

MATER DEI INSTITUTE  
OF EDUCATION,  
DUBLIN

**Mater Dei Institute of Education  
A College of Dublin City University**

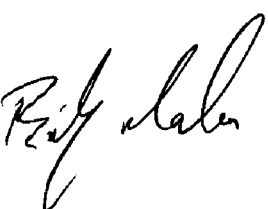
**The Letter of James:  
Literary Structure, Form and Unity**

**Bill Mallon**

**Supervisor: Dr Fearghus Ó Fearghail**

**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
School of Theology  
March 2014**

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of PhD is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed: 

ID No.: 56112947

Date: 12/3/14

## Acknowledgements

It is with a great sense of relief and an even bigger sense of achievement that I bid farewell to this thesis on the letter of James, though it is with a sense of sadness also. This thesis has been a constant companion for the last few years, through good times and through bad times. This work has gone through so many phases. It grew and evolved with me. Like the resolute Virgil, guiding Dante through the various *cantos* of the *Inferno*, this thesis has been a wise guide for me throughout my life. There are many reasons I chose to undertake this research on James but perhaps the most obvious one for me was the sense of mystery which surrounds the text. Many of my friends and family will perhaps know me best from my use of the term *δίψυχος*, which comes from the letter of James. I was always fascinated by the term, which means 'double-minded' or as some scholars prefer, 'Mr. Facing-both-ways'! One cannot help but be pulled in by such a term. From that starting point, other mysteries surrounding James' structure and form convinced me to devote a large part of my life to its study.

I would like to thank a few people who were with me on the journey. To my mother Freda, to whom I have dedicated this thesis, I could not have done this without your help and support. I really am quite honoured to have such a loving and understanding mother. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. To my sister Karen and my brothers Niall and Glen, you have my thanks also. To my aunty Phil, without whom I would not be here today in my present state. To the Great A.K, Alan Kelly, my uncle, who I'm sure is very proud. To all my nieces and nephews and grand nephews, uncles and aunties, and cousins, thank you. A very special thanks should also be given to my girlfriend Mairéad who helped me on this journey when I needed it the most. She has been a constant source of support for me.

In thanking my family, I am reminded of those who have passed on, who keep an ever present watch over me from above. To my father, Walter, who went too soon, I give a special thanks. I know somewhere out there you helped me when I needed it the most. To my grandmother and grandfather, Ann and Joe, who passed on, I also extend a special thank you. A special mention is also given to my aunt Maisie, who passed on only

recently. I know you would all be so proud. One could not mention the dead without of course naming our mysterious author of the letter of James.

I wish to thank my friends also. I have thanked each one in my own time for their help, and for the support, and distractions, during this thesis. A big thank you to the other PhD students I have worked with over the years. I wish you all the best of luck in your future studies. I would like to thank two people from my past life in UCD who fostered my interest in the Bible and which led me to the path I walk today. Prof. Carmel McCarthy and Dr. Jonathan Kearney, thank you both.

The staff of Mater Dei has been extremely helpful to me since I first walked through the doors. Working in the library for many years has led me to become friends with many staff members. I want to thank everyone in the library and college who helped and supported me. It was much appreciated. Within the institute itself I would like to personally thank some members of staff. Dr. Gabriel Flynn has been an incredibly supportive and lovely man and has seen me at my worst and at my best, but mostly at my worst. He was an inspirational leader in academic research and has saved me from myself more than a few times. Thank you. Another person I would like to thank is Dr. Martin Hogan, who was extremely helpful in supplying additional reading material and for offering some insights into this thesis. Finally, I wish to thank Dr. Andrew McGrady. Andrew contacted me many years ago to be one of the first PhD students under his new research initiative when he became director of the college. He encouraged me and has brought me to many conferences, both at home and abroad. He has been very good to me when times were tough and was always willing to lend a hand and offer support. I hope this thesis stands as a testament to the support which the college has given me. Finally, I would like to thank Ethna Regan, who chaired my viva, and my examiners Dr. Brad Anderson and Dr. Kieran O'Mahony who offered invaluable support and encouragement. Thank you all.

Finally, I would like to offer up a very large thank you to my supervisor, Dr. Fearghus Ó Fearghail. I can't thank him enough for all the help over the years. He was always willing to lend a helping hand or ear, not only in my academic life but also in my personal life. I don't know which one of us took on the role of the prophet Job for the duration of the thesis but I would like to think we both enjoyed the journey, and the

reward, at the end of it all. I am extremely proud and honoured to call him my supervisor and my friend. His knowledge of the bible is quite remarkable, as is his knowledge of almost everything else. One can only hope to achieve such greatness in one's life as Fearghus has in his. I will always remain eternally grateful for his support and guidance.

## Abbreviations

### Journals and Books

<i>ANRW</i>	Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt
<i>Bib</i>	Biblica
<i>BTB</i>	Biblical Theology Bulletin
<i>BSac</i>	Bibliotheca Sacra
<i>BZ</i>	Biblische Zeitschrift
<i>CBQ</i>	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
<i>CR·BS</i>	Currents in Research: Biblical Studies
<i>EvQ</i>	Evangelical Quarterly
<i>IDB</i>	The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible
<i>JB</i>	Jerusalem Bible
<i>JBL</i>	Journal of Biblical Literature
<i>JETS</i>	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
<i>LB</i>	Linguistica Biblica
<i>Neot</i>	Neotestamentica
<i>NTS</i>	New Testament Studies
<i>NovT</i>	Novum Testamentum
<i>PIBA</i>	Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association
<i>RHR</i>	Revue d'Histoire des Religions
<i>ST</i>	Studia Theologica
<i>SNT</i>	Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt
<i>TLZ</i>	Theologische Literaturzeitung
<i>TLR</i>	Theologische Revue
<i>TNT</i>	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
<i>TSK</i>	Theologische Studien und Kritiken
<i>TD</i>	Theology Digest
<i>TynB</i>	Tyndale Bulletin
<i>ZKT</i>	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie
<i>ZNW</i>	Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft

### Old Testament Sources

Gen.	Genesis
Ex.	Exodus
Lev.	Leviticus
Num.	Numbers
Deut.	Deuteronomy
Josh.	Joshua
Judg.	Judges
Ruth	Ruth
1 Sam.	1 Samuel

2 Sam.	2 Samuel
1 Kgs.	1 Kings
2 Kgs.	2 Kings
1 Chr.	1 Chronicles
2 Chr.	2 Chronicles
Ezra	Ezra
Neh.	Nehemiah
Tob.	Tobit
Jdt.	Judith
Esth.	Esther
1 Macc.	1 Maccabees
2 Macc.	2 Maccabees
Job	Job
Ps.	Psalms
Prov.	Proverbs
Eccl.	Ecclesiastes
Song.	Song of Solomon
Wis.	Wisdom of Solomon
Sir.	Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)
Isa.	Isaiah
Jer.	Jeremiah
Lam.	Lamentations
Bar.	Baruch
Ezek.	Ezekiel
Dan.	Daniel
Hos.	Hosea
Joel	Joel
Amos	Amos
Ob.	Obadiah
Jon.	Jonah
Mic.	Micah
Nah.	Nahum
Hab.	Habakkuk
Zeph.	Zephaniah
Hag.	Haggai
Zech.	Zechariah
Mal.	Malachi

### **New Testament Sources**

Matt.	Matthew
Mk.	Mark
Lk.	Luke
Jn.	John
Acts	Acts of the Apostles
Rom.	Romans

1 Cor.	1 Corinthians
2 Cor.	2 Corinthians
Gal.	Galatians
Eph.	Ephesians
Phil.	Philippians
Col.	Colossians
1 Thess.	1 Thessalonians
2 Thess.	2 Thessalonians
1 Tim.	1 Timothy
2 Tim.	2 Timothy
Titus	Titus
Phlm.	Philemon
Heb.	Hebrews
Jas.	James
1 Pet.	1 Peter
2 Pet.	2 Peter
1 Jn.	1 John
2 Jn.	2 John
3 Jn.	3 John
Jude	Jude
Rev.	Revelation

### **Extra-Biblical Sources**

1 Clem.	1 Clement
Her., <i>Vis.</i>	The Shepherd of Hermas, Visions
Her., <i>Mand.</i>	The Shepherd of Hermas, Mandates
Her., <i>Sim.</i>	The Shepherd of Hermas, Similitudes
<i>Did.</i>	Didache
Barn.	Epistle of Barnabas
1QS	The Community Rule
1QH	Thanksgiving Hymns
CD.	Damascus Document
<i>Test. Asher.</i>	The Testament of Asher
2 Bar.	2 Baruch
<i>Syr. Bar.</i>	2 Baruch
<i>Ep. Jer.</i>	Epistle of Jeremiah
1 Esd.	1 Esdras



## Classical Sources

<i>Arist.</i>	Aristotle
Jos.	Josephus
Philo	Philo
Plat.	Plato
Sen.	Seneca
Ps. Isoc.	Pseudo Isocrates
Ps. Dem.	Pseudo Demetrius
Ps. Lib.	Pseudo Libanius
Cic.	Cicero
Quint.	Quintilian
Dem.	Demetrius
Jul. Vic.	Julius Victor
Plut.	Plutarch
<i>Ant.</i>	Jewish Antiquities, Josephus
<i>Life</i>	Life of Josephus, Josephus
<i>War</i>	Jewish War, Josephus
<i>Iliad</i>	Iliad, Homer
<i>Agamemnon</i>	Agamemnon, Aeschylus
<i>Republic</i>	Republic, Plato
<i>On Nature</i>	On Nature, Parmenides
<i>Ad Dem.</i>	Ad Demonicum, Ps. Isocrates
<i>Sen. Ep.</i>	Epistles, Seneca
<i>Ep. Disc.</i>	Discourse, Epictetus
<i>Rhet. Her.</i>	Rhetorica ad Herennium
<i>Rhet.</i>	Rhetoric, Aristotle
<i>Quint. Inst.</i>	Institutio Oratoria, Quintilian
<i>Cic. De Inv.</i>	De Inventione, Cicero
<i>De Eloc.</i>	De Elocutione
BGU	Letters of Apion
<i>Plu. Advice</i>	Advice to the Bride and Groom, Plutarch
<i>Sen. Nat. Ques.</i>	Natural Questions, Seneca
<i>Ad Nicoc.</i>	Ad Nicoclem, Isocrates

## General

Ⲛ	Codex Sinaiticus
B	Codex Vaticanus
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
KJV	King James Version
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
RSV	Revised Standard Version

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>Chapter I - Literary Structure: <i>Status Quaestionis</i></b>	
Introduction	4
1. The Search for an Overall Structure	5
2. A Literary Structure with a Double Introduction	9
3. Rhetorical Analyses of the Letter of James	11
4. Chiastic Arrangements	15
5. Non-Rhetorical Literary Structures	17
6. More Recent Analyses	19
Conclusion	26
<b>Chapter II - Introduction and Conclusion: <i>Status Quaestionis</i></b>	
Introduction	29
1. The Introduction to the Letter of James	29
1.1 - An 'epitome': 1:2-27	29
1.2 - A Double Introduction: 1:2-27	30
1.3 - <i>Exordium</i> and <i>Propositio</i> : 1:2-27	35
1.4 - A Double Introduction: 1:2-21	36
1.5 - Enduring Trials: 1:2-19a	37
1.6 - An Opening Unit: 1:2-18	38
1.7 - A Prologue: 1:2-12	40
1.8 - A True Introduction: 1:2-11	42
2. Conclusion of the Letter of James	43
2.1 - An Epilogue: 5:19-20	44
2.2 - A Conclusion at 5:13-20	45
2.3 - An Alternative Conclusion: 5:12-20	45
2.4 - A Further Alternative Conclusion: 5:7-20	46
Conclusion	50

### **Chapter III - Methodological Considerations for the Letter of James**

Introduction	53
1. The Vocabulary of James	54
2. Delimiting Units	62
2.1 - The Use of Repetition as a Means of Delimiting Units	64
2.1.1 - Inklusio	64
2.1.2 - Anaphoric-type Repetitions	66
2.1.3 - Epiphoric-type Repetitions	67
3. On the use of Rhetoric to Structure James	67
4. Literary Form and Genre	70
Conclusion	72

### **Chapter IV - Finding an Introductory Section in the Letter of James**

Introduction	74
1. The Function of 1:1 in the Letter of James	75
1.1 - δοῦλος in the Letter of James	75
1.2 - The Twelve Tribes in the Diaspora	79
1.3 - The Salutation	81
1.4 - The Introduction to the Letter (1:2-11)	84
2. The Position and Function of 1:12	89
3. The Introductory Role of 1:2-11 in the Letter of James	91
3.1 - Joy	92
3.2 - Brotherhood	92
3.3 - Faith	93
3.4 - Trial and Testing	95
3.5 - Steadfastness	96
3.6 - Wisdom	97
3.7 - Prayer	97
3.8 - τέλειος and δίψυχος	98
3.9 - The Lowly and the Rich	101
Conclusion	102

## **Chapter V - The Literary Structure of Jas. 1:12-5:20**

<b>Introduction</b>	104
<b>1. Jas. 1:12-2:26</b>	105
1.1 - Jas. 1:12-15	105
1.2 - Jas. 1:16-18	106
1.3 - Jas. 1:19-25	107
1.4 - Jas. 26-27	108
1.5 - Jas. 2:1-13	110
1.6 - Jas. 2:14-26	112
1.7 - The unit Jas. 2:1-26	114
1.8 - The unity of Jas. 1:12-2:26	115
<b>2. Jas. 3:1-4:12</b>	116
2.1 - Jas. 3:1-12	116
2.2 - Jas. 3:13-18	118
2.3 - Jas. 4:1-10	121
2.4 - Jas. 3:1-18 and 4:1-10	124
2.5 - Jas. 4:11-12	125
2.6 - Jas. 4:11-12 as part of 3:1-4:10	129
2.7 - Transitional Role of 4:11-12	130
<b>3. Jas. 4:13-5:20</b>	131
3.1 - Jas. 4:13-17	131
3.2 - Jas. 5:1-6	132
3.3 - Links between Jas. 4:13-17 and 5:1-6	134
3.4 - Jas. 5:7-11	134
3.5 - Jas. 5:12	136
3.6 - Links between Jas. 5:1-6 and 5:7-12	139
3.7 - Jas. 5:13-20	140
3.8 - Jas. 5:19-20	142
3.9 - Jas. 4:13-5:20	145
<b>Conclusion</b>	146

## **Chapter VI - The Literary Form of James**

Introduction	148
1. The <i>Status Quaestionis</i> of James' Literary Form	149
1.1 - Diatribe	149
1.2 - Sermon/Homily/Synagogue homily	151
1.3 - <i>Paraenesis</i>	152
1.4 - A <i>Protreptic</i> Discourse	155
1.5 - Wisdom Writing	156
1.6 - Epistle/Literary Letter	158
1.7 - A Real Letter	159
1.8 - Circular/Encyclical Letter	160
1.9 - A Diaspora Letter	162
2. The Literary Form of James	164
2.1 - Epistolary Prescript	164
2.2 - Closing Section of James	167
3. What Type of Letter is James?	170
3.1 - A Diaspora Letter?	170
3.2 - Letter of Exhortation?	171
3.2.1 - Letter of Advice	172
3.2.2 - Letter of Admonition	173
3.2.3 - A <i>Paraenetic</i> Letter	174
Conclusion	178

## **Chapter VII – A Unifying Thread in the Letter of James**

Introduction	181
1. Unity in the Letter of James	182
1.1 - Lack of Thematic Unity	182
1.2 - A 'Sort of Unity'	183
1.3 - Christian Conduct	184
1.4 - Faith	184
1.5 - Testing and Trial	185

1.6 - Perfection	186
1.7 - Contrasting Themes	189
1.8 - Unity in the Letter of James - An Evaluation	191
2. A Source of Unity - Contrasts in the Letter of James	191
3. τέλειος and δίψυχος - Unifying Themes	193
3.1 - τέλειος	194
3.2 - δίψυχος	196
3.3 τέλειος and δίψυχος: Agents of Unity in the letter of James	200
3.3.1 - 1:12-2:26	200
3.3.2 - 3:1-4:12	201
3.3.3 - 4:13-5:20	202
Conclusion	204
<b>Conclusion</b>	206
<b>Bibliography</b>	211

## **Thesis Abstract**

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the literary structure, form and unity of the letter of James, an investigation which only really began about the middle of the 19th century. This period of time marked a beginning where scholars began to suggest that James was more than a chaotic jumble of sayings and exhortations, a characterisation often describing James in earlier studies. This line of inquiry continued on throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. There still, however, remains a great diversity of opinion and disagreement on the matter. This thesis offers a sustained study of the literary structure and form of James over seven chapters. **Chapter I** traces the present state of the question in relation to the literary structure of the letter, and how diverse the range of opinions are. **Chapter II** focuses specifically on the introduction and conclusion of the letter. **Chapter III** outlines the various methodologies used to decipher the letter's structure and form, with suggestions on the methods this thesis will take. **Chapter IV** endeavours to delineate the introduction to the letter while **Chapter V** focuses on the literary structure of the rest of the letter. **Chapter VI** will examine the literary form of James which is an important issue that arises from the study of the letter's literary structure. Here, the epistolary status of James will be assessed. Finally, **Chapter VII** will then seek to establish the unity of the letter, with a focus upon the themes of perfection and double mindedness as unifying themes.

## Introduction

*'A superficial glance at this epistle may easily leave the impression that every attempt to outline it must fail'.<sup>1</sup>*

Although hardly the popular view held by scholars these days concerning the letter of James, one might be forgiven for thinking that the quote is somewhat correct if one were to look at the largely differing views held by scholars over the last century and a half, most of which are still found today. The letter of James represents perhaps the single most misunderstood and misinterpreted text in the New Testament. Many scholars of James would agree that the letter is to be somewhat likened to a maze; what looks like a correct path will often lead to a dead end, and vice versa, what often looks like a dead end, from a certain angle, will often lead to new and differing paths. Ultimately we all share in the same goal when we engage the text of James. We wish to find the way out. We wish to escape what Todd Penner called quite appropriately, 'the eternal return of the same'.<sup>2</sup> A. Meyer's study on James in the 1930s is well named, *Das Rätsel des Jacobusbriefes*. It aptly sums up the consensus of the studies on James up until that time and indeed sums up quite appropriately the current consensus on the letter of James today.

The focus of this thesis will be on the structure and literary form of James, perhaps the greatest mystery in Jamesian scholarship. There has been a significant development in the last 30-40 years which began to treat James seriously on these issues. The past twenty years alone has seen more studies on James than at any previous time in twentieth-century scholarship. These are joined by numerous articles generated in that same time period, along with the publication of some groundbreaking commentaries. New investigations into literary form and structure, together with the increase in viewing NT texts through the lens of rhetorical criticism, have led to new insights into the letter of James.

---

<sup>1</sup> This quote comes from William Hendriksen, *Bible Survey: A Treasury of Bible Information* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1949), p. 329, cited in D. E. Hiebert, 'The Unifying Theme of the Epistle of James', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 135 (1978), p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> T. Penner, 'James in Current Research', *CR:BS* 7 (1999), p. 260, in a 1999 article on the state of research into James' structure, form, and unity, was hopeful of the direction studies into the letter of James were heading.



The aim of this thesis is to investigate several aspects of the letter of James, namely, its literary structure, and form and its overall unity. From about the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century scholars began to suggest that the letter of James was more than a chaotic ‘throwing together’ of sayings such as Martin Luther had visualised centuries earlier. Ernst Pfeiffer and Hermann J. Cladder were the first to plot a new direction through James, and from the 1970s onwards, in both literary and rhetorical studies, their work has been carried forward. However, there remains a great diversity of opinion on the literary structure of James. The present thesis offers a sustained study of the literary structure, form and unity of the letter of James over seven chapters. **Chapter I** presents the current state of the question in relation to the literary structure of the letter. It is a literary review of the most relevant studies done on the letter of James from the mid-nineteenth century when literary structure and form became an important focus of critical scholarship. This review will highlight the main issues that scholars face when seeking a literary structure of the letter of James. The review will follow a chronological order so that one can see how views have evolved on the literary structure of James. **Chapter II** focuses specifically on the introduction and conclusion of the letter. Their importance for the literary structure of James should be evident from the literary review of chapter I. Most attention has been devoted by scholars to the introduction, but the conclusion also has been examined. In this chapter we will look critically at the main proposals that have been put forward for the introduction and the conclusion of James. Methodological issues will be discussed in **Chapter III** to lay the groundwork for our study of the literary structure and form of James in subsequent chapters. Such issues will include the vocabulary of James, how one delimits a textual unit and larger units, the nature and use of repetitions in a text, and issues relating to the literary form of a text. **Chapter IV** will delineate the introduction to the letter and indicate its role in the letter of James. **Chapter V** focuses on the literary structure of the body of the letter, going through the text in detail and endeavouring to present a satisfactory overall literary structure. **Chapter VI** will examine the literary form of James which continues to be a matter of contention in studies on James. It will first of all present a *status quaestionis* on the literary form of James before we offer our own proposal. Finally, **Chapter VII** will seek to establish the unity of the letter, an important issue which has been ongoing since the time of the Reformation and which even to this day remains largely

unanswered due to differing opinions among scholars regarding the literary structure and form of James.

It is the aim of this thesis to avoid what Penner feared in Jamesian scholarship - an eternal return to the same. We hope this work on the structure, form and unity of James will show that the letter of James still has much to offer, that instead of following the same old paths around the maze, we can suggest some new ones.

## Chapter I

### The Literary Structure of James: *Status Quaestionis*

#### Introduction

When the letter of James was written, it did not have chapters or verses and probably very little punctuation, if any.<sup>1</sup> Punctuation marks were added later as were other helps designed to assist the reader. The oldest system of capitalisation (*kephalaia*) known to us, are those found in the margins of the 4<sup>th</sup> century Codex Vaticanus (B).<sup>2</sup> Looking at the actual text in Codex Vaticanus one can deduce from the spaces left by the scribe the following units (set out here with modern chapter and verse numbers): 1:1, 2-11, 12-18, 19-25, 26-27; 2:1-4; 5-13, 14-26, 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12 (4:1-6, 7-12); 13-17; 5:1-12, 13-20. The 4<sup>th</sup> century Codex Sinaiticus has quite different divisions: 1:1, 2-16, 17-21, 22-25, 1:26-2:9; 2:10-19, 20-24, 25-26; 3:1-2, 3-11, 12; 3:13-4:12; 4:13-17; 5:1-6, 7, 8-11, 12-18, 19-20.<sup>3</sup> These divisions were intended to help the reader understand the text. The division of the NT into chapters came much later and is attributed to Stephen Langton (c.1150-1228). The division into chapters that is in use today is already to be found in thirteenth century Latin Bibles,<sup>4</sup> but the verse divisions were only added centuries later by Stephanus (Robert Estienne) in his Greek edition of 1551 and used by him in 1553 in his French version of the NT.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> B. M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament. Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration* (Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 26-27.

<sup>2</sup> Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 23. Cf. H. Von Soden, *Die Schriften des neuen Testaments*, Vol. 4 - Text available online at <http://www.csntm.org/printedbook> ([http://images.csntm.org/PublishedWorks/von\\_Soden\\_volume\\_4/0614.jpg](http://images.csntm.org/PublishedWorks/von_Soden_volume_4/0614.jpg) - 4/0623).

<sup>3</sup> MS available for consultation at [www.codexsinaiticus.org](http://www.codexsinaiticus.org).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, the 13<sup>th</sup> century Shearman Bible and the forthcoming article of F. Ó Fearghail, 'The Shearman Bible: A calendar'.

<sup>5</sup> Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 104.

## 1. The Search for an Overall Structure

It was really only in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that scholars began to find evidence of an overall structure in the letter of James. While W. M. L. de Wette maintained in his handbook to the NT that the Letter of James was written without an overall plan,<sup>6</sup> J. E. Cellérier, in his commentary on James, proposed a three-part arrangement for the letter, 1:1-2:26; 3:1-5:11 and 5:12-20, with various sub-sections in each part.<sup>7</sup> In that same year (1850) an article was published by E. Pfeiffer who strongly disputed de Wette's opinion. He argued that the letter did have an overall plan and he found the key to this plan in 1:19, which, in his view, contained the main points ('die hauptgeschichtspuncte') set out in the letter up to the end of the fourth chapter.<sup>8</sup> In particular, he saw the admonition 'be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger' as setting the agenda for the three sections 1:21-2:26; 3:1-18 and 4:1-17.<sup>9</sup> He saw a transition from the end of chapter 4 to 5:1-6 which was in turn linked to 5:7-11, while the final exhortations of 5:12-20 were also an integral part of the letter.<sup>10</sup>

Opinion was divided on the structure of the letter of James not just among commentators on the letter but also among textual critics. In his critical edition of the NT published in 1869-72, C. Von Tischendorf arranged the text of James as follows without any real indication of an overall plan: 1:1, 2-11, 12-15, 16-18, 19-27; 2:1-4, 5-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-10, 11-12, 13-17; 5:1-6, 7-11, 12, 13-18, 19-20. Westcott and Hort, on the other hand, in their critical edition of the Greek NT of 1889, clearly subscribed to the existence of an overall plan for the letter, dividing it as follows: 1:1, 2-18, 19-27; 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6; 5:7-20. In the same year that Westcott and Hort published their edition of the NT, R. Cornely, in his introduction to the New Testament, put forward an overall plan for the letter. He used the term 'exordium' to refer to the letter's opening which he identified as 1:2-18 (and which he divided into three sections, 1:1-4; 1:5-11 and 1:12-18).<sup>11</sup> He did not specify

<sup>6</sup> W. M. L. de Wette, *Kurzgefasstes Kurze Erklärung der Briefe des Petrus, Judas und Jakobus : Kurzgefasstes Exegetisches Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Vol. III, 1 (Leipzig: Verlag Weidmann, 1847), p. 103.

<sup>7</sup> J. E. Cellérier, *Étude et Commentaire sur l'Épître de St Jacques* (Genève/Paris: Kessmann/Reinwald, 1850), pp. xxiii-xxv; on p. xx he wrote: 'Aucun plan n'est appert; mas le profondeur des pensées fait supposer a priori que S. Jacques n'aune pas écrit au hazard et san ordre'.

<sup>8</sup> E. Pfeiffer, 'Der Zusammenhang des Jakobusbriefes', *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 23 (1850), 163-180.

<sup>9</sup> Pfeiffer, 'Jakobusbriefes', 167-78.

<sup>10</sup> Pfeiffer, 'Jakobusbriefes', 179.

<sup>11</sup> R. Cornely, *Historicae et Criticae Introductionis in U. T. Libros Compendium S. Theologiae Aquiditoribus Accommodatum* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1889), p. 589.

what he meant by 'exordium', but it is still significant that he used the term. For the body of the letter he put forward a three-part arrangement: 1:19-2:26; 3:1-4:12 and 4:13-5:18. He took 5:19-20 to form an epilogue. Three years later in his edition of the Catholic Letters, B. Weiss took 1:1-18 as the introduction ('Einleitung'), while he arranged the main body of the letter into three main sections - 1:19-2:26, 3:1-4:12 and 4:13-5:12. He took 5:13-20 to form the conclusion ('Briefschluss').<sup>12</sup>

The early twentieth century (1904) saw the appearance of the proposal of H. J. Cladder. He accepted Pfeiffer's assessment of the role of 1:19b in the letter, but went on to propose his own arrangement of the whole in which he saw 1:26-27 as having an introductory role.<sup>13</sup> He described the letter as 'artistic' and believed it had an overall plan.<sup>14</sup> This can be seen from the arrangement he put forward in which 1:2-25 acts as an introduction (in six parts: 1:2-4, 6-8, 9-12, 13-15, 19-21 and 22-25). He took 1:26-27 to function as a type of anticipatory section, introducing themes which were to be expanded in 2:1-4:12.<sup>15</sup> He saw the first part of the central section 2:1-3:12 as paralleling the second part, 3:15-4:12. In particular he took 2:1-11 to parallel 4:4-8a; 2:14-26 to parallel 4:1-3, and 3:3-12 to parallel 3:15-18. In addition he saw 4:13-5:18 as corresponding to 1:2-25, pointing out parallels between 1:2-4 (A) and 5:7-12 (A), 1:6-8 (B) and 5:13-18 (B), 1:9-12 (C) and 4:13-17 (C), 1:13-15 (D) and 5:1-6 (D), and 1:19-25 (F, G) and 4:8b-12 (F, G).<sup>16</sup> The most important contribution of Cladder's analysis is that it strongly underlined the unity and overall design of the letter. An overall plan is also evident in Nestle's edition of the Greek New Testament published in 1906 (1:1, 2-18, 19-27; 2:1-4:12 [2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-12]; 4:13-5:6; 5:7-20).

J. B. Mayor published a major work on the letter of James in 1913. Even today his study holds relevance, particularly his insightful knowledge into the style and language of James, and the range of possible sources for the letter. Mayor writes of the 'design of the Epistle' and arranges it in nine sections: 1:1-18, 19-27; 2:1-13,

<sup>12</sup> B. Weiss, *Die Katholischen Briefe. Textkritische Untersuchungen und Textherstellung* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1892), pp. 93-116: Einleitung: 1:1, 2-12, 13-18; I: 1:19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; II: 3:1-4:12 (3:1-12; 3:13-17; 4:1-12); III: 4:13-5:12 (4:13-5:6; 5:7-11, 12); Briefschluss: 5:13-20 (13-18, 19-20).

<sup>13</sup> H. J. Cladder, 'Die Anlage des Jakobusbriefes', *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 28 (1904), 50.

<sup>14</sup> Cladder, 'Die Anlage', 52.

<sup>15</sup> Cladder, 'Die Anlage', 57, took 1:26-27 to function as an introduction, although in the arrangement for the letter he described 1:2-8 as an introductory section, which consisted of a double admonition to joyous endurance (1:2-4), and an admonition to faithful wisdom (1:5-8).

<sup>16</sup> Cladder, 'Die Anlage', 57.

14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-17; 5:1-11 and 12-20.<sup>17</sup> That same year H. von Soden, in his edition of the Greek NT, arranged the letter in the following way: 1:1; 2-18, 19-27; 2:1-26 (2:1-13; 14-26), 3:1-17; 4:1-5:20. J. H. Ropes (1916), who was one of the first to classify James as a literary letter, based on what he saw as the conventional Greek opening of a letter in 1:1,<sup>18</sup> proposed an overall arrangement of the text in three parts: 1:2-2:26 ('On certain religious realities'), 3:1-18 ('On the teacher's calling') and 4:1-5:20 ('Worldliness and the Christian conduct of life contrasted').<sup>19</sup> Ropes divided these parts into smaller sections (1:2-12, 13-27; 2:1-7, 8-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12, 13-17; 5:1-6, 7-11, 12-18). He saw *Πρὸ πάντων* in 5:12 as a common formula found at the end of letters.<sup>20</sup> He took 5:19-20 to form the conclusion to the letter.

M. Dibelius, in what is perhaps the best-known known work on James which appeared first in German in 1921, mentions the oft-noted characteristic of the letter, its 'lack of continuity', explained in his view by its literary character - *paraenesis*.<sup>21</sup> But although he did not find a continuity of thought in James, he did point to formal connections between sayings, which were established by 'catchwords'.<sup>22</sup> His commentary bears witness to an arrangement of sorts. It opens with a prescript in 1:1 which is linked to 1:2 by *χαίρειν/χαρὰν*. The rest of the letter is divided into eight sections which he describes in his commentary as a series or group of sayings or, as in the case of two sections, a treatise. The following arrangement is used in his commentary: 1:2-18 (a series of sayings concerning temptations), 1:19-27 (a series of sayings about hearing and doing), 2:1-13 (a treatise on partiality), 2:14-26 (a treatise on faith and works), 3:1-12 (a treatise on the tongue), 3:13-18 and 4:1-12 (a group of sayings against contentiousness), 4:13-17 and 5:1-6 (a group of sayings against

<sup>17</sup> J. B. Mayor, *Epistle of James. The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes, and Comments* (London: MacMillan, 1913), pp. cxxviii-cxxxiii.

<sup>18</sup> J. H. Ropes, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. James*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1916), p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Ropes, *James*, pp. 3-5. An earlier study by F. J. A. Hort, *The Epistle of St James: Greek Text with Introduction, Commentary as Far as Chapter IV, Verse 7, and Additional Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), p. 23, also proposed a triple division of the text (1:1-27; 2:1-5:6; 5:7-20), despite his view that James was composed of miscellaneous content.

<sup>20</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 300.

<sup>21</sup> M. Dibelius, and H. Greeven, *James: A Commentary on the Epistle of James*, trans. M.A. Williams (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1976), p. 5 (German edition: 'das Fehlen des Zusammenhangs').

<sup>22</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 5.

worldly-minded merchants and rich people), 5:7-20 (a series of sayings on various themes).<sup>23</sup>

J. Chaine, in his 1927 commentary on the letter in the *Études Bibliques* series, divided the letter into 'instructions' of which he has eight in 1:2-4:12 (1:2-12, 13-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12); this section is followed by a double warning in 4:13-17 and 5:1-6 and these in turn are followed by final recommendations in 5:7-20.<sup>24</sup> The arrangement that one finds in Ketter's 1952 work on James in the Herder commentary series does not differ much from that put forward by Chaine. After the greeting (1:1) Ketter arranges the text in eight sections as follows: 1:2-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-5:6; 5:7-20.<sup>25</sup> A. E. Barnett, in his article on the letter in the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (1962), has a similar arrangement, the only difference being that Barnett arranges chaps. 3 and 4 as follows: 3:1-4:10; 4:11-5:6.<sup>26</sup>

In spite of what he perceived to be the 'relative lack of plan' in the letter of James, B. Reicke, in his Anchor Bible commentary on James of 1964, put forward an arrangement of the letter in five main sections after the greeting of 1:1 (1:2-18; 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-5:6; 5:7-20). In their 1965 *Introduction to the New Testament*, A. Robert and A. Feuillet asked if the letter had 'a real coordination among its ideas' and came to the conclusion that the various units did not seem to have much of a connection between them.<sup>27</sup> They divided the letter into eleven sections - 1:2-12, 13-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12, 13-17; 5:1-11 - with a closing section at 5:12-20.<sup>28</sup> In his 1967 commentary on the letter in which he describes James as a tract showing traces of the diatribe form, E. Sidebottom proposed dividing the letter into five sections which diverged from the usual suggestions (1:2-17, 18-21; 1:22-2:26; 3:1-5:12; 5:13-20).<sup>29</sup> Others who highlighted the lack of an overall plan in the letter during this period include J. Cantinat.<sup>30</sup> Cantinat lists a number of authors finding 'une certaine unité de plan' in the epistle of James, based on Pfeiffer's

---

<sup>23</sup> Dibelius, *James*, pp. 69, 108.

<sup>24</sup> J. Chaine, *L'Épître de Saint Jacques* (Paris: Gabalda, 1927), pp. 141-42.

<sup>25</sup> P. Ketter, *Hebräerbrief, Jacobusbrief, Petrusbriefe, Judasbrief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1952), pp. 126-88.

<sup>26</sup> A. E. Barnett, 'James, Letter of', in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. by G. A. Buttrick, Vol. II (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962), pp. 795-96.

<sup>27</sup> A. Robert and A. Feuillet, 'The Epistle of James', in *Introduction to the New Testament*, ed. by A. Robert and A. Feuillet (New York: Desclee Company, 1965), p. 553.

<sup>28</sup> Robert and Feuillet, 'James', pp. 554-55.

<sup>29</sup> E. Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, The New Century Bible Commentary (London: Thomas Nelson, 1967), p. 26f.

<sup>30</sup> J. Cantinat, *Les Épîtres de Saint Jacques et de Saint Jude* (Paris: Gabalda, 1967), pp. 9-10.

suggestion in relation to 1:19 or Cladder's in relation to 1:26,<sup>31</sup> and he himself concludes that the lack of a real plan, of a rigorous logic in the presentation of themes, does not stop the letter from having a certain unity.<sup>32</sup>

Ruckstuhl's commentary of 1985 treats the letter in thirteen sections (1:2-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12, 13-17; 5:1-6, 7-11, 12, 13-18, 19-20) but does not discuss the issue of an overall plan.<sup>33</sup> In his 1992 commentary, D. E. Hiebert divided the letter into four parts (1:2-18; 1:19-3:18; 4:1-5:12; 5:13-20), within which he saw a logical organisation, but not 'a clear structural plan'.<sup>34</sup> However, he does see the letter developing a 'basic theme', namely, 'Tests of a Living Faith'.<sup>35</sup> P. Perkins in her 1995 commentary choose a six-part division (1:1-27; 2:1-26; 3:1-12; 3:13-4:12; 4:13-5:12; 5:13-20), but found little indication in the letter of an overall structural plan.<sup>36</sup>

## 2. A Literary Structure with a Double Introduction

F. O. Francis suggested in 1970 that the letter of James, which he sees as having an overall plan, contains a double opening statement, 1:2-11 and 1:12-25 (a thanksgiving formula), which is developed in the main body of the letter and a concluding statement in 5:7-20. He appealed to 1 John for support for his view of the introduction and conclusion to the letter and to a pattern he found in Hellenistic epistolography.

Francis's 'double-opening' theory involves a two-fold structure which introduces the main themes of the letter. The first part of the introduction, 1:2-11, is broken down into three parts which are restated and expanded in the second part, 1:12-25 (the theme of 1:2-4 is found restated in 1:12-18; 1:5-8 in 1:19-21 and 1:9-11 in 1:22-25). Francis sees the opening statement of James (1:2-25) as having a chiasmic relation between this opening section and themes in the main body, which he divides into 2:1-26 and 3:1-5:6. He notes that in James 'the pattern is a b c/a b c in the

---

<sup>31</sup> Cantinat, *Jacques*, p. 9. See also J. Michl, *Die katholischen Briefe* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1968), pp. 15-17; H. Balz and W. Schrage, *Die Briefe des Jakobus, Petrus, Johannes und Judas* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973).

<sup>32</sup> Cantinat, *Jacques*, p. 11.

<sup>33</sup> E. Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief, 1.-3. Johannesbrief*, Die Neue Echter Bibel, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament mit der Einheitsübersetzung (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1985).

<sup>34</sup> D. E. Hiebert, *James* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1992), p. 36: 'The epistle obviously does not set forth a clear structural plan heralding the logical organization of its contents'.

<sup>35</sup> Hiebert, *James*, p. 37.

<sup>36</sup> P. Perkins, *First and Second Peter, James and Jude*, Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1995), pp. 92-93.



opening period and then c b in the body of the letter, with point “a” - testing - underlying the whole’.<sup>37</sup> Francis notes that testing appears in the opening period as an introduction that underlines the development of the two main sections of the letter, namely faith and action regarding the rich and poor (2:1-26) and the ‘angry passion of wisdom, words and position (3:1-5:6)’.<sup>38</sup> Francis takes 5:7-20 as the ‘closing admonitions’ of the letter and compares it to the closing of another letter - 1 John, noting that they both share two common elements of closing epistolary form - eschatological instruction and thematic reprise. He sees in 5:7-11 a ‘thematic reprise’ of themes from the opening section of the letter, themes such as patience and blessedness. The section 5:12-20 offers prayers and mutual support and Francis sees these elements as being characteristic of other NT epistolary conclusions.<sup>39</sup> Finally Francis notes a link between 5:13-20 and the theme beginning in 1:16, between ‘being deceived on the source of adversity and the closing concern with those in adversity (5:13-18) and those who are deceived (5:19-20)’.<sup>40</sup>

For P. H. Davids (1982) the apparently haphazard nature of the letter of James was due to its origin as a redacted work containing sayings which were originally separate but are now part of one whole.<sup>41</sup> He argued that James does have a central argument, which is coherent, and also that it has a definite theological framework. Following in the footsteps of Francis and developing his theory, he takes James to begin with an epistolary introduction (1:1), which moves, via catchwords, into a double opening statement (1:2-27). This is divided into two parts, 1:2-11 and 1:12-25, with 1:26-27 serving as a concluding summary and a transition to the following unit.

The first part, 1:2-11, introduces the themes of testing, wisdom, and wealth, while the second part, 1:12-27, expands and summarises these themes. These themes are then further expanded and restated in the main body, 2:1-26 takes back up the theme of wealth, 3:1-4:12 takes back up the theme of wisdom, and 4:13-5:6 takes back up the theme of testing:

---

<sup>37</sup> F. O. Francis, ‘The Form and Function of the Opening and Closing Paragraphs of James and 1 John’, *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 61 (1970), 118.

<sup>38</sup> Francis, ‘Form and Function’, 118.

<sup>39</sup> Francis, ‘Form and Function’, 125.

<sup>40</sup> Francis, ‘Form and Function’, 125-26.

<sup>41</sup> P. H. Davids, *The Epistle of James: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), p. 24.

1:2-4 (testing)	1:5-8 (wisdom)	1:9-11 (wealth)
1:12-18	1:19-21	1:22-25
4:13-5:6	3:1-4:12	2:1-26

Dauids takes 5:7-20 as a closing statement in the letter, following Francis in seeing an eschatological exhortation coupled with a thematic reprise in 5:7-11, a rejection of oaths in 5:12 and an encouragement to help one another through prayer and forgiveness (5:13-20).<sup>42</sup> He sees 5:7-11 as providing a summary of the three major themes of the introduction (testing, wisdom and poverty and wealth).<sup>43</sup>

The structure proposed by Dauids reflects his conviction that the letter is a unified whole with a clear literary structure. The double opening theory used by these scholars, however, has come in for criticism of late, not only for the Hellenistic sources used by Francis to argue his thesis, but also for the lack of evidence on how 1:12-27 is a restatement of 1:2-11.<sup>44</sup>

### 3. Rhetorical Analyses of the Letter of James

The application of Greco-Roman rhetorical theory and practice to NT studies led a number of scholars to apply the rules for Greco-Roman speeches to NT letters and, in time, to the letter of James. The application to letters of the rules of rhetoric designed for speeches was not without its problems or its critics; nevertheless, it offered a new perspective from which to view the overall arrangement of NT letters.<sup>45</sup>

W. Wuellner (1978) was one of the first to put forward an arrangement of the letter of James according to the rules of rhetoric. He argued that the text consists of an introduction, 1:1-12, composed of an epistolary prescript (1:1), *exordium* (1:2-4), *narratio* (1:5-11) and *propositio* (1:12). This was followed by the *argumentatio* (1:13-5:6) which Wuellner divided into seven 'speech sections': 1:13-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6. Within these divisions he finds a further division,

<sup>42</sup> Dauids, *James*, p. 28.

<sup>43</sup> Dauids, *James*, p. 29.

<sup>44</sup> T. Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora: Discursive Structure and Purpose in the Epistle of James*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, no. 144 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), p. 22; T. Penner, *The Epistle of James and Eschatology: Re-reading an Ancient Christian Letter*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series, no. 121 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp. 124 n.1, 144; F. Ó Fearghail, 'On The Literary Structure of the Letter of James', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 19 (1996), 69-71.

<sup>45</sup> See W. G. Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1973); D. F. Watson, 'Rhetorical Criticism of the Pauline Epistles since 1975', *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 3 (1995), 219-48.

based upon 'positive' and 'negative' remarks.<sup>46</sup> This structure is as follows: 1:13-27 (negative, 1:13-16; positive, 1:17-27), 2:1-13 (negative, 2:1-7; positive, 2:8-13), 2:14-26 (use of *exempla* and connection with 1:19-27), 3:1-18 (negative, 3:1-12; positive, 3:13-18), 4:1-12 (negative, 4:1-4; positive, 4:5-12), 4:13-5:6 (doing good/sin, 4:13-17; relationship between God and believers as the basis and goal of all behaviour, 5:1-6). This arrangement was then followed by what Wuellner saw as a *peroratio* in 5:7-20. Wuellner's rhetorical analysis sought to answer the question of the genre of the letter of James, its train of thought, and the situation of the text or reader. In the view of L. Thurén, however, Wuellner's detailed analysis often seems artificial.<sup>47</sup>

A decade later, in an article in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* (1988), E. Baasland offered a rather different rhetorical arrangement to that put forward by Wuellner. He took 1:2-3:12 to form the first part of the letter and deemed it to have an *exordium* (1:2-15), a *propositio* (1:16-22 is amplified in 1:23-27) and an *argumentatio* (2:1-3:12). He divided the second part of the letter into a second *propositio* (3:13-18), which is amplified in 4:1-6, and an *argumentatio* (4:7-5:6).<sup>48</sup> Baasland took 5:7-20 to form the *peroratio*, which he saw as returning to themes in the *exordium*.

Other suggestions for a rhetorical structure of the letter include that of M. Klein in his 1995 monograph on James. He saw a double *propositio* in 1:2-27 (1:2-18; 1:19-27), which appears to mimic the function of a double introduction. He divided the main body, the *argumentatio*, into six sections (2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6), followed by a *peroratio* in 5:7-11 and a series of brief concluding statements in 5:12-20.<sup>49</sup>

Having surveyed the 'rhetorical' scene, L. Thurén, in his 1995 article, argued that 1:1-18 forms the *exordium* to the letter (including, therefore, the prescript 1:1) while 5:7-20 forms the *peroratio*.<sup>50</sup> He goes on to specify that 1:1-4 meets 'all the requirements of an exordium', establishing the *ethos* and *pathos* of the author, while

<sup>46</sup> W. Wuellner, 'Der Jakobusbrief im Licht der Rhetorik und Textpragmatik', *Linguistica Biblica*, 43, (1978), 41.

<sup>47</sup> L. Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric in James', *Novum Testamentum* 37 (1995), 267, adding 'Wuellner finds a sophisticated structure, which comprises many positive and negative small sections. They, however, have proved difficult to reconcile with modern commentaries' (p. 267).

<sup>48</sup> E. Baasland, 'Literarische Form, Thematik und geschichtliche Einordnung des Jakobusbriefes', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, ed. W. Haase and H. Temporini, Part II, Vol. 25.5, (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988), p. 3659.

<sup>49</sup> M. Klein, *Ein vollkommenes Werk, Vollkommenheit, Gesetz und Gericht als theologische Themen des Jakobusbriefes* (Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln: Kohlhammer, 1995), pp. 39-40.

<sup>50</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 275.

1:5-11 and 1:12-18 form the ‘*amplificatio*’ and ‘*inclusio*’.<sup>51</sup> Thurén sees the *exordium* as being specified and exemplified by an *amplificatio* (1:5-11) with two examples: wisdom (1:5-8) and money (1:9-11).<sup>52</sup> He divides the rest of the letter as follows: 1:19-27 (*propositio*), 2:1-5:6 (*argumentatio*) and 5:7-20 (*peroratio*).<sup>53</sup> D. F. Watson (1997) sees James as more complex structurally than Thurén suggests.<sup>54</sup> Speaking broadly of rhetorical structures in James he notes that while there is rhetorical structure in James,<sup>55</sup> a unifying rhetorical model has yet to be found.<sup>56</sup>

In his rhetorical analysis of James which follows closely that of Wuellner, J. H. Elliott (1997) divided the letter into a prescript (1:1), an introduction (1:2-12), the *argumentatio* (1:13-5:12) and a conclusion (5:13-20). He divides the *argumentatio* which contains a series of positive and negative examples into the following sections: 1:13-27, 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:11 and 5:12.<sup>57</sup> The conclusion returns to topics already found in the introductory chapter (1:2-27) - 5:13a restates 1:2-4, 1:12, 1:14a and 1:19-20; 5:13b and 5:14-18 restate 1:5-8, while 5:19-20 recalls 1:12.<sup>58</sup>

In the course of his study of the socio-rhetorical function of an apparent allusion to a saying of Jesus in Jas. 2:5, W. H. Wachob (2000) identifies 1:2-12 as the *exordium* of the letter,<sup>59</sup> noting also that the prescript 1:1 has a rhetorical function which is like that of the *exordium*.<sup>60</sup> Together prescript and *exordium* prepare the audience for the discourse that follows.<sup>61</sup> He describes 1:13-27 as the *narratio* which

<sup>51</sup> Thurén, ‘Risky Rhetoric’, 271.

<sup>52</sup> Thurén, ‘Risky Rhetoric’, 271-72.

<sup>53</sup> Thurén, ‘Risky Rhetoric’, 282. Thurén’s arrangement of the main body is as follows: 2:1-26 - Action/money: specific (2:1-7), general (2:8-13), theoretical (2:14-26); 3:1-4:12 - Speech/wisdom: theoretical (3:1-12), general (3:13-18), specific (4:1-12); 4:13-5:6 - Climax: Speech and action/money (5:7-20). His *peroratio* consists of a *recapitulatio* or reiteration of themes, such as endurance and speech in 5:7-11, and a *conquestio* or final exhortation in 5:12-20.

<sup>54</sup> D. F. Watson, ‘Rhetorical Criticism of Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles since 1978’, *CR:BS* 5 (1997), 190.

<sup>55</sup> Watson himself notes rhetorical arrangements in 2:1-26 and 3:1-12. See D. F. Watson, ‘James 2 in Light of Greco-Roman Schemes of Argumentation’, *New Testament Studies* 39 (1993), 94-121; ‘The Rhetoric of James 3:1-12 and a Classical Pattern of Argumentation’, *Novum Testamentum*, 35, (1993), 48-64.

<sup>56</sup> D. F. Watson, ‘An Assessment of the Rhetoric and Rhetorical Analysis of the Letter of James’, in *Reading James with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of James*, ed. by R. L. Webb and J. S. Kloppenborg (London: T&T Clark, 2007), pp. 99, 105.

<sup>57</sup> J. H. Elliott, ‘The Epistle of James in Rhetorical and Social Scientific Perspective Holiness-Wholeness and Patterns of Replication’, *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 23 (1993), 72.

<sup>58</sup> Elliott, ‘James’, 72.

<sup>59</sup> W. H. Wachob, *The Voice of Jesus in the Social Rhetoric of James*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 106 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 158, 163.

<sup>60</sup> Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, p. 163.

<sup>61</sup> Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, p. 163.

to Wachob is the negative dimension of the trials of 1:2-12.<sup>62</sup> He takes 2:1-5:6 as the *confirmatio*, embellishing the view that human trials can have both a positive and negative outlook.<sup>63</sup> Finally, he takes 5:7-20 as the *peroratio*.

The structure proposed by D. H. Edgar for James (2001) has a number of rhetorical elements. He takes 1:2-18 to form the *exordium* of the letter with 1:19-27 forming the *prothesis*, or statement of facts.<sup>64</sup> In his view the letter is composed of two main parts - 1:19-3:18 and 4:1-5:20. He takes 3:13-18 to function as a form of epilogue to 2:1-3:12, closing off the *prothesis* with a short recapitulating statement, epitomised in 3:13.<sup>65</sup> He notes that 3:13-18 provides a transition between 2:1-3:12 and 4:1ff.<sup>66</sup> He takes 4:1-10 as a unit, a call to repentance, with 4:11-12, forming a transition to 4:13-5:11, and 5:12-20 closing the letter. In 5:12 he sees *Πρὸ πάντων*, the direct address 'my brothers', and the oath formula as indicative of the beginning of an epistolary closing formula.<sup>67</sup> He sees two more typical letter closing formulae in 5:12-20, the health wish and the prayer wish, although he notes they 'are not expressed by the usual formulas, but are combined in a way which fits the text's concern with exhortation to show steadfast commitment to God and solidarity with other group members'.<sup>68</sup>

One of the more recent rhetorical analyses of James has been that of B. Witherington in his 2007 commentary on the letter. Witherington, like Thurén, saw 1:2-4 as establishing the authority and *ethos* of the author. He took 1:5-18 to introduce in brief some matters of the discourse.<sup>69</sup> He sees an *exordium* at 1:2-18, with 1:12 beginning a new subsection (1:12-18). He takes 1:19-27 to form the *propositio*, with 1:26-27 serving as a summary of 1:2-25 and as a transition to the next section in 2:1ff.

---

<sup>62</sup> Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, p. 158.

<sup>63</sup> Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, p. 159.

<sup>64</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor? The Social Setting of the Letter of James*, p. 159. Edgar follows the Aristotelian guidelines in forming his *exordium* and *prothesis*. Others who form the *exordium* and *prothesis* similarly include Baasland, 'Literarische Form, Thematik', p. 3655, and Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric in James?', pp. 269-273, 277-278.

<sup>65</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 161.

<sup>66</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 161. See also Baasland, 'Literarische Form, Thematik', pp. 3658-3659.

<sup>67</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 209. See also the earlier study of Francis.

<sup>68</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 210.

<sup>69</sup> B. Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Jewish Christians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Hebrews, James and Jude* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), p. 419, cites Quintilian in his statement that deliberative discourses serve the purpose of bringing up issues of doubt which the listeners may have, and guiding them on a particular course of action to remedy such a situation (Quint., *Inst. Or.* 3.8.25).

He divides the rest of the letter into three sections: 2:1-26, 3:1-18 and 4:1-5:6.<sup>70</sup> The letter concludes with a *peroratio* (5:7-20), consisting of a recapitulation (5:7-11), and a final exhortation/appeal to emotions (5:13-20).<sup>71</sup>

#### 4. Chiasmic Arrangements

A number of scholars have proposed chiasmic structures for the letter of James. In the case of a chiasmus, concepts or themes in the text are related in a symmetrical pattern. In a chiasmic structure themes found in the first part of the text are seen as mirrored in a second part, forming an X or *chi* pattern. The central section of this pattern is regarded as the most important part of the text.<sup>72</sup> The early study of Cladder recognised chiasmic patterns in parts of the letter (2:1-3:12 and 3:13-4:8). In his study of the letter J. Reese (1982) argues for a chiasmic arrangement of the whole letter, setting it out as follows. According to this structure, 3:1-18 forms the centre of the letter.<sup>73</sup>

- A 1:2-27- testing, the seeking of wisdom and acts of maturity
- B 2:1-26- a sermon warning against riches
- C 3:1-18- *the responsibilities of both sage and teacher*
- B' 4:1-5:6- continuing arguments against the rich
- A' 5:7-20- exhortation on the subjects of testing, prayer and maturity

R. Crotty (1992) proposed a chiasmic structure for 1:16-5:20 with 1:2-15 acting as a *prolegomenon* which introduces themes. Crotty saw links between 1:16-18 and 5:19-20 and worked inward from these verses to form the following chiasmic pattern. In this structure 4:1-3 is at the centre of the letter.<sup>74</sup>

- 1:16-18 - human error and sinfulness
- 1:19-27 - practical speech of believers
- 2:1-26 - works on behalf of the other
- 3:1-18 - positive models of practical faith
- 4:1-3 - *person as centre of the struggle*
- 4:4-10 - negative models of practical faith
- 4:11-5:11 - works on behalf of the other
- 5:12-18 - practical speech of believers
- 5:19-20 - human error and sinfulness

<sup>70</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 483, disagrees with the continuation of 3:18 into chapter 4.

<sup>71</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, pp. 533ff.

<sup>72</sup> See D. E. Aune, *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), pp. 93-94 for details.

<sup>73</sup> J. M. Reese, 'The Exegete as Sage: Hearing the Message of James', *BTB* 12 (1982), 82-85.

<sup>74</sup> R. B. Crotty, 'The Literary Structure of James', *Australian Biblical Review* 40 (1992), 45-57.

R. Krüger, in his monograph of 2005, proposed the following structure:

A	1:2-8 - patience, requesting wisdom
B	1:9-11 - humiliation of the rich
C	1:12 - preservation through temptation
D	1:13-15 - origin of temptation
E	1:16-18 - gift from above
F	1:19-25 - doing the word
G	1:26 - controlling the tongue
H	1:27 - pure and undefiled religion
X	2:1-13 <i>discrimination</i>
H'	2:14-26 - faith and pure works
G'	3:1-12 - the power of the tongue
F'	3:13-16 - positive action
E'	3:17-18 - wisdom from above
D'	4:1-3 - origin of evil
C'	4:4-12 - choosing between God and the world
B	4:13-5:6 - humiliation of the rich
A'	5:7-20 - patience, requesting help, responsibility for wanderers

This suggests that 2:1-13 forms the central part of the letter with 1:2-8 and 5:7-20 acting as introduction and conclusion.<sup>75</sup>

H. Guthrie (2006) adopted and refined some of the elements of Taylor's work in his own analysis of the structure of James. He saw in the opening chapter a double introduction, 1:2-27 (1:2-12 and 1:13-27) with 5:7-20 forming the conclusion of the letter. He arranged the body of the letter, 2:1-5:6, chiastically:

A	2:1-11 - Violating the royal law through judging the poor
B	2:12-13 - So speak and act as one being judged by the law of liberty
C	2:14-26 - Wrong action toward the poor
D	3:1-12 - Wrong speaking toward one another
E	3:13-18 - <i>Righteous vs. worldly wisdom</i>
D'	4:1-5 - Wrong action and speaking in practice
C'	4:6-10 - A call to humility and repentance
B'	4:11-12 - Do the law, do not judge it
A'	4:13-5:6 - Twin calls to the arrogant rich (presumption and judgment)

In this case 3:13-18 is seen as the centre of the letter.<sup>76</sup>

As we can see, there is great divergence in how scholars form their chiastic structures, especially in how each views the central portion of the chiasm.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup> R. Krüger, *Der Jakobusbrief als prophetische Kritik der Reichen, Eine exegetische Untersuchung aus lateinamerikanischer Perspektive*, Beiträge zum Verstehen der Bibel, Vol. 12 (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2005), p. 106.

<sup>76</sup> M. E. Taylor and G. H. Guthrie, 'The Structure of James', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68 (2006), 693.

<sup>77</sup> This disagreement highlights the unsatisfactory nature of the chiastic arrangements put forward for the letter of James. The use of chiasmus for structuring NT texts has not always been well received. Porter and Reed have dubbed it a modern phenomenon which was unknown to ancient writers, while

## 5. Non-Rhetorical Literary Structures

In his 1976 commentary on James, Adamson expressed the view that the 'sustained unity of its structure' was 'indisputable',<sup>78</sup> and in his monograph on the letter published in 1989 he argued that the letter was 'built on a powerfully constructed, harmonious pattern, the product of a single powerful mind'.<sup>79</sup> Adamson cited in support of his position the 1972 article of P. B. R. Forbes in which Forbes argued that the letter was composed of two balanced, coherent sections formed of the first two chapters (53 verses) and the following three (55 verses). The first part consisted of five almost equal sections or paragraphs (1:1, 2-11, 12-21, 22-27; 2:1-13, 14-26), the second of eight (3:1, 2-6, 7-12, 13-18; 4:1-10, 11-17; 5:1-6, 7-12, 13-20). He found that each section formed 'a reasonably definite and intelligible unit in an integrated sequence of ideas' - all in all a strong argument for the unity of the letter.<sup>80</sup> Adamson also cited Francis in support of his proposal. As for Adamson's own literary structure for the letter he divided the first three chapters along traditional lines in his commentary of 1976 (1:2-27; 2:1-26; 3:1-18). He divided the remaining chapters into four sections (4:1-10, 11-17; 5:1-18, 19-20), with 5:19-20 closing the letter, the author's 'way of coming round to where he began'.<sup>81</sup>

In his thematic analysis, F. Vouga (1984) noted that certain themes introduced in the opening chapter provide a basis for the coherence that follows. He proposed three main divisions of the text, each beginning with a major 'faith' theme - 1:2-19a concerning the testing of faith; 1:19b-3:18, concerning the adherence of faith, and 4:1-5:20 relating to the loyalty of faith.<sup>82</sup> In addition to this threefold division, Vouga notes a triad of tests that follows the thematic opening statement of 1:2-4, each of which is paralleled in the closing of the text, 1:5-8 / 4:13-17; 1:9-11 / 5:1-6 and 1:13-19a / 5:12-20. This sequence of tests is interrupted by the beatitude of 1:12 that parallels 5:7-11. Vouga designates 1:19b-3:18 as the central part of the letter. The unit

---

others suggest that the schema itself reveals an artificial and incorrect structure within the text. Aune notes that the presence of chiasmic patterns in NT texts is too complex for an ancient reader to notice, especially in some of the macro chiasmic structures proposed, while also pointing to the haphazard means by which textual units are manipulated and massaged in order to make them fit into a larger structural patterns. See Aune, *Westminster Dictionary*, pp. 94-96.

<sup>78</sup> J. B. Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, reprint of 1976 edn (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), p. 20.

<sup>79</sup> J. B. Adamson, *James: The Man and his Message* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), p. 90.

<sup>80</sup> P. B. R. Forbes, 'The Structure of the Epistle of James', *Evangelical Quarterly* 44 (1972), 147-53.

<sup>81</sup> Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, pp. 44-45, 202.

<sup>82</sup> F. Vouga, *L'Épître de Saint Jacques. Commentaire du Nouveau Testament*, Vol. 13a (Genève/Paris: Labor et Fides, 1984), pp. 19-20, 59-60.



1:19b-27, introduces five themes that are further expanded in the main body. These include: love (1:27a / 2:1-13), adherence to the 'word' (1:22-24 / 2:14-26), the tongue (1:19-20, 1:26 / 3:1-13), the danger of earthly wisdom (1:19 / 3:14-18), and keeping oneself unstained from the world (1:27b / 4:1-5:20). This final section (4:1-5:20) is divided into two parts, based on one's loyalty to faith. The first part, 4:1-10, shows submission and humility to one's faith, while the second part, 4:11-12, shows a faith devoid of judgement and partiality, while the admonitions in 4:1-5:20 recapitulate the opening themes and conclude the author's main thought.<sup>83</sup>

R. Martin (1988) drew upon the work of Vouga, particularly his thematic development, while being critical of the lack of detail in his development of the triple faith formula.<sup>84</sup> Martin considered chapter one to be the key to the structure of the letter. His three-part arrangement which follows that of Vouga is 1:2-19a; 1:19b-3:18 and 4:1-5:20. Like Vouga, he takes 4:13-5:20 as a concluding section. Martin considered 1:19-27a to form an overture, introducing the main body of the letter which begins in 2:1, while 1:2-19a paralleled the conclusion in 4:13-5:20 thematically.<sup>85</sup>

T. Cargal, in his 1993 analysis of James, advocated a new approach to the letter. Cargal uses a communicative hypothesis based upon Greimasian structural semiotics. He notes that previous studies on James failed to find coherence in terms of its discursive syntax, therefore he considers the possibility that James is primarily organised in terms of its discursive semantics.<sup>86</sup> According to Cargal, this approach answers questions related to structure and purpose where form and redaction-critical approaches failed because of their exclusive focus on historical concerns and a reliance upon genres of the Greco-Roman period such as *paraenesis* and epistolary literature.<sup>87</sup> In his estimation, one should look for a series of themes and figures in the letter rather than a logical progression. Cargal argued for the thematic importance of 'restoration' in James. He sees the designation 'twelve tribes of the Diaspora' as a future hope of the author that the readers see themselves as a 'new people of God', and as a 'spiritual Israel'.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>83</sup> Vouga, *L'Épître de Saint Jacques*, pp. 21-23.

<sup>84</sup> R. Martin, *James*, Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 48 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), pp. cii-ciii.

<sup>85</sup> Martin, *James*, pp. cii-ciii.

<sup>86</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, pp. 36-44.

<sup>87</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 29.

<sup>88</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, pp. 48-49.

Cargal saw 1:1 as integral to the issues laid out within the body of the letter. He notes a link between the opening (1:1) and closing (5:19-20). He sees the reference to wandering from the truth in 5:20 as linked to the term *διασπορα* in 1:1 which he takes, in relation to the letter of James, to refer to those who have wandered from God. The author's purpose is to convince the readers 'to see themselves as the "diaspora", literally and metaphorically, and to restore them through the letter'.<sup>89</sup> This restoration of the readers through the 'truth' is carried out through four discursive units: 1:1-21; 1:22-2:26; 3:1-4:12 and 4:11-5:20,<sup>90</sup> with each section offering both negative and positive examples of behaviour to be either followed or avoided.<sup>91</sup>

## 6. More Recent Analyses

In his substantial two-volume commentary on James of 1994 H. Frankemölle takes 1:2-18 to function as an *exordium* or prologue of the letter, which is divided into 1:2-12 and 1:13-18.<sup>92</sup> For him 1:19-5:6 forms the main body of the letter which he divides into seven parts: 1:19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12 and 4:13-5:6. He takes 5:7-20 to function as the *peroratio* or epilogue corresponding to the prologue in 1:2-18.<sup>93</sup>

L. T. Johnson, in his commentary on James (1995), argued that James used common Hellenistic themes and *topoi* in the construction of the letter.<sup>94</sup> He took the first major section 1:2-27 to form 'an *epitome* of the work as a whole',<sup>95</sup> and as such it introduced themes which were developed later. He divided the rest of the letter as follows: 2:1-26,<sup>96</sup> 3:1-12 (one of the more self-contained units in the text - a 'carefully constructed argument', according to Johnson),<sup>97</sup> 3:13-4:10 (the topic of 'envy'), divided into 3:13-4:6 (the indictment laid against the audience) and 4:7-10 (the

<sup>89</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 50.

<sup>90</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 52 n. 75, takes 4:11-12 'to serve as part of both the conclusion of the third unit and the introduction of the fourth unit. The presence of such "hinge" verses marking the transition from one discourse unit to another, particularly a concluding discourse unit that one can anticipate will recall many of the sub-themes of the discourse as a whole, is not unusual'.

<sup>91</sup> For similar views, although from a rhetorical point of view, see the studies of Wuellner and Elliott.

<sup>92</sup> H. Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, Ökumenischer Taschenbuch Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 17 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1994), pp. 177-80.

<sup>93</sup> Parallels between *exordium* and *peroratio* include: perfection in 1:4, 15, 17 and 5:11, works in 1:4 and 5:15, prayer in 1:5b, 6a and 5:13-18, and giving in 1:5, 17 and 5:18.

<sup>94</sup> L. T. Johnson, *The Letter of James: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible, Vol. 37A (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1995), pp. 28-29.

<sup>95</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 15.

<sup>96</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 219-29.

<sup>97</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 253-54.

response),<sup>98</sup> 4:11-5:6 (the topic of arrogance). The latter is related to the previous unit by virtue of its theme, namely, that arrogance stems from envy, examples of which include, the slandering of a neighbour, fights in the community, jealousy and the murdering of the righteous person.<sup>99</sup> Finally, Johnson took 5:12-20 as his closing section.

T. Penner in his thematic analysis of James (1996), proposed an eschatological *inclusio* between 1:2-12, the letter body opening, and 4:6-5:12, the letter body conclusion,<sup>100</sup> with the two units forming an inclusion for the main body of the letter, 1:13-4:5. He found chiasmic structures in 1:2-12 (A. 1:2-4; B. 1:5-11; A. 1:12) and in 4:6-5:12 (A. 4:6-12; B. 4:13-5:6; A. 5:7-12) which he also considered to form units.<sup>101</sup> Penner found the conclusion of the letter in 5:13-20, arguing that 5:12 is linked to what goes before it (5:7-11), while the phrase *τις ἐν ὑμῖν* in 5:13 provides a cohesive strand running through 5:13-20.<sup>102</sup>

P. J. Hartin (1996, 1999, 2003) conducted a number of studies on James focusing on the sapiential and eschatological nature of the letter. Hartin dubbed 1:1 an epistolary prescript, whose themes he saw restated in the main body, particularly through the theme of diaspora.<sup>103</sup> He saw chapter 1 as presenting a two-fold introduction similar to that of Francis and Davids (1:2-11, 1:12-27). He used *Ἀδελφοί μου* to divide individual units in James at 2:1, 14; 3:1; 4:11; 5:7 and 5:12, and *Ἄγε νῦν* to do the same at 4:13 and 5:1. Hartin notes five main themes that develop within the two opening units in chapter 1: the theme of steadfastness (1:2-4, 12-16), wisdom (1:5-8), rich and poor (1:9-11), speech control (1:26), and being 'doers of the word' (1:22-25).<sup>104</sup> These themes and the markers mentioned above helped Hartin arrange the letter in the following sections: 2:1-13 (Do not show favouritism), 2:14-26 (Doers of the word / Faith and Works), 3:1-12 (The tongue and Speech), 3:13-4:10 (Call to friendship with God), 4:11-12 (Speaking evil against one another) and 4:13-5:6 (Judgement on the rich because of friendship with the world).

<sup>98</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 268-69.

<sup>99</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 292.

<sup>100</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, pp. 145-46.

<sup>101</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, pp. 145, 157.

<sup>102</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, pp. 150-51.

<sup>103</sup> P. J. Hartin and D. J. Harrington (ed.), *James*, *Sacra Pagina*, Vol. 14 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press 2003). See also P. J. Hartin, 'Who is Wise and Understanding Among You? An Analysis of Wisdom, Eschatology and Apocalypticism in the Epistle of James', in *Society of Biblical Literature 1996 Seminar Papers*, Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers, no. 35 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), pp. 491-495.

<sup>104</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 28.

Hartin's conclusion to James begins in 5:7 and runs to 5:20. It consists of four sections - 5:7-11, 12, 13-18 and 19-20. He notes that the emphasis on prayer in the conclusion is comparable to the endings of 1 John 5:14-21 and Jude 17-25.<sup>105</sup> Hartin can be seen to model his concluding section on elements derived from the work of Francis.

F. Ó Fearghail (1996) noted the importance of both δίδυμος and τέλειος in James, noting that they both could contribute to defining a structural theme in the letter. He takes 1:2-11 to form the introduction to the letter. He sees 1:1 as reflecting the typical opening of a Hellenistic letter and, as others have shown, notes its link to the next verse through the words χαίρειν (1:1) and χαρὰν (1:2).<sup>106</sup> He divides 1:2-11 into three parts (1:2-4; 1:5-8 and 1:9-11), and on the basis of themes appearing here that are expanded in the letter body, he suggests that 1:2-11 acts as an introduction to the letter and may be described as the *proemium*. He includes 1:1 under this term.<sup>107</sup> The crucial verse for delimiting the introduction to James is 1:12. He points out that themes announced in 1:2-4 are repeated in 1:12. The question is - should these repetitions be seen as forming an inclusion or should they be seen as anaphorically beginning a new section and closing off 1:2-11? In his view 1:12 is the beginning of the letter body.<sup>108</sup> Despite only focusing on the introduction and conclusion in his article, Ó Fearghail does give a brief summary of how the main body of the letter is structured. He sees a new beginning in 3:1, a section marked by new themes and new vocabulary, which is confirmed by the repetition in 3:1 of the verb λημψόμεθα, found in 1:12 (λήμψεται). This creates the unit 1:12-2:26. He sees another new section beginning at 4:13 marked by the address Ἄγε νῦν. This suggests to him that 3:1-4:12 forms a unit. The section 4:13-5:20 concludes the letter. Thus we have an epistolary greeting (1:1), an introductory section/*proemium* (1:2-11), and a triple division of the main body (1:12-2:26; 3:1-4:12; and 4:13-5:20).<sup>109</sup> For Ó Fearghail, 5:7-20 does not have the credentials of a *peroratio*, but, while it does not have an epistolary conclusion, the letter 'does have elements that are to be found in concluding exhortations of other NT letters'.<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup> Hartin follows closely the analysis of Francis; see Hartin, *James*, p. 29.

<sup>106</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 73.

<sup>107</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 76-79.

<sup>108</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 74-76.

<sup>109</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 83.

<sup>110</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 83.

R. Wall (1997) follows Francis in taking the letter to have a double introduction, but does not arrange it in the same manner. Wall's arrangement takes the double introduction to be 1:2-21 (1:2-11 and 12-21). He sees themes arranged in triads in 1:2-11 (1:2-4, 5-8, 9-11), which are then repeated in 1:12-21 (1:12-15, 16-18, 19-21).<sup>111</sup> Wall stresses the importance of 1:19 and its development in 1:22-5:6: the phrase 'be quick to hear' corresponds to 1:22-2:26, 'be slow to speak' corresponds to 3:1-18, while 'be slow to anger' corresponds to 4:1-5:6.<sup>112</sup> Thus, Wall proposes a triple division of the text (1:22-2:26; 3:1-18; 4:1-5:6). He finds a conclusion to the letter of James in 5:7-20 which he sees as providing 'a compelling rationale for why the entire composition offers its readers effective guidelines for faith and life'.<sup>113</sup> Wall notes that the themes and structure of the conclusion are 'vaguely parallel' to the introduction in 1:2-21 and form 'bookends that provide a frame of reference for the wisdom essays found in between'.<sup>114</sup> These restatements between the opening and closing portions of the letter help return the reader to the grand theme of spiritual testing according to Wall.<sup>115</sup>

K. Tollefson outlines the epistle's dialectic in his 1997 article, emphasising the themes of community faith and testing under the polar opposites of God and the devil. Structurally, he divides the epistle into a prescript (1:1), an introduction (1:2-18), followed by the sections 1:19-27; 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-10; 4:13-5:6 and 5:7-20, with 5:19-20 forming the conclusion.<sup>116</sup> In his monograph on James of 1997 M Tsuji argues for a three part structure with 1:2-27 as the introduction, 2:1-5:6 (2:1-26; 3:1-4:12; 4:13-5:6) as the main body, and 5:7-20 as the conclusion.<sup>117</sup> C. F. Sleeper, in his 1998 commentary, also sees 1:2-27 as an introduction, introducing themes which are developed later in the letter.<sup>118</sup> He divides the main body into five units - 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12; 3:13-4:12 and 4:13-5:6, with 5:7-20 acting as a conclusion for the letter.

<sup>111</sup> R. Wall, *Community of the Wise, New Testament in Context* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), p. 44.

<sup>112</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 69.

<sup>113</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 248.

<sup>114</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 248.

<sup>115</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 249.

<sup>116</sup> K. D. Tollefson, 'The Epistle of James as Dialectical Discourse', *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 27 (1997), 66-67.

<sup>117</sup> M. Tsuji, *Glaube zwischen Vollkommenheit und Verweltlichung: Eine Untersuchung zur literarischen Gestalt und zur inhaltlichen Kohärenz des Jakobusbriefe*, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Series 2*, 93 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1997), pp. 62, 97-98.

<sup>118</sup> C. F. Sleeper, *James*, *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), pp. 19-21.

R. Bauckham (1999) suggested that ‘something must be wrong with the goal that is being attempted’, in light of the wide variety of arrangements proposed for James and the lack of consensus among scholars.<sup>119</sup> He was critical of those who felt that James displayed a lack of coherence of thought but agreed that it ‘does not exhibit the kind of coherence that is provided by a sequence of argument or logical progression of thought, encompassing the whole work’.<sup>120</sup> Bauckham was quite critical of the rhetorical analyses of James, believing that most rhetorical approaches are misguided since they suppose that James must have a single communicative goal that is pursued by means of a sequential argument.<sup>121</sup>

Bauckham proposed a prescript, 1:1, an introduction, 1:2-27, and an exposition, 2:1-5:20. Using formal markers such as ἀδελφοί μου and Ἄγε νῦν he divided the exposition into twelve units: 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-10, 11-12, 13-17; 5:1-6, 7-11, 12, 13-18, 19-20. These twelve units are ‘carefully crafted as self-contained entities with strong indications to readers that they are to be read as such’.<sup>122</sup>

In his recent commentary on James in 2000, which is an expansion of his previous volume in the *Tyndale New Testament Commentary Series* (1985), D. Moo is not convinced of the more elaborate schemes of other commentators. In his view the letter opens with the address or greeting, 1:1, and continues with the introduction, 1:2-18. He takes 1:19-5:11 to form the body of the letter which he divided into five sections - 1:19-2:26; 3:1-4:3; 4:4-10; 4:11-12 and 4:13-5:11. Moo sees 5:12-20 as the concluding section of the letter.<sup>123</sup> R. Fabris in both his 1980 and his 2004 commentaries on the letter of James, divides it into nine sections as follows: 1:2-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6 and 5:7-20.<sup>124</sup>

C. Burchard’s commentary on James in the *Handbuch zum Neuen Testament* series which appeared in 2000 takes 1:1 as a prescript with 1:2-11 as an introduction. He calls 1:2-11 a ‘summarising exposition’, and draws upon the work of H. von Lips (1990), in order to show how themes in 1:2-11 are developed in the main body of the

<sup>119</sup> R. A. Bauckham, *Wisdom of James Disciple of Jesus the Sage*, New Testament Readings (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 61.

<sup>120</sup> Bauckham, *James*, p. 62.

<sup>121</sup> Bauckham, *James*, pp. 66-67.

<sup>122</sup> Bauckham, *James*, p. 66.

<sup>123</sup> D. Moo, *The Letter of James*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), p. 232.

<sup>124</sup> R. Fabris, *Lettera di Giacomo, Introduzione, Versione, Commento* (Bologna: Dehoniane, 2004), p. 15.

letter.<sup>125</sup> He arranges the main body into two parts, 1:12-3:11 and 3:12-5:6, with a conclusion in 5:7-20.

H. J. Klauck, in his 2004 study of NT letters and ancient rhetorical theory, takes a brief look at the letter of James. He sees 1:1 as a prescript which holds formally to the Hellenistic model. He sees a *proem* in 1:2-18, which conforms to epistolary formalities with its call to joy and its address 'my brothers'. Klauck compares the *proem* of a letter to the *exordium* of a speech. The *proem* presents themes which will be expanded upon in the main body of the letter which he divides into seven or eight thematic units.<sup>126</sup> The opening *proem* is counterbalanced by the concluding epilogue 5:7-20. Klauck, drawing upon Francis, sees the closing of James as drawing upon typical epistolary closings such as 'eschatological outlook concern for health of sick church members, mutual intercessory prayer, and with qualifications also the prohibition of swearing oaths'.<sup>127</sup>

In his 2006 text-linguistic investigation of the discourse structure of James, M. E. Taylor (2006) applied a linguistic analysis to James, which highlighted the role of various inclusions throughout the letter. As well as adopting the double opening of Francis, Taylor's work on James draws on an earlier study by G. H. Guthrie on Hebrews, particularly his 'cohesion analysis model'.<sup>128</sup> He asserts that the eschatological framework of Penner's reading is difficult to isolate as a major theme of the text, and highly unlikely to control the reading of the entire text. He notes that Penner's designation of an *inclusio* for the letter body (1:1-12 and 4:6-5:12) overlooks the importance of 4:11-12 and its 'tight connection with 2:12-13'.<sup>129</sup> Taylor also criticises those who choose to take 1:2-12 as an introductory section, seeing it as being too restrictive. He notes that most commentators opt for the entirety of chapter 1 or at least extend the opening to 1:18.<sup>130</sup>

Taylor takes inclusions between 1:2-4 and 1:12 and between 1:12 and 1:25 to mark out a double introduction which he sees as extending to 1:27. He sees 2:1-5:6 as

---

<sup>125</sup> C. Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament 15, 1 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2000), p. 12. See also H. von Lips, 'Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament' in *Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament* 64 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990), p. 415.

<sup>126</sup> Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, p. 339.

<sup>127</sup> Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, p. 339.

<sup>128</sup> M. E. Taylor, *A Text-linguistic Investigation into the Discourse Structure of James*, Library of New Testament Studies, no. 311 (London: T&T Clark, 2006), pp. 45-58.

<sup>129</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 25.

<sup>130</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 25.

forming the main body of the letter of James, which consists of a series of ‘sustained essays’ (2:1-13; 2:14-26; 3:1-12; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6), with several inclusions emerging as significant structural indicators (2:12-13 / 4:11-12; and 4:6 / 5:6).<sup>131</sup> He takes 5:7-20 to form the conclusion, with 5:12 acting as a transitional phrase between 5:7-11 and 5:13-20.<sup>132</sup>

In their 2008 commentary on James, C. L. Blomberg and M. J. Kamell see 1:1 as a standard letter greeting, but this, in their view, is the only ‘letter’ element in James.<sup>133</sup> They take 1:2-11 as a unit which contains three sub-units - 1:2-4 (trials in the Christian life); 1:5-8 (wisdom) and 1:9-11 (riches and poverty). They see each of these three units restated in 1:12-27 in a manner not wholly dissimilar to the double introductions of Francis and Davids. The difference may be seen in the verses which they choose to find these restatements: 1:2-4 is found restated in 1:12-18 (trials and temptations in relation to God); 1:5-8 is found restated in 1:19-26 (wisdom in the areas of wisdom and speech) and 1:9-11 is found restated in 1:27 (the ‘have-nots’ and the responsibility of the ‘haves’: the thesis of the letter).<sup>134</sup> Although the restatements are found in slightly different locations than say those of Francis or Davids, one may note the similar thematic links between both studies. Again these thematic links are difficult to see. They see 2:1 as beginning the main body which is divided into 2:1-26 (2:1-13, 14-26); 3:1-4:12 (3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12) and 4:13-5:18 (4:13-17; 5:1-12, 13-18).<sup>135</sup> A closing section, 5:19-20, concludes the letter.

In his 2009 commentary on James, D. G. McCartney puts forward a literary structure for the letter of James that is broadly similar to what Bauckham put forward in 1999. He followed the approach of Bauckham in using certain markers, such as ‘my brothers’, as well as proverbial sayings, to delineate the structure of James.<sup>136</sup> He takes 1:2-27 to form the introduction to the letter which gives an overview of the author’s concern with the life of faith - ‘a kind of précis or epitome that summarily presents the themes of the letter, though not in a straight line, but cyclically and from

---

<sup>131</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, pp. 60-62.

<sup>132</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, pp. 119-20. For a critique of these instances of inclusion found in James by Taylor see D. C. Allison Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of James*, The International Critical Commentary (New York, NY: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), p. 81.

<sup>133</sup> C. L. Blomberg and M. J. Kamell, *James*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), p. 43.

<sup>134</sup> Blomberg and Kamell, *James*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>135</sup> Blomberg and Kamell, *James*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>136</sup> D. G. McCartney, *James*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), pp. 62-67.



a variety of angles'.<sup>137</sup> The rest of the letter he divided into four discourses - 2:1-26 (faith and behaviour); 3:1-18 (Faith, wisdom and speech ethics), 4:1-12 (Strife in the church as lack of faith) and 5:7-18 (Looking to God's call).<sup>138</sup> Between 4:1-12 and 5:7-18 is an interjection (4:13-5:6) - two oracles of warning. Finally, a closing exhortation in 5:19-20, setting out mutual responsibility and blessing, brings the letter to a close. He sees these various segments (with the exception of the interjected woe oracles) as providing a basic formal structure, most beginning with a vocative such as 'brothers' and closing with a proverb.<sup>139</sup>

In a recent commentary on the letter of James in the International Critical Commentary series, D. C. Allison, Jr. (2013) largely follows the study of Bauckham in his arrangement of the letter.<sup>140</sup> For Allison, chapter I of the letter introduces all the important topics of the letter, and, while not exactly functioning as a table of contents, it does to a significant degree foreshadow what follows.<sup>141</sup> He divides the main body of the letter, 2:1-5:20, as follows: 2:1-13, 2:14-26, 3:1-12, 3:13-18, 4:1-12, 4:13-5:6, 5:12 and 5:13-20.<sup>142</sup>

## Conclusion

From the above survey it is clear that there has been and continues to be a great deal of disagreement between scholars on how the letter of James is organised. From the mid-19th century some scholars have argued that the letter has an overall literary plan, while others have found no such literary plan in the letter. Recent studies have tended to highlight the presence of an overall plan, even if opinion is quite divided on what exactly this plan might be. This lack of agreement in the overall literary structure of the letter of James may be seen already in the lack of agreement on the opening section of the letter.

Various arrangements which see James as having an overall plan have been advanced for the main body of the letter. These include the seventeen part division of Krüger,<sup>143</sup> the nine part division of Guthrie,<sup>144</sup> the eight part division of Crotty<sup>145</sup> and

---

<sup>137</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 63.

<sup>138</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 67.

<sup>139</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 67.

<sup>140</sup> Allison, Jr., *James*, pp.77-78.

<sup>141</sup> Allison, Jr., *James*, pp. 78-79; he notes that 1:2-27 could be said to function as a *propositio* (p. 80).

<sup>142</sup> Allison, Jr., *James*, p. 80.

<sup>143</sup> 1:2-8, 9-11, 12, 13-15, 16-18, 19-25, 26, 27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-16, 17-18; 4:1-3, 4-12; 4:13-5:6; 5:7-20.

Elliott,<sup>146</sup> the seven part division of Frankemölle<sup>147</sup> and Klauck,<sup>148</sup> the six-part division of Hartin,<sup>149</sup> Tollefson,<sup>150</sup> Taylor,<sup>151</sup> Klein,<sup>152</sup> and from a rhetorical perspective, Wuellner,<sup>153</sup> the five-part division of Moo,<sup>154</sup> and Sleeper,<sup>155</sup> the four-part division of Johnson,<sup>156</sup> the three-part division of Pfeiffer,<sup>157</sup> Cornely,<sup>158</sup> Davids,<sup>159</sup> Reese,<sup>160</sup> Ó Fearghail,<sup>161</sup> Cargal,<sup>162</sup> Wall,<sup>163</sup> Tsuji,<sup>164</sup> and from a rhetorical perspective, Baasland,<sup>165</sup> Thüren,<sup>166</sup> and Witherington,<sup>167</sup> and finally, the two-part division of Cladder,<sup>168</sup> Francis,<sup>169</sup> Vouga,<sup>170</sup> Martin,<sup>171</sup> Burchard,<sup>172</sup> and Edgar.<sup>173</sup>

There are those who simply divide the entire letter into a series of units ranging from thirteen to nine units, because they do not see the letter as having an overall plan. These arrangements include the thirteen-part arrangement of Ruckstuhl,<sup>174</sup> the twelve-part arrangement of Bauckham,<sup>175</sup> the eleven-part arrangement of Chaine,<sup>176</sup> and Robert and Feuillet,<sup>177</sup> the nine-part arrangement of Mayor,<sup>178</sup> and Fabris,<sup>179</sup> the eight-part arrangement of Dibelius,<sup>180</sup> and Ketter,<sup>181</sup> the

---

<sup>144</sup> 2:1-11, 12-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-5, 6-10, 11-12; 4:13-5:6.

<sup>145</sup> 1:16-18, 19-27; 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:4-10; 4:11-5:11; 5:12-18; 5:19-20.

<sup>146</sup> 1:13-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:11; 5:12.

<sup>147</sup> 1:19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6.

<sup>148</sup> Klauck does not give an example of how he arranges 2:1-5:6 but does suggest it could be divided into seven or eight segments.

<sup>149</sup> 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12; 3:13-4:10; 4:11-12; 4:13-5:6.

<sup>150</sup> 1:19-27; 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-10; 4:13-5:6; 5:7-20.

<sup>151</sup> 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6.

<sup>152</sup> 1:13-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6.

<sup>153</sup> 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6.

<sup>154</sup> 1:19-2:26; 3:1-4:3, 4-10, 11-12; 4:13-5:11.

<sup>155</sup> 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12; 3:13-4:12; 4:13-5:6.

<sup>156</sup> 2:1-26; 3:1-12; 3:13-4:10; 4:11-5:6.

<sup>157</sup> 1:21-2:26; 3:1-18; 4:1-17.

<sup>158</sup> 1:19-2:26; 3:1-4:12; 4:13-5:18.

<sup>159</sup> 2:1-26; 3:1-4:12; 4:13-5:6.

<sup>160</sup> 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-5:6.

<sup>161</sup> 1:12-2:26; 3:1-4:12; 4:13-5:20.

<sup>162</sup> 1:22-2:26; 3:1-4:12; 4:11-5:20.

<sup>163</sup> 1:22-2:26; 3:1-18; 4:1-5:6.

<sup>164</sup> 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-5:6.

<sup>165</sup> 2:1-3:12; 3:13-4:6; 4:7-5:6.

<sup>166</sup> 2:1-26; 3:1-4:12; 4:13-5:6.

<sup>167</sup> 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-5:6.

<sup>168</sup> 2:1-3:12; 3:13-4:12.

<sup>169</sup> 2:1-26; 3:1-5:6.

<sup>170</sup> 1:19-3:18; 4:1-5:20.

<sup>171</sup> 1:19-3:18; 4:1-5:20.

<sup>172</sup> 1:12-3:11; 3:12-5:6.

<sup>173</sup> 1:19-3:18; 4:1-5:20.

<sup>174</sup> 1:2-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12, 13-17; 5:1-6, 7-11, 12, 13-18, 19-20.

<sup>175</sup> 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-10, 11-12, 13-17; 5:1-6, 7-11, 12, 13-18, 19-20.

<sup>176</sup> 1:2-12, 13-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12, 13-17; 5:1-6, 7-20.

<sup>177</sup> 1:2-12, 13-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12, 13-17; 5:1-11, 12-20.

<sup>178</sup> 1:1-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12; 13-18; 4:1-17; 5:1-11, 12-20.

seven-part arrangement of Adamson<sup>182</sup> and Barnett,<sup>183</sup> the six-part arrangement of Perkins,<sup>184</sup> the five-part arrangement of Reicke<sup>185</sup> and Sidebottom,<sup>186</sup> the four-part arrangement and Hiebert,<sup>187</sup> and finally, the three-part arrangement of Cell  rier<sup>188</sup> and Ropes.<sup>189</sup>

While the lack of agreement on many aspects of the literary structure of James is striking, it also emerges from the above survey that current research on James has moved inexorably toward the identification of the overall structure of the letter and the search for overarching themes that run through it, providing a source of unity for the whole. This search for structure and coherence, although manifested in various ways, arises out of the widespread conviction in current scholarship that such coherence and structure can be found. It is rare today to find a treatment of the text of James which does not investigate the overall relationship of each part of the text to the whole. Despite the emerging consensus on some aspects of James, there are still obvious areas of disagreement among scholars, including the introduction and conclusion of the letter. The introduction in particular is crucial to discerning the overall structure in James. The next chapter will investigate more closely the main proposals for the opening and closing of the letter of James.

---

<sup>179</sup> 1:2-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-12; 4:13-5:6; 5:7-20.

<sup>180</sup> 1:2-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12; 3:13-4:12; 4:13-5:6; 5:7-20.

<sup>181</sup> 1:2-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-12, 13-18; 4:1-5:6; 5:7-20.

<sup>182</sup> 1:2-27; 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-10, 11-17; 5:1-18, 19-20.

<sup>183</sup> 1:2-18, 19-27; 2:1-13, 14-26; 3:1-4:10; 4:11-5:6; 5:7-20.

<sup>184</sup> 1:1-27; 2:1-26; 3:1-12; 3:13-4:12; 4:13-5:12; 5:13-20.

<sup>185</sup> 1:2-27; 2:1-26; 3:1-18; 4:1-5:6; 5:7-20.

<sup>186</sup> 1:2-17, 18-21; 1:22-2:26; 3:1-5:12; 5:13-20.

<sup>187</sup> 1:2-18; 1:19-3:18; 4:1-5:12; 5:13-20.

<sup>188</sup> 1:1-2:26; 3:1-5:11; 5:12-20.

<sup>189</sup> 1:2-2:26; 3:1-18; 4:1-5:20.

## Chapter II

### Introduction and Conclusion: *Status Quaestionis*

#### Introduction

In his discussion of the literary structure of the letter, F. Ó Fearghail makes the point that any overall literary structure put forward for the letter 'is very much dependant on how one resolves the problems of its introduction and conclusion'.<sup>1</sup> From the survey in the first chapter it is clear that there exists quite a diversity of opinion about the introduction of the letter of James which has been seen to range from 1:1/2-11 to 1:1/2-27. The opening section has been described as an introduction, *exordium*, prologue and *proemium*, though what these terms signify in their respective studies of James is not always clear.

The survey in the previous chapter also reveals that there is widespread disagreement among scholars about the conclusion of the letter, although less than in the case of the introduction. Suggestions for a concluding unit include 4:13-5:20, 5:7-20, 5:12-20, 5:13-20 and 5:19-20, with terms such as conclusion, epilogue or *peroratio* being applied in various cases. A look at the various proposals for the introduction and conclusion of James should help to clarify the issues involved.

#### 1. The introduction to the Letter of James

##### 1.1 - An 'epitome': 1:2-27

Johnson sees 1:2-27 as introducing themes which are developed in other parts of the letter of James.<sup>2</sup> This first chapter of the letter, which is held together by a

---

<sup>1</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 68.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson, James, p. 15. C. B. Amphoux, 'Systèmes anciens de division d'épître de Jaques et composition littéraire', *Bib.* 62 (1981), 390-400, took 1:2-27 as the opening section in his literary structure of the letter.

series of word links,<sup>3</sup> functions in his view as something of ‘a ‘table of contents’ for the letter, or as an ‘overture’ of its themes’.<sup>4</sup> In terms of ancient literary categories he sees the chapter as an ‘*epitome*’ of the work as a whole.<sup>5</sup> Later on in his commentary he describes 1:2-27 as anticipating themes which are developed more fully in the letter ‘by way of essays’.<sup>6</sup> Bauckham is critical of Johnson’s description of 1:2-27 as an *epitome*, not finding the evidence to support this position.<sup>7</sup> The designation of 1:2-27 as a table of contents, however, is a useful description for how themes are introduced that recur in the main body of the letter.

Sleeper sees 1:2-27 as introducing themes in a manner similar to Johnson, although he does not use the term *epitome* as Johnson does. Sleeper breaks the opening section at 1:12 which he sees as the beginning of the unit 1:12-16. For him 1:12 is both a parallel and a contrast to 1:2-4.<sup>8</sup> Sleeper sees 1:26-27 as the conclusion not only to 1:22-27, but also to the entirety of chapter one. He notes that although 1:26-27 introduces new topics such as the tongue, and keeping oneself unstained from the world, it is linked to the preceding sections by several themes: speech (1:26/1:19), keeping oneself pure and undefiled (1:27/1:21), and the importance of being a ‘doer’ (1:27/1:22-25). He notes, however, that it anticipates much of the discussion of chapter 2 and must be regarded as a transition.<sup>9</sup>

## 1.2 - A Double Introduction: 1:2-27

A number of authors take 1:2-27 to provide a double introduction to the letter of James. The first to suggest this was Francis, who based his suggestion on what he saw as a pattern of double introductions that he found in a number of ancient texts, including texts from the *Antiquities* of Josephus, 1 Maccabees and the NT letters of Philemon and 1 and 2 Thessalonians.<sup>10</sup> According to Francis the ‘main argumentative

---

<sup>3</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 174.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 15, 174-75.

<sup>6</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 175.

<sup>7</sup> Bauckham, *James*, p. 72, finds it difficult to parallel the introduction in James with any other known model of introduction. He criticises Johnson’s literary category of *epitome*, noting that Johnson’s proposal of the *Sentences of Syriac Menander* as an example is flawed since the *epitome* and *Florilegium* do not appear in any manuscript together, thus the *epitome* could not function as an introduction to the *Florilegium*. Bauckham does however note that *epitome* would be an appropriate term for the introduction in James, but based on the evidence he finds, he does not see it as conforming to ancient practice.

<sup>8</sup> Sleeper, *James*, p. 55.

<sup>9</sup> Sleeper, *James*, p. 65.

<sup>10</sup> Francis, ‘Form and Function’, 111-17.

interests' of the epistle are introduced in two 'carefully balanced statements', namely, 1:2-11 and 1:12-25,<sup>11</sup> with the second statement reminiscent of a thanksgiving formula.<sup>12</sup> He takes the two statements in 1:25-26 to serve as 'a kind of literary hinge', recapitulating the themes of the two parts of the introductory section and 'turning the reader to the initial argumentative section of the body of the epistle'.<sup>13</sup> Themes from the first part of the introduction are restated in the second part. These themes are then developed in the main body of the letter. Francis makes the point that in both paragraphs of the introduction (1:2-11 and 1:12-25) and in the recapitulation (1:26-27) the thematic materials appear in the reverse order in which they are found in the body of the letter.<sup>14</sup>

Francis divided both units into three parts - the first, 1:2-11, into the units 1:2-4; 1:5-8 and 1:9-11, and the second, 1:12-25, into the units 1:12-18, 1:19-21 and 1:22-25.<sup>15</sup> He saw themes from each of the three sections in 1:2-11 restated in 1:12-25. Francis grouped these statements and restatements under thematic headings: testing/steadfastness - 1:2-4/1:12-18; wisdom-words/reproaching - 1:5-8/1:19-21; rich-poor/doers of the word - 1:9-11/1:22-25.<sup>16</sup> The two parallel sections, however, have little in common. Finally, he found a recapitulation of the main themes of 1:2-25 in 1:26-27, which anticipates themes in the main body of the letter that follows.<sup>17</sup>

Drawing on the work of Francis, Davids also argues for a double introduction to the letter, and following Francis he finds in the closing verses elements 'normally in epistolary closings', namely, *Πρὸ πάντων* plus an oath formula, a health wish and the topic of prayer.<sup>18</sup> Like Francis and others, Davids points out links between 1:2-4 and 1:12-15.<sup>19</sup> He entitles 1:5-8 'wisdom comes through prayer' and he sees it as paralleling 1:19-21 which he entitles 'pure speech contains no anger'. He sees 1:9-11, which he entitles 'poverty excels wealth', as paralleling 1:22-25, which he entitles 'obedience requires generosity'.<sup>20</sup> Like Francis, Davids sees 1:26-27 as a 'literary

<sup>11</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 117.

<sup>12</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 117.

<sup>13</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 118.

<sup>14</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 118.

<sup>15</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 118.

<sup>16</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 117.

<sup>17</sup> See the comment of Aune, *Westminster Dictionary*, p. 239.

<sup>18</sup> Davids, *James*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>19</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 79.

<sup>20</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 29.

hinge', a summary and transitional section, which links 1:2-25 to the main body of the letter.<sup>21</sup> Both Francis and Davids, then, see themes in 1:2-4 restated in 1:12-18.

The genre of a double-opening as advanced by Francis and Davids has been strongly criticised by Ó Fearghail in his study of the literary structure of James. In his view the genre of a double-opening, as Francis understands it, is not to be found in the two texts from Josephus used by Francis, namely, *Antiquities* VIII.50-54 and XI.123ff., nor in the text from Eusebius (*Praep. Evang.* IX.33-34) to which Francis appeals.<sup>22</sup> The double opening is not to be found either, he argues, in the two-part introduction to the letter of King Demetrius to the Jews in 1 Macc. 10:25-45, in the letter to Philemon, or in the two letters to the Thessalonians.<sup>23</sup> The texts cited by Francis do not, according to Ó Fearghail, provide an example of the genre of a double-opening in which the themes of the body of the letter are presented and represented. While some may have repeated expressions of thanksgiving in their introductions, Ó Fearghail argues, these 'do not introduce the body of the letters and indeed are sometimes quite separate from the introductory theme'.<sup>24</sup> The question of whether themes introduced in the first part of the introduction, 1:2-11/12, are restated in the second part, 1:12/13-27, is a separate issue from the existence or not of the genre of a double opening. One needs to examine the text of James itself to see if themes introduced in the first part of the introduction, 1:2-11/12, are restated in the second part, 1:12/13-27.

Hartin also takes 1:2-27 as a double introduction somewhat similar to that of Francis (1:2-11; 1:12-27), though how he sees themes from the first part developed in the second part of the introduction differs from that proposed by Francis. The structure of the first part of the double introduction of Hartin follows that of Francis and Davids. He also follows him in seeing 1:2-11 as a unit, held together by various catchwords - πειρασμοῖς / δοκίμιον (1:2-3), ὑπομονήν / ὑπομονή (1:3-4), λειπόμενοι / λείπεται (1:4-5), αἰτείτω / αἰτείτω (1:5-6), διακρινόμενος / δίψυχος (1:6-8) - with 1:9-11 linked to 1:2-8 by the note of joy in Καυχάσθω and by the enclitic δὲ. Hartin, like Francis, sees a new beginning in 1:12 due to the links between

---

<sup>21</sup> Davids, *James*, pp. 100-101; Francis, 'Form and Function', 118.

<sup>22</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'On the Literary Structure', 69-70; see Francis, 'Form and Function', 112-13, 116.

<sup>23</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 71-77; see Francis, 'Form and Function', 112-17.

<sup>24</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'On the Literary Structure', 71.

1:12 (testing) and 1:13-15 (temptation). He notes parallels between 1:2-4 and 1:12-15.<sup>25</sup>

The development of Hartin's second introductory unit, 1:12-27, is quite different from what Francis and Davids proposed. Hartin divides this unit into two sub-sections. The first, 1:12-18, deals with endurance and the prize of the crown of life and develops themes from 1:2-4. The second, 1:19-27, deals with religion in word and deed.<sup>26</sup> Hartin does not mention a restatement of themes from the first part of the introduction in 1:12-27, as Francis and Davids do. He does see 1:19-27 as introducing themes which will be addressed later in the body of the letter, and he sees it as functioning 'much in the manner of a table of contents'.<sup>27</sup> He sees 1:26-27 as concluding the chapter, providing a summary of themes, but also anticipating the next chapter.<sup>28</sup> It is not clear though how 1:26-27 provides a summary of the themes in 1:2-25.

Taylor's approach to the opening unit of the letter of James has parallels with the double introductions above. He identifies an *inclusio* at 1:2-4 and 1:12 and another at 1:12 and 1:25.<sup>29</sup> The one who endures trial in 1:12 is the one who 'continues' or 'abides' in the law of liberty of 1:25, and there is a link between those who are blessed in 1:12 and those who are blessed in 1:25; both exemplify being obedient to God.<sup>30</sup> These inclusions provide him with 'a compelling structural reason for isolating 1,2-25 as an introduction to the whole'.<sup>31</sup> He sees 1:12 as performing a dual function, acting as an 'overlapping constituent', that is, a passage that is used simultaneously as the conclusion of one block of material and the introduction to the next.<sup>32</sup> In this case it links 1:2-11 and 1:13-25.<sup>33</sup> Taylor points out the lexical and thematic parallels between 1:12 and 1:2-4 on the one hand and 1:25 on the other.<sup>34</sup> For Taylor 1:12

---

<sup>25</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 103.

<sup>26</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 102.

<sup>27</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 102, following Johnson.

<sup>28</sup> Hartin's understanding of the double introduction could possibly find a parallel in the rhetorical studies which have an *exordium* and *propositio*. These rhetorical propositions, which will be analysed in due course, note the importance of 1:19-27 in developing themes in the main body, as Hartin does.

<sup>29</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 60, notes, like Penner, that the two independent units within the inclusion, 1:5-8 and 1:9-11, may have existed 'in some form of independent tradition but have now been crafted into the letter at this point for a specific purpose'; cf. Penner, *James*, p. 145.

<sup>30</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 62.

<sup>31</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 100; see also pp. 60-62.

<sup>32</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 82.

<sup>33</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 82.

<sup>34</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, pp. 61, 62.



'occupies a significant role in the letter opening', it serves as 'a summary of 1,2-11 and as a transition to the following unit beginning with 1,13'.<sup>35</sup>

The first three verses of 1:13-25, 1:13-15, form a unit on temptation. There are inclusions between 1:13 (κακῶν) and 1:21 (κακίας), and between 1:16 and 1:19a (note ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί in both).<sup>36</sup> Taylor notes a link between the birth language of 1:15 (ἀποκύει) and 1:18 (ἀπεκύησεν) which he describes as a 'hook word' transition and sees it linking 1:13-15 and 1:17-18. Taylor takes 1:26-27 to have a transitional character (a feature that provides him with another reason for understanding 1:2-25 as the opening of the letter).<sup>37</sup> However, he follows Davids in taking it to be closely linked to 1:21-25 - its 'summary character, unusual vocabulary and broad thematic concepts related to true religion' providing a 'specific application' for the exhortations of 1:21-25 and anticipating at the same time 'the basic points developed in the rest of the letter'.<sup>38</sup> He notes that 1:26-27 'rounds out the theme of deception and specifies practical manifestations of 'pure and undefiled' religion' in terms of right speaking (controlling the tongue) and right acting (merciful and pure), 'twin themes that play significant roles in the broader discourse'.<sup>39</sup> Themes in the double introduction are then brought forward into a chiasmic arrangement of the letter body in 2:1-5:6, though the manner in which the themes are paralleled differs from both Francis and Davids.<sup>40</sup>

Although Taylor adopts a double introduction in his arrangement, he is critical of Francis and Davids as to how they perceive the restatement of themes in the second part of the introduction, notably the themes of wisdom and wealth. He notes that while the theme of πειρασμοῖς links 1:12, 13-15 with 1:2-4, and God's good gifts in 1:17-19a with the theme of wisdom in 1:5-8, the theme of wealth seems to disappear. He takes 1:13-27 to consist of four 'carefully stitched sub-units' (1:13-15, 16-19a, 19b-21 and 22-25) and 'a dynamic transition to the body of the letter (1,16-17)'.<sup>41</sup> He points out various connections between these units, arguing that 'numerous lexical links, intentional contrasts and parallel statements' contribute to the thematic

---

<sup>35</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, pp. 61.

<sup>36</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 63. Johnson, *James*, p. 199, notes a similar link between 1:16 and 19.

<sup>37</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 101.

<sup>38</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 101.

<sup>39</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 106.

<sup>40</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 108.

<sup>41</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 105.

cohesion of the whole.<sup>42</sup> Taylor sees the obedience that is required of the tongue in 1:26 as paralleling the reference to proper speech (boasting) in 1:9, while care for orphans and widows is related to issues of poverty and wealth in 1:9-11.<sup>43</sup> However, the destruction of the rich man and the exaltation of the poor man of 1:9-11 can hardly be seen as an exact parallel of the author's exhortation to help widows and orphans in 1:26-27.<sup>44</sup> In his monograph on James of 1995 M. Klein takes 1:2-27 to form a double *propositio* which introduces two themes, 1:2-18, which introduces the first theme ('*Zielthema*') - the 'complete work' as goal of the preservation of faith in the temptations of life, and 1:19-27 which introduces the second, the theme of the way ('*Wegthema*'); both themes are developed in various exhortations in the '*Argumentatio*' or the main body of the letter (2:1-5:6).<sup>45</sup>

### 1.3 - *Exordium* and *Propositio*: 1:2-27

A number of authors who approach the letter of James from a rhetorical standpoint take 1:2-18 to function as an *exordium* and 1:19-27 as a *propositio*. In essence their *exordium* and *propositio* function as an introduction to the body of the letter (2:1-5:6), with 5:7-20 acting as a *peroratio*. Baasland, who takes the letter of James to be a *protreptic* speech in the form of a letter, is clearly influenced by Wuellner in his rhetorical arrangement of the letter of James. He takes 1:2-18 to form the *proemium* of the letter which corresponds to the *peroratio* in 5:7-20. He sees 1:16-18 as a transition ('*transitus*'), which leads to the *propositio* in 1:19-27, in which the theme of the *confirmatio* (2:1-3:12) and *confutatio* (3:13-5:6) is given.<sup>46</sup>

Witherington sees 1:2-18 as 'a preview of coming attractions, hinting at some of the themes that will subsequently be dealt with'.<sup>47</sup> He argues that 1:2-4 establishes the authority and *ethos* of the speaker and his rapport with the audience while 1:5-8 serves to introduce in brief some of the matters of the discourse. He sees 1:12 as 'something of a hinge between what has come before and what comes

<sup>42</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 105.

<sup>43</sup> Taylor, *Text-linguistic*, p. 105.

<sup>44</sup> See also Taylor and Guthrie, 'The Structure of James', 703.

<sup>45</sup> Klein, *Jakobusbriefes*, pp. 39-40. See critique in G. C. Bottini, *Giacomo, E La Sua Lettera* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 2000), pp. 221-30.

<sup>46</sup> Baasland, 'Literarische Form, Thematik', p. 3659; in an earlier study in *Studia Theologica*, 'Der Jakobusbrief als neutestamentliche Weisheitsschrift', *Studia Theologica* 36 (1982), 119-39, he took 1:1-18 as the opening section.

<sup>47</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 419.

afterward' and takes it to begin a new section.<sup>48</sup> He notes several themes in 1:12-18 which recall themes from 1:2-11 - the blessing of one who endures trials in 1:2/1:12; the doubter of 1:6-8 in the wrong understanding of temptation in 1:13-15; the perfecting of faith in 1:3-4 'mirrored in reverse by the elaborate climax, from temptation to death in 1:14-15' and the giving of wisdom in 1:5 in the giving of gifts in 1:17.<sup>49</sup>

Following Thurén and others he takes 1:19a with its introductory vocative 'know this' addressed to 'my beloved brothers', to signal a transition from the *exordium* to the *propositio*, 1:19-27.<sup>50</sup> The *propositio* may be seen as a further introduction to the main body of the letter. For him a *propositio* 'must provide a clue as to the real substance and urgency and theme of the following discourse and its various arguments'.<sup>51</sup> He cites with approval Martin's comment that the section 1:19b-27 'opens with a survey of five themes in swift succession, all of them due to be expanded in later parts of the letter'.<sup>52</sup> He follows Davids in taking 1:26-27 as a summary-transition, summing up what precedes and leading on to the following chapter.<sup>53</sup> He notes that the transitional verses 1:26-27 lead to the first major exposition of a theme, summarising the practical nature of the doing of the word from 1:22-25 and developing it under the theme of correct religious practices (bridling the tongue, helping others, abstaining from the world).<sup>54</sup>

#### 1.4 - A Double Introduction: 1:2-21

Both Cargal and Wall follow Francis's statement that a double introduction is to be found in the letter of James, though they choose 1:2-21 as their double introduction.<sup>55</sup> Cargal divides 1:2-21, his first discursive unit, into two sections - 1:2-12 ('The Blessing of Trials'), which is divided into three sections, 1:2-4, 1:5-8 and 1:9-12.<sup>56</sup> The second section, 1:13-21 ('Saving the Soul from Death'),<sup>57</sup> is divided

<sup>48</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 432.

<sup>49</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 432.

<sup>50</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, pp. 419 n. 66, 436.

<sup>51</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 436.

<sup>52</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 437, citing Martin, *James*, p. 47.

<sup>53</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 437. Drawing upon Quintilian, *De inventione rhetorica* 1.22.32, he notes that a *propositio* should be brief, concise, self contained and should leave the elaboration on the themes previewed until the discourse begins in 2:1 - 'it is appropriate that the end of the proposition serve as a transition to the first argument, and James 1:26-27 serves this function'.

<sup>54</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, pp. 447-48.

<sup>55</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, pp. 52, 58-61.

<sup>56</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, pp. 75, 89-90.

into three parallel sections, 1:13-16, 1:17-19a and 1:19b-21, with 1:13-16 paralleling 1:2-4, 1:17-19a paralleling 1:5-8 and 1:19b-21 paralleling 1:9-12.<sup>58</sup> For Cargal, the first of the sub-units of 1:2-21, 1:2-12, endeavoured to 'persuade the readers that 'enduring trials' was not an indication of their piety and status as 'perfect and complete' before God, but rather an opportunity for the believer to ask God for the things that they lacked. The second sub-unit (1:13-21) highlighted the need of the readers to receive the implanted word (1:21) which they lacked in order that they would not be led astray towards death.<sup>59</sup>

Wall divides the two parts of his double introduction differently from Cargal. Unlike Cargal he takes 1:12 to be part, not of the first but, of the second section, dividing the introduction into the units 1:2-11 and 1:12-21.<sup>60</sup> In a manner similar to Cargal, Wall sees the introduction as consisting of two statements of paired triads, with the points of 1:2-11 repeated in 1:12-21, while each triad describes a particular element of the present crisis, the advised response and a potential peril appropriate to that response.<sup>61</sup> He sees these two triads as closely parallel - 1:2-4 to 1:12-15, 1:5-8 to 1:16-18 and 1:9-11 to 1:19-21.<sup>62</sup> The main body of the letter (1:22-5:6), according to Wall, is a commentary on the 'wisdom from above' which he takes James to summarise in 1:19 as 'quick to hear, slow to speak, [and] slow to anger'.<sup>63</sup>

### 1.5 - Enduring Trials: 1:2-19a

Vouga and Martin take 1:2-19a as the opening section of the letter of James which they entitle 'Enduring Trials' and which they divide as follows: 1:2-4, 1:5-8, 1:9-11, 1:12, and 1:13-19a.<sup>64</sup> Martin follows Vouga in seeing links between 1:5-8 and 4:13-17, 1:9-11 and 5:1-6, 1:12 and 5:7-11, and between 1:13-18 and 5:12-20.<sup>65</sup> For both Vouga and Martin, 1:19b-3:18 forms the second section introduced by 1:19b-27, which introduces themes that are developed later in the letter.<sup>66</sup> The 'true religion' of 1:27a is expanded in 2:1-13. The 'word' in 1:22-24 - a development of the 'implanted

---

<sup>57</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 76.

<sup>58</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, pp. 58-61.

<sup>59</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, pp. 52, 90.

<sup>60</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, pp. 34-35, 44-46.

<sup>61</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 44.

<sup>62</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, pp. 44-46.

<sup>63</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 75.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Vouga, *Jacques*, p. 21; Martin, *James*, p. cii.

<sup>65</sup> Vouga, *Jacques*, pp. 21-23; Martin, *James*, p. cii.

<sup>66</sup> Vouga, *Jacques*, p. 21; Martin, *James*, pp. cii-ciii.

word' (1:18) - is expanded in 2:14-26. The verses 1:18-20 and 1:26 are developed in 3:1-13, while 1:19b is expanded in 3:15-18. Finally 1:27b, according to Martin, is expanded in 4:1-5:11, as in both of them Christians are asked to fulfil their duty in the world in the face of evil powers arrayed against them. The letter closing is formed by 5:12-20 which according to Martin 'rehearses many of the previous themes as a postlude and recapitulation'.<sup>67</sup>

### 1.6 - An Opening Unit: 1:2-18

Many scholars have seen 1:2-18 as the opening unit of the letter of James. Cornely, called this unit an 'exordium' but gave no indication of how he saw it functioning.<sup>68</sup> Hort took 1:2-18 to form the first 'paragraph' after the greeting, but included 1:19-27 with it in what he termed the 'Introduction, on Religion'.<sup>69</sup> Ropes took 1:2-18 to be part of the first section of the letter (1:2-2:26) and entitles it: 'In the formation of character'.<sup>70</sup> While Dibelius took 1:2-18 as a unit, he did not see it as a coherent unit, let alone an introduction.<sup>71</sup>

The unit 1:2-18 is popular with those who put forward rhetorical arrangements for the letter. Thurén takes 1:1 and 1:2-18 to form an introduction or *exordium* in the letter. He subscribes to the view that the prescript should be seen as an integral part of the *exordium*.<sup>72</sup> For him the first four verses meet 'all the requirements of an *exordium*',<sup>73</sup> while 1:5-8 and 9-11 specify its 'mission', the first theme being introduced in 1:5-8, wisdom/speech, the second, money/action, in 1:9-11.<sup>74</sup> Seeing no sign of a major transition between 1:12 and 1:13, Thurén takes 1:12 as the beginning of a new section which continues to 1:15 and elaborates themes already enunciated, namely, that steadfastness during trials leads to rewards from God, while those who suffer temptations during trials will die.<sup>75</sup> The *exordium* is brought to a conclusion in 1:16-18 with a note on the perfection of God and his saving acts.<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> Martin, *James*, p. ciii.

<sup>68</sup> Cornely, *Introductionis*, p. 589.

<sup>69</sup> Hort, *James*, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

<sup>70</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 4; he did not feel that it was possible, in the case of James, 'completely to trace the real sequence of his thought'.

<sup>71</sup> Dibelius, *James*, pp. 69-71; he saw it as having far less unity than the following section 1:19-27 (p. 108).

<sup>72</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 270.

<sup>73</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 271.

<sup>74</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 272.

<sup>75</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 272.

<sup>76</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 274, 282.

Thurén finds similar themes in 1:2-4 and 1:12-18 - perseverance and perfection - which underline the unity of 1:12-18.<sup>77</sup> He also sees the exhortation, ἴστε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί, of 1:19a as ‘a typical phrase for letter-body-opening’ and as a sign of the transition from the *exordium* to the *propositio*.<sup>78</sup>

Frankemölle takes 1:2-18 as a ‘Prolog’ or ‘Exordium’ with 5:7-20 as an ‘Epilog’ or ‘Peroratio’.<sup>79</sup> He dispenses with the other rhetorical terms and divisions in his treatment of the letter. He divides 1:2-18 into two parts, 1:2-11 and 1:12-18, and sees it as fulfilling all the functions of an introductory unit, introducing themes found in the main body of the letter.<sup>80</sup> The themes of testing and trial of 1:2 are recalled in 1:12 thus forming an inclusion for 1:2-12. Themes of 1:2-4 are found in 1:19-27 and 3:1-12 respectively. The lack of wisdom referred to in 1:5 is recalled in 3:13-18 with its section on complete wisdom. The theme of faith of 1:6-8 is taken up again in 2:14-26. The theme of rich and poor in 1:9-11 reappears in 2:1-13 and 5:1-6. The theme of temptations of 1:16-18 is echoed in 4:1-12.<sup>81</sup> The epilogue or *peroratio* in 5:7-20 is divided into three parts (5:7-8, 9-12 and 13-20)

Edgar also takes 1:2-18 to be an *exordium* and he sees it as setting the basis for all of what follows.<sup>82</sup> It is composed, in his view, of four units - 1:2-8, 9-11, 13-15 and 16-18.<sup>83</sup> Unwavering commitment to God who gives generously ‘to those who ask in loyal commitment’ are key themes of 1:2-8, while rich and poor and their relationship to God, are key themes of 1:9-11. While he finds a ‘clear recapitulation’ of the language and motifs of 1:2-8 in 1:12, he notes no difference between testing in 1:12 and temptation in 1:13, and consequently takes 1:12-15 to form a unit.<sup>84</sup> He finds a contrast between human and divine action in 1:12-18, with 1:12-15 representing human action and 1:16-18 representing divine action. Edgar notes that direct admonition of the addressees and the presentation of God’s supremacy run throughout this entire section and introduce the key theme of endurance and loyalty to God. Those who are obedient to God and endure will be rewarded (1:12) while those who

---

<sup>77</sup> See table in Thurén, ‘Risky Rhetoric’, 282.

<sup>78</sup> Thurén, ‘Risky Rhetoric’, 272; he takes it to correspond to a typical Pauline letter body opening phrase (n. 52).

<sup>79</sup> Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, pp. 133-74.

<sup>80</sup> In this aspect of themes being introduced in 1:2-18 that are treated in the main body of the letter his study can be seen as broadly similar to the earlier studies of Francis and Davids.

<sup>81</sup> Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, pp. 135-38, 162.

<sup>82</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 160.

<sup>83</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, pp. 140-56.

<sup>84</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, pp. 160-61.

doubt or are divided in loyalty will receive nothing (1:6-8). Following their own desires will result in death (1:13-15).<sup>85</sup> God's supreme authority and benevolence are outlined in 1:16-18 - the addressees are warned not to be deceived about this. God stands in a special relationship with them (1:18).<sup>86</sup>

Moo takes 1:2-18 to function as an introduction to the letter, although the function and character he attributes to the unit differ from that attributed to it by earlier scholars. In his view 1:2-18 is not a clearly defined section, nor does it have 'a unifying theme'; moreover, it only has minor links with the rest of the letter.<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, he does accept that some themes are introduced in 1:19-27 which are developed in the main body of the letter, while he takes 1:26-27 to be an important summary and transitional unit which puts forward themes that are developed in the main body of the letter.<sup>88</sup>

Moo takes 1:26-27 to be the culmination of the theme of doing the word of God of 1:19-25, verses that elaborate on how one does the word of God. He sees the topic of controlling the tongue (1:26), which he notes from 1:19-20, as returning in 3:1-12 and 4:11-12; the concern for the helpless of 1:27, in 2:15-16 and 5:1-6, the avoidance of the world (1:27), in 4:4-10.<sup>89</sup> More emphasis is placed by Moo on 1:26-27 as having an introductory than is the case in his treatment of 1:2-18.

Finally, Klauck also takes 1:2-18 as an introduction to the letter. He compares the function of the introduction to that of a *proemium*, and sees it as similar to how Frankemölle and Johnson present their introductory sections. Klauck compares the *proem* of a letter to the *exordium* of a speech, presenting the individual themes which are to be developed in the body by a rhetorical *amplificatio*.<sup>90</sup>

### 1.7 - A Prologue: 1:2-12

Jas. 1:2-12 has long been seen as a unit within the letter of James whether on its own or as part of a greater unit. As may be seen above, it is taken as part of a double introduction by Francis and others, but it was also taken as a unit on its own by

---

<sup>85</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, pp. 156-57.

<sup>86</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, pp. 156-57. Edgar takes 1:19-3:18 to form a unit in which 1:19-27 has an introductory role with the significant themes of 2:1-3:12 being prefigured in these verses (see p. 159). He follows Baasland, 'Literarische Form, Thematik', p. 3655, in taking these verses to function as a *prothesis* (p. 160).

<sup>87</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 51.

<sup>88</sup> Cladder, 'Die Anlage', 57.

<sup>89</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 95.

<sup>90</sup> Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, pp. 338-39.

Ropes, for example, although he did not see it as having the role of a true introduction.

Working from a rhetorical perspective Wuellner takes 1:2-12 to have the role of an introduction or prologue to the letter which he sees as composed of a *proemium* (1:2-4), a narrative (1:5-11) and a recapitulatory verse (1:12).<sup>91</sup> In Ó Fearghail's view, however, it is difficult to see 'how 1:2-4 and 1:5-11 can be distinguished as *proemium* and narrative' and to see 1:12 as a 'recapitulatory verse for 1:2-11'.<sup>92</sup> The *inclusio* that H. von Lips finds between 1:2-3 and 1:12 leads him to take 1:2-12 to form a unit which he sees as a summary exposition of what is to follow in the letter.<sup>93</sup>

Elliott takes 1:2-12 as his introduction in the letter, seeing 1:2-4 as introducing its major theme - 'the completeness and wholeness of the readers, of their community, and of their relation to God'.<sup>94</sup> The contrast between wholeness and incompleteness of 1:2-4 which is developed in 1:5-8 introduces a series of contrasts which permeate the whole letter, 'signalling both its structure and its basic thematic'.<sup>95</sup> He notes that the unit 1:9-11, which contrasts the reversed status of the lowly and rich brother before God, anticipates the contrasts of 2:1-26; 4:1-12 and 4:13-5:6.<sup>96</sup> The restatement of themes from 1:2-4 in 1:12 indicates the unity of 1:2-12.<sup>97</sup>

Penner adduces various reasons for treating 1:2-12 as a unit. He points to the well-known links between 1:2-4 and 1:12, which he takes to form an inclusion for the unit 1:2-12. In addition he finds an 'apparently deliberate chiasmic structure' in 1:2-12 which he sets out as follows:<sup>98</sup>

1:2-4: testing of the believer (A)  
1:5-11: two themes (wisdom and reversal) related to the believer (B)  
1:12: testing of the believer (A)

This structure which revolves around the thematic and linguistic links between 1:2-4 and 1:12 underlines the unity of 1:2-12. He also points to the fact that 1:2-12 provides 'a strong concentration of key words and motifs which recur as 'flashbacks'

<sup>91</sup> Wuellner, 'Der Jakobusbrief im Lichte der Rhetorik und Textpragmatik', 37.

<sup>92</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 71.

<sup>93</sup> Von Lips, 'Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament', pp. 414-24; Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 68, 71.

<sup>94</sup> Elliott, 'James', 72.

<sup>95</sup> Elliott, 'James', 72.

<sup>96</sup> Elliott, 'James', 72.

<sup>97</sup> Elliott, 'James', 71-72.

<sup>98</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 145.



throughout the text of James'.<sup>99</sup> Another reason why Penner takes 1:12 as part of his introductory unit is that he notes that the flow of argument from 1:12 does not continue into 1:13-15. Penner, drawing upon the work of von Lips, describes 1:2-12 as a 'summarising exposition'.<sup>100</sup> Penner further noted that the introductory role of 1:2-12 was a 'deliberate rhetorical device on the part of the writer in order to provide a structural opening to the main body to which various implicit and explicit allusions are made throughout the remaining body of the letter'.<sup>101</sup> Finally, Penner sees 1:2-12 as a unified section which provides a strong concentration of words and motifs which recur as 'flashbacks' throughout the text, particularly in his conclusion to the main body (4:6-5:12), words such as: ὑπομονήν (1:3), ὑπομονή (1:4) / ὑπομείναντας (5:11); ὑπομένει (1:12) / ὑπομείναντας (5:11); δίψυχος (1:8) / δίψυχοι (4:8); ταπεινός (1:9), ταπεινώσει (1:10) / ταπεινοίς (4:6), ταπεινώθητε (4:10); πλούσιος (1:10-11) / πλούσιοι (5:1); ὕψει (1:9) / ὑμᾶς (4:10); Μακάριος (1:12) / μακαρίζομεν (5:11); Καυχᾶσθω (1:9) / καυχᾶσθε (4:16); χαρὰν (1:2) / χαρὰ (4:9).<sup>102</sup>

### 1.8 - A True Introduction: 1:2-11

Earlier studies of James which refer to 1:2-11 as an introduction include those of J. P. Lange (1881), who took 1:1 as part of his introduction,<sup>103</sup> and O. Bardenhewer (1928).<sup>104</sup> Both merely labelled these sections as introductory and did not see them as introductions in the true sense. In recent times 1:2-11 has been seen as a unit albeit as part of a larger unit. This is the case, for example, in the arrangements with a double introduction put forward by Francis, Hartin and Wall mentioned above. Ó Fearghail who rejects the double introduction thesis sees 1:2-11 as forming a true introduction to the letter. Taking 1:2-11 as an introduction to the letter has implications for the letter's overall arrangement.

The unity of 1:2-11 according to Ó Fearghail is based on a number of relationships within 1:2-11 - catchwords, verbal and thematic links - and the repetition in 1:12 of themes from 1:2-4. Crucially these repetitions are not seen to form an

<sup>99</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 146.

<sup>100</sup> For a summary of the themes found between 1:2-12 and the rest of the main body see table on p. 415 of von Lips's article, 'Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament'.

<sup>101</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 148.

<sup>102</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, pp. 146-47. But see Ó Fearghail, 'On the Literary Structure', 72, who notes that many themes from 1:2-11 are not restated in 4:6-5:12, themes such as wisdom, faith, prayer and testing.

<sup>103</sup> J. P. Lange, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Bielefeld: Verlag von Velhagen und Klasing, 1862), pp. 29-42.

<sup>104</sup> O. Bardenhewer, *Der Brief des heiligen Jakobus* (Freiburg: Herder, 1928), p. 2.

*inclusio*. Rather they are to be seen as functioning anaphorically (*anaphora*) signalling the beginning of a new section.<sup>105</sup> He also notes that ‘the beatitude Μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν, with its unequivocal declaration and a relative clause couched in solemn style, is well suited to introducing the main body of the letter, better suited, indeed, than 1:19a, 1:19b or 2:1’.<sup>106</sup> All of these reasons led him to delimit 1:2-11 as a unit. He also saw the reappearance later in the letter of themes present in 1:2-11 as confirming the introductory nature of 1:2-11 - themes such as testing, steadfastness, wisdom, rich and poor, faith, divine gift, prayer, perfection and double mindedness.<sup>107</sup> He saw these themes restated throughout the text, and noted in particular that the themes of τέλειος and δίψυχος appear to sum up the contents of the letter.<sup>108</sup> Finally, he saw the manner in which themes were introduced and then developed in the main body as similar to the function of a *proemium*, which he describes as a ‘summary of what was to follow’.<sup>109</sup>

In his commentary on James, Burchard describes 1:1-11 as the entrance (‘Eingang’) to the letter. He entitles it ‘Wer an wen was’ (‘Who, to whom, what’) which indicates what he takes 1:1-11 to represent. He describes 1:2-11 as the opening (‘Eröffnung’) of the letter, taking it to set out what was to come (‘Was im Brief kommt’).<sup>110</sup> The general theme is presented in 1:2-4, and the exhortation of these verses is addressed to specific groups of people in 1:5-8 and 1:9-11. He also describes it as a summarising exposition (‘summarische Exposition’).<sup>111</sup> He sees 1:2-4 expanded in 1:12-3:11, the first half of the letter, and 1:5-8, 9-11, in 3:12-4:12, 4:13-5:6, the second half.<sup>112</sup>

## 2. Conclusion of the Letter of James

The conclusion of the letter is also a source of disagreement among scholars although less than in the case of the introduction. Suggestions for a concluding unit

<sup>105</sup> See Ó Fearghail, ‘Literary Structure’, 74 n. 62 for examples of anaphoric-type repetitions: Acts 8:4 and 11:1; 15:40-1 and 18:23; Heb. 1:2 and 1:5. See also Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, pp. 281-83.

<sup>106</sup> Ó Fearghail, ‘Literary Structure’, 76. Other such beatitudes can be found in Ps. 1:1; Prov. 8:32; Job 5:17; Sir. 14:1; Matt. 5:3-11; 11:6; Lk. 1:45; 6:20-22.

<sup>107</sup> Ó Fearghail, ‘Literary Structure’, 76-77.

<sup>108</sup> Ó Fearghail, ‘Literary Structure’, 78-79.

<sup>109</sup> Ó Fearghail, ‘Literary Structure’, 79.

<sup>110</sup> Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 12.

<sup>111</sup> Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 52.

<sup>112</sup> Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 52.

include 5:7-20, 5:12-20, 5:13-20 and 5:19-20 which have also been described as the conclusion, epilogue or *peroratio*.

## 2.1 - An Epilogue: 5:19-20

Cornely, in his introduction to the New Testament, described 5:19-20 as the epilogue of the letter of James, although again, he does not specify what he means by the term 'epilogue'. The two verses, 5:19-20, do clearly form a unit introduced by ἀδελφοί μου, and they conclude the letter, but whether Cornely saw them as forming a true epilogue remains unclear.

Ropes calls 5:19-20 a concluding section but sees it as part of the larger unit 5:7-20.<sup>113</sup> Hiebert found 5:19-20 an 'abrupt conclusion' to a letter which he regarded as having no 'usual epistolary conclusion'.<sup>114</sup> Crotty takes 5:19-20 as his conclusion, because of a parallel in theme he sees to 1:16-18. This parallel helps him form his chiasmic arrangement.<sup>115</sup> Bauckham, in a recent commentary on James, noted that 5:19-20 is a unit which can be seen to conclude the letter.<sup>116</sup>

Cargal sees 5:19-20 (which he takes to be part of a larger unit, 4:11-5:20, entitled 'bringing back one's neighbor') as linking up with his first discursive unit - 1:1-21. On the wandering theme found in 5:19-20 Cargal notes that the truth in 5:19-20, from which the addressees have wandered, appears to be the word of truth, the implanted word of 1:1-21, specifically 1:18-21.<sup>117</sup> He notes that both units, 1 and 4, deal with the saving of one's soul - they have wandered from the truth and now they must be restored in order that their souls be saved.<sup>118</sup> Cargal also highlights a parallel between 5:19-20 and 1:1, perceiving James' use of the term διασπορᾶ (1:1) as a metaphorical representation of those who have wandered from the truth (5:19-20). Cargal sees the author's role in the letter as bringing back those who have been scattered or led away, an act of restoration which he sees in the author's self designation as a servant of God and Jesus Christ.<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>113</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 313, divided it into 5:7-11, 12-18 and 19-20, Dibelius, *James*, pp. 257ff., into 5:7-11, 12, 13-15, 16-18 and 19-20.

<sup>114</sup> Hiebert, *James*, p. 38.

<sup>115</sup> Crotty, 'The Literary Structure', 45-47.

<sup>116</sup> Bauckham, *James*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>117</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 53.

<sup>118</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 53.

<sup>119</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 49.

## 2.2 - A Conclusion: 5:13-20

Some scholars take 5:13 to begin the conclusion, mostly because they see a relationship between 5:12 and the verses that precede it. Sidebottom, for example, sees 5:13-20 as a conclusion to the letter, because for him 5:12 concludes the larger unit 3:1-5:12.<sup>120</sup> Perkins takes 5:13 to be the initial verse of the conclusion 5:13-20, taking 5:12 to conclude 4:13-5:12. In her view, 5:13-20 is a final exhortation to the community on the importance of prayer.<sup>121</sup>

Penner takes 5:13 as the initial verse of the conclusion 5:13-20, taking 5:12 to belong to 4:6-5:12.<sup>122</sup> He finds an inclusion between 4:6 and 5:12 which indicates the unity of this section. Elliott also takes the conclusion of the letter to begin in 5:13; preferring to view 5:7-12 as part of the main body of the letter.<sup>123</sup> In addition he finds a correlation of themes between the introduction, 1:2-12, and conclusion, 5:13-20. In his view 5:13a restates 1:2-4; 1:12; 1:14a and 1:19-20; 5:13b and 5:14-18 restate 1:5-8; 5:19-20 recalls 1:12.<sup>124</sup>

## 2.3 - An Alternative Conclusion: 5:12-20

A number of scholars take 5:12-20 to form the conclusion or at least the closing section of the letter. For Cellérier it formed the third part of the letter, while for Pfeiffer it was the closing section.<sup>125</sup> Mayor took these verses as a closing unit, dividing them into four parts, 5:7-11, 12, 13-18 and 19-20. Robert and Feuillet describe 5:12-20 as the closing recommendations of the letter centred on the concept of prayer.<sup>126</sup> Vouga and Martin both take 5:12-20 as their concluding section, although as part of a larger final unit (4:13-5:20). They see this unit, including 5:12-20, as paralleling sections in the introduction (1:5-8 and 4:13-17; 1:9-11 and 5:1-6; 1:12 and 5:7-11; 1:13-19a and 5:12-20).<sup>127</sup>

Johnson takes 5:12-20 as his conclusion, taking the formula  $\Pi\rho\delta\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omega\nu$  of 5:12 to mark the transition from the body to the conclusion of the letter. Unlike other

<sup>120</sup> Sidebottom, *James*, p. 46, entitles 5:19-20 as 'further moral exhortations'.

<sup>121</sup> Perkins, *First and Second Peter, James and Jude*, p. 93.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 157.

<sup>123</sup> See analysis of Elliott's introduction above.

<sup>124</sup> Elliott, 'The Epistle of James', 72.

<sup>125</sup> Pfeiffer, 'Jakobusbriefes', 179.

<sup>126</sup> Robert and Feuillet, 'The Epistle of James', p. 555.

<sup>127</sup> Vouga, *Jacques*, p. 21; Martin, *James*, p. cii.

scholars Johnson takes 5:7-11 as a self contained unit marked by an *inclusio* formed by references to patience in 5:7 and 11 and by the threefold repetition of ἀδελφοί in 5:7, 9 and 10. He sees it as forming part of the body of the letter. It marks out, in his view, the positive side of the reversal of 1:12, while 4:13-5:6 marks out the negative side of the reversal of 1:9-11.<sup>128</sup>

Like Johnson, Moo takes the phrase Πρὸ πάντων as marking the beginning of the letter's concluding section. In his view it functions similarly to the concluding term Λοιπὸν ('finally'), which is found in 2 Cor. 13:11 and Phil. 4:8. Moo, like Francis, sees 5:13-18 with its encouragement of prayer for physical ailments as typical of the concluding health wish of Hellenistic letters. He notes that James does not conclude his letter with greetings and benedictions typical of epistolary closings but like Francis he sees 5:19-20 as closely parallel to the conclusion of 1 John.<sup>129</sup>

Edgar also sees 5:12 as marking the beginning of the letter's closing section. He follows Francis in seeing the oath as a typical letter closing formula. He finds two other typical closing formulae in the heath and prayer wishes, although he notes that they 'are not expressed by the usual formulas, but are combined in a way which fits the text's concern with exhortation to show steadfast commitment to God and solidarity with other group members'.<sup>130</sup> Edgar sees 5:19-20 as not typical of other closing formulae but expresses the view that it 'can be seen to have been combined with the letter-closing section, playing a role within the whole text analogous to that of an epilogue in Greek speeches, giving a short thematic recapitulation'.<sup>131</sup>

#### 2.4 - A further alternative Conclusion: 5:7-20

The most popular conclusion proposed for the letter of James is 5:7-20. One of the earliest scholars to take 5:7-20 as a conclusion to the letter was Cladder who took it to relate to certain sections in the introduction (1:2-25), specifically 1:2-8 with its themes of prayer and patience.<sup>132</sup> On the seemingly abrupt ending of James, Francis, whose discussion of the conclusion has been most influential on later scholars, notes that many Hellenistic letters of all types 'have no closing formulas

<sup>128</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 325-26, 340-46.

<sup>129</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 248-49.

<sup>130</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 209.

<sup>131</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 209.

<sup>132</sup> Cladder, 'Die Anlage', 57. See also the study of Krüger.

whatsoever' but 'just stop' and have 'no apparent further epistolary close'.<sup>133</sup> He goes on to argue, however, that Jas. 5:7-20 does contain features of epistolary closings. For this he appeals to the work of Exler who lists characteristic closing themes and phrases of Hellenistic letters.<sup>134</sup> Francis saw *Πρὸ πάντων* with a 'health wish' and the 'oath formula' as significant and saw these features at work in Jas. 5:12-20.<sup>135</sup> He also argued that prayer was an 'established element of the epistolary close' of NT letters, and he listed examples from Paul (2 Cor. 9:14; 13:7; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2-6; 1 Thess. 5:17; Phlm. 22) and 1 John 5:14-17 in support.<sup>136</sup>

The examples given by Exler,<sup>137</sup> however, indicate, as Ó Fearghail has pointed out, that the phrase *Πρὸ πάντων* can be found at both the beginning and end of letters and is not particularly characteristic of the conclusion, and while the phrase is often found with a health wish, one may find it at the beginning or end of a letter, as Exler's examples show.<sup>138</sup> Moreover, what Francis sees as the 'health wish' in James is 'not a courtesy wish', as one would expect to find in a letter, nor is it a query after the recipient's health, as one would also expect to find in a letter, but 'instructions about a sick person' and how that person should be treated.<sup>139</sup> As for the exhortation on oaths in 5:12, an oath formula is often found at the conclusion of Hellenistic letters, as indeed Exler's examples show, but the oath is used in the cases cited by Exler in a formal context to underline the authority of the letter; this is quite different from its use in Jas. 5:12.<sup>140</sup> There is no example of the phrase *Πρὸ πάντων* occurring with oaths in any of the examples furnished by Exler.<sup>141</sup> What Ó Fearghail does find interesting in the examples of Hellenistic letters furnished by Exler is the complete absence in some of them (apart from the date) of a closing formula.<sup>142</sup>

The theme of prayer, as Francis points out, is an 'established element' of the epistolary conclusion of NT epistles, and he points to the concluding sections of the letters of Paul in which he recommends prayer or asks for prayer or announces that he

<sup>133</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 125.

<sup>134</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 125; F. X. Exler, *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter. A study in Greek Epistolography* (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 1923), pp. 107-10.

<sup>135</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 125.

<sup>136</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 125.

<sup>137</sup> Cf. Exler, *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter*, pp. 107-110.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 80.

<sup>139</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 80.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 80.

<sup>141</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 81.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 80-81; cf. 1 John 5:13; 1 Cor. 16:22; 1 Thess. 5:23, 1 Pet. 5:1; Jude 18:21.

is praying for his readers (cf. 2 Cor. 13:7; 1 Thess. 5:17, 25; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2-3; Phlm. 22). Ó Fearghail points out that the theme of prayer does accompany concluding salutations of Pauline letters, as a personal appeal in 1 Thess. 5:25 and Phlm. 22, and in the non-Pauline Col. 4:12, where it appears as an assurance of being remembered. But, as Ó Fearghail notes, it is more frequent in exhortations that precede the epistolary conclusion, as for example, in 1 Thess. 5:17, 2 Cor. 13:7, 2 Thess. 3:1, Heb. 13:18 or Eph. 6:18.<sup>143</sup>

Francis notes that the theme of prayer accompanies concluding salutations in 1 Thess. 5:25 and Phlm. 20. In these two examples, however, the theme of prayer occurs not in an exhortation as in James but as a personal appeal made by the writer of the letter.<sup>144</sup> The general exhortation to pray for what one needs in Phil. 4:6 ('Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God') is perhaps the closest in kind to the exhortation found in Jas. 5:13-18.<sup>145</sup>

With reference to Jas. 5:19-20 Francis appeals to the example of 1 John 5:14-17 in which the writer recommends prayer for anyone in need and 'especially the brother in sin'.<sup>146</sup> It is an example that he sees as similar to the closing exhortation in the letter of James in that both recommend prayer for the brother who sins - 'If any one sees his brother committing what is not a mortal sin, he will ask, and God will give him life for those whose sin is not mortal. There is sin which is mortal; I do not say that one is to pray for that' (1 John 5:16). Francis sees another parallel to Jas. 5:19-20 in the reference to prayer in Jude 20b ('pray in the Holy Spirit') since it is 'conjoined to the need of the sinner' (v.23).<sup>147</sup>

Despite its problems, the proposal put forward by Francis for an epistolary conclusion in James has been quite influential. Davids followed Francis in taking 5:7-20 to contain epistolary concluding motifs and a thematic reprise of patience in 5:7-11.<sup>148</sup> Hartin, also followed Francis in taking 5:7-20 as a conclusion. He divided it into three sections (5:7-11, 12, 13-20), and like Francis found the phrase Πρὸ

---

<sup>143</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 81

<sup>144</sup> See 1 Thess. 5:25: 'pray for us'; Phlm. 22: 'I am hoping through your prayers to be granted to you' (cf. Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 81).

<sup>145</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 81.

<sup>146</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 125.

<sup>147</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 125.

<sup>148</sup> Cf. Davids, *James*, p. 26.

πάντων, the theme of prayer and the thematic reprise of patience as indicators of a conclusion in 5:7-20.<sup>149</sup>

The links between the opening and concluding sections of the letter of James have also influenced the choice of 5:7-20 as the conclusion of the letter.<sup>150</sup> Wuellner, for example, found a correlation of themes between the *exordium* 1:2-12, and the closing of the letter in 5:7-20 which he termed a *peroratio*.<sup>151</sup> Frankemölle takes the correspondence between 1:2-18 (the *exordium*) and 5:7-20 to confirm the role of the latter as the epilogue or *peroratio*.<sup>152</sup> Burchard sees a correspondence of themes between his introduction, 1:2-11, and 5:7-20 which leads him to take 5:7-20 as the closing unit.<sup>153</sup> The links which Baasland observed between the *exordium* 1:2-15 and 5:7-20 led him to take the latter as the *peroratio*.<sup>154</sup> In a similar vein Thurén identified 5:7-20 as the *peroratio*, which to him has parallels with the *exordium* (1:1-18) and which is formed of two units, 5:7-11, termed the *recapitulatio*, and 5:12-20, the *conquestio*.<sup>155</sup>

In his non-rhetorical approach, Taylor notes a 'grand *inclusio*' between 1:2-27 and 5:7-20. He does not follow Francis in seeing epistolary concluding formulae in 5:7-20. He notes the change of tone in 5:7, initiating the conclusion of the letter which extends to 5:20.<sup>156</sup> The unit 5:7-20 picks up a number of key items and themes from 1:2-27.<sup>157</sup> It consists of three sections, 5:7-11, 12 and 13-20, with 5:12 acting as a transition between 5:7-11 and 5:13-20.<sup>158</sup> Sleeper also takes 5:7-20 to bring the letter to a close but he divides it into two units - 5:7-11 and 5:12-20. He sees 5:7-11 returning to the theme of 1:2-4 and 1:12, both of which deal with patience, while

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Hartin *James*, pp. 245-47, 261.

<sup>150</sup> These links include: 1:12 (Μακάριος) / 5:7 (Μακροθυμήσατε); 1:12 (ὑπομένει) / 5:11 (ὑπομείναντας and ὑπομονήν); 1:15 (ἁμαρτία) / 5:20 (ἁμαρτωλὸν and ἁμαρτιῶν); 1:16 (πλαυᾶσθε) / 5:19 (πλανηθῆ); 1:18 (ἀληθείας) / 5:19 (ἀληθείας); 1:18 (ἀπεκύησεν) / 5:18 (καρπὸν); 1:20 (δικαιοσύνην) / 5:16 (δικαίου); and 1:21 (σῶσαι) / 5:20 (σώσει).

<sup>151</sup> Wuellner, 'Der Jakobusbrief', 36, 43.

<sup>152</sup> Frankemölle, 'Das Semantische Netz des Jakobusbriefes', 175, 193.

<sup>153</sup> Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 12.

<sup>154</sup> Baasland, 'Literarische Form, Thematik', p. 3659.

<sup>155</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 262-84.

<sup>156</sup> Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, p. 119.

<sup>157</sup> Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, pp. 119-123; the thematic parallels he finds between 1:2-27 and 5:7-20 are as follows: 1:12/1:25 (blessing) and 5:7 (blessing); 1:3/1:4/1:12 (patience) and 5:11 (patience); 1:15 (death) and 5:20 (death); 1:16 (deceived/led away) and 5:19-20 (deceived/led away); 1:18 (truth) and 5:19 (truth); 1:18 (fruit) and 5:18 (fruit); 1:20 (righteousness) and 5:16 (righteousness); 1:21 (salvation) and 5:20 (salvation).

<sup>158</sup> Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, p. 122. See also M. E. Taylor, 'Recent Scholarship on the Structure of James', *Currents in Biblical Research* 3 (2004), 109; Taylor and Guthrie, 'Structure of James', 700-01.



5:12-20 deals with interrelationships within the Christian community. He points out links with the opening section of the letter - oath taking (5:12) and appropriate speech (1:19-20, 26); prayer in 5:13-18 which recalls the theme of prayer in 1:5-8; faith in 5:19-20 which recalls the theme in 1:2-4.<sup>159</sup> In her chiasmic structure of the letter, Krüger takes 5:7-20 to correspond to 1:2-8, linked by the themes of patience, endurance and prayer.<sup>160</sup>

The use of the term *peroratio* to 5:7-20 has not gone without criticisms. Does 5:7-20, Ó Fearghail asks, fulfil the role of a *peroratio* as found in the rhetorical handbooks? Can one say that 5:7-11 or 5:7-20 recapitulates the issues raised earlier in the letter to remind the audience of issues that had already been set out, as the handbook suggests the *peroratio* should do? How does the presence in 5:7-20 of the elements of oath taking, caring for the sick, confession of sin, taking care of an errant brother - how do these new elements fit with the rhetorical definition of the *peroratio*? In addition, as Ó Fearghail has pointed out, the thematic correspondences between the *exordium* and *peroratio* can also be explained as the correspondences between the beginning of the body of the letter, 1:12-27, and its conclusion, 5:7-20.<sup>161</sup> This does not mean, he notes, that 5:7-20 cannot be seen as providing a conclusion to the letter, since the instances of prayer and the bringing back of the wandering brother can be seen as topics suitable for the conclusion of a letter.<sup>162</sup>

## Conclusion

The survey in this chapter has shown how divided opinion is on identifying the introduction and conclusion of the letter. The most popular suggestions for the introduction are those of 1:2-27 and 1:2-18, but there is a range of suggestions that go from 1:2-11 to 1:2-27. The double introduction proposed by Francis and his suggestion for the conclusion of James have been very influential. Davids and others have been heavily influenced by his suggestions. Some of those who do not follow his theories exactly have adopted in varying degrees his proposal of a double introduction or his view of the oath and the health wish in the closing verses of James as epistolary closing features (e.g. Taylor, Wall, Hartin). A proposal for a double introductory

---

<sup>159</sup> Sleeper, *James*, p. 130.

<sup>160</sup> Krüger, *Der Jakobusbrief*, pp. 105-08.

<sup>161</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 82.

<sup>162</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 82.

section in James has been met with criticism, not only in the sources cited originally by Francis which do not show much evidence of a double opening structure in antiquity, but also in how both Francis, Davids, and others, view the restatement of themes in the second half of the double introduction.

The rhetorical approach has also seen various suggestions for the opening and closing of the letter, but again there is quite an amount of disagreement on what constitutes a *proemium* or prologue. Wuellner, Edgar, Witherington, and Thurén each proposed their own particular rhetorical arrangements for James, with little agreement on the extent, for example, of the *propositio* or the *exordium*.

One trend that emerges from the review is that scholars have generally accepted that in the opening chapter of James themes are introduced that are found elsewhere in the letter. In this, too, the study of Francis has been influential. His views have been supported by those such as Johnson who sees the whole of the first chapter (1:2-27) as an *epitome*, a table of contents of themes which recur in the rest of the letter. It is also true to say that in recent years scholars have tended to see the opening and closing verses as very much part and parcel of the letter.

The conclusion of James has been less a source of contention than the introduction. The concluding two verses, 5:19-20, have been seen to play a concluding role, and Cornely described them as an ‘epilogue’. But the most popular proposals for the concluding unit of James have been 5:7-20, 5:12-20 and 5:13-20.

The studies of Francis and Ropes have been most influential in the delimiting of these units. Many scholars take 5:12 as the beginning of the conclusion. The presence of the phrase *Πρὸ πάντων* in 5:12 has induced many to see here the beginning of the concluding section.

Others have been influenced by the links between the opening and concluding sections of the letter of James in their choice of 5:7-20 as its conclusion. This is especially true of the rhetorical arrangements of James which see the presence of a *peroratio* in the final verses of James as corresponding to the presence of the prologue at the beginning. The use of the term *peroratio* for 5:7-20 has not gone without criticisms, though, since there is very little in the close of James that could be called a ‘restatement of themes’, in the manner of a proper *peroratio*. Non-rhetorical approaches to the literary structure of James have also been criticised, as we have seen.

Before endeavouring to delimit the introduction and conclusion of James, to establish its overall literary structure and its literary form, and to make some suggestions as to how James may be seen as a unified whole, it is necessary to discuss a number of methodological issues that will underpin the following chapters.

## Chapter III

### Methodological Considerations for the Letter of James

#### Introduction

In his methodological work on the exegesis of the New Testament, K. Berger describes a text as 'a web of relationships'.<sup>1</sup> It is the relationships between the various verses of James that is the focus of attention here. As we saw in chap. I above, James was long seen as being bereft of an overall plan or literary structure. W. M. L. de Wette, for example, maintained in his handbook to the NT that the Letter of James was written without a plan.<sup>2</sup> Von Tischendorf, in his critical edition of the NT (1869-72), had much the same view, dividing the text into eighteen parts: 1:1; 1:2-11; 1:12-15; 1:16-18; 1:19-27; 2:1-4; 2:5-13; 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; 5:13-18; 5:19-20. Although Dibelius, in his famous commentary on James, isolated units in the text with a variety of methods, he does come with an arrangement in which a number of smaller units are linked together from thematic and form critical points of view.<sup>3</sup> In more recent years, as we have seen above, scholars have tended to see the letter as more of a unified document and have put forward suggestions for its literary structure. It is rare today to find a treatment of James which does not provide some detail on the overall relationship of each part of the text to the whole.

In searching for the literary structure of a text such as James, the challenge is to tease out the relationships between the various elements of the text. This involves a close examination of the text of James - an examination that involves syntactic, stylistic, semantic and thematic analyses of the text, its vocabulary, the frequency of certain terms in the text and where they occur, the nature of the repetition of words

---

<sup>1</sup> K. Berger, *Exegese des Neuen Testaments*, (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1977), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> W. M. L. de Wette, *Kurzgefasstes Exegetisches Handbuch zum Neuen Testament* III,1, (Leipzig, 1847), p. 103.

<sup>3</sup> Dibelius, *James*, pp. 69, 108.

and phrases, the changes from narrative to direct speech, the changes of place and time, and the use of particles. Since it is important to know the terms that are important for James - the frequency of their occurrence where they occur, and their significance - our first preliminary task is to look at the vocabulary used in James.

## 1. The Vocabulary of James

The vocabulary of the letter of James is quite varied. Let us take a look at some of the more important words and concepts in James and their occurrences, and indeed recurrences throughout the letter.<sup>4</sup>

- **δοῦλος** [*slave, servant*]: 1:1. Only occurs once, however, other words related to servitude can be found in James at 1:9 (ταπεινός), 4:6 (ταπεινοίς), 4:7 (ὑποτάγητε) and 4:10 (ταπεινώθητε).
- **κύριος** [*lord*]: 1:7, 2:1; 3:9, 4:10; 5:4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15. Interchangeable with θεός in some places.
- **θεός** [*God*]: 1:1, 5, 27; 2:5, 19, 23; 3:9; 4:4, 6, 7, 8. The word θεός ceases to be used by the author after 4:8. The term κύριος may act as a substitute for the word 'God' or it may refer exclusively to Christ as in 1:1 and 2:1.
- **δώδεκα** [*twelve*]: 1:1. This is the only numerical word found in James, except for the use of εἷς in 2:19 and 4:12 where it has the sense of 'one'.
- **φυλαίς** [*tribes*]: 1:1.
- **διασπορά** [*diaspora, scattering*]: 1:1.
- **χαίρειν** [*rejoice, greetings*]: 1:1.
- **πᾶς** [*all*]: 1:2, 5, 8, 17, 19, 21; 3:7; 4:16.
- **χαρά** [*gladness, joy*]: 1:2; 4:9.
- **ἀδελφός** [*brother*]: 1:2, 9, 16, 19, 2:1, 5, 14, 15, 3:1, 10, 12, 4:11, 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19. Its frequency in James is notable.
- **πειρασμός/πειραζόμενος/πειράζομαι/ἀπίραστός/πειράζεται** [*testing, temptation*]: 1:2, 1:12, 1:13, 1:14. Note the concentration in 1:12-14.

---

<sup>4</sup> The translations in this list are taken from J. P. Louw & E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 2 vols (UBS: 1999).

- δοκίμιον / δόκιμος [*testing*]: 1:3, 12.
- μου [*I, me*]: 1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 3, 5, 14, 18; 3:1, 10, 12; 5:12, 19 (no ἐγώ or ἡμεῖς).
- ὑμῶν/ὑμᾶς/ὑμῖν [*you*]: 1:3, 5, 21; 2:2, 6 (2), 7, 16; 3:13, 14; 4:1 (3), 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16; 5:1, 2 (2), 3 (3), 4 (2), 5, 6, 8 (2), 12, 13, 14, 19. These occurrences highlight the direct style of the writer; the letter has 54 imperatives in 108 verses.
- αὐτῷ [*he, she, it*]: 1:5, 8, 9, 10, 11 (3), 12, 13, 18, 23, 25, 26 (2), 27 (2); 2:5, 6, 7, 14, 16, 21, 22, 23; 3:3 (2), 9 (2), 10, 11, 13, 15; 4:11, 17; 5:3, 5, 14 (2), 15 (2), 18, 19, 20 (2).
- ὑπομονή [*endurance*]: 1:3 (ὑπομονήν), 1:4 (ὑπομονή), 5:11 (ὑπομείναντας). The equivalent term μακροθυμέω is found in 5:7 (μακροθυμήσατε/μακροθυμῶν) and 5:8 (μακροθυμήσατε).
- τέλειος/τελειώ [*perfect/make perfect*]: 1:4 (τέλειον/τέλειοι), 1:17 (τέλειον), 1:25 (τέλειον), 2:8 (τελείτε), 2:22 (έτελειώθη), 3:1 (τέλειος). It is absent in the closing of the letter.
- κατεργάζεται [*accomplish*]: 1:3.
- πίστις [*faith*]: 1:3 (πίστεως), 1:6 (πίστει); 2:1 (πίστιν); 2:5 (πίστει); 2:14 (πίστιν/πίστις); 2:17 (πίστις); 2:18 (πίστιν/πίστιν/πίστιν); 2:20 (πίστις); 2:22 (πίστις/πίστις); 2:24 (πίστεως); 2:26 (πίστις); 5:15 (πίστεως). There is a cluster of the term in 2:14-26 but it is also present in 2:1-5. Elsewhere in the letter it is found in 1:3, 1:6 and in 5:15.
- ἔχέτω [*possess, hold a view*]: 1:4; 2:1, 14, 18; 3:14; 4:2.
- ἔργον [*act, work*]: 1:4, 25; 2:14, 17, 18 (3), 20, 21, 22 (2), 24, 25, 26; 3:13. There is a cluster of the term in 2:14-26.
- Εἰ [*if, because, that, whether*]: 1:5, 23, 26; 2:8, 9, 11; 3:2, 3, 14; 4:11 (2), 12.
- ὁλόκληροι [*entire*]: 1:4.
- τις/τί/τινά/τινές [*someone, something*]: 1:5, 7, 18, 23, 26; 2:14, 16, 18; 3:2; 5:12, 13, 14, 19.
- αἰτέω [*ask for*]: 1:5 (αἰτείτω), 1:6 (αἰτείτω), 4:2 (αἰτεῖσθαι), 4:3 (αἰτεῖτε/αἰτεῖσθε). Note also the theme of prayer.
- λειπόμενοι / λείπεται [*to be in need of, not possess*]: 1:4, 5.

- **γινώσκοντες** [*to know, learn, be familiar with*]: 1:3 (γινώσκοντες), 2:20 (γινῶναι), 5:20 (γινωσκέτω).
- **σοφία** [*wisdom*]: 1:5 (σοφίας), 3:13 (σοφίας), 3:15 (σοφία), 3:17 (σοφία). It frames 3:13-18.
- **διδόντος** [*to give*]: 1:5; 4:6.
- **διακρινόμενος** [*to evaluate carefully, prefer, make a distinction*]: 1:6 (διακρινόμενος/διακρινόμενος), 2:4 (διεκρίθητε), 3:17 (ἀδιάκριτος).
- **λήμψεται** [*to acquire, receive*]: 1:7 (λήμψεται), 1:12 (λήμψεται), 3:1 (λημψόμεθα), 4:3 (λαμβάνετε), 5:7 (λάβη), 5:10 (λάβετε). In all the cases of James the verb is always used in relation to divine giving, either good (1:12; 5:7, 10) or bad (1:7; 3:1; 4:3).
- **άνηρ / άνδρός** [*man, human*]: 1:8, 12, 20, 23; 2:2; 3:2.
- **δίψυχος** [*double-minded*]: 1:8 (δίψυχος), 4:8 (δίψυχοι). Only here in the NT. It may have been coined by the author.
- **όδός** [*road, journey, way of life*]: 1:8 (οδοῖς), 2:25 (όδῳ), 5:20 (όδοῦ).
- **ταπεινός** [*downhearted, lowly, humble*]: 1:9 (ταπεινός), 4:6 (ταπεινοῖς), 4:10 (ταπεινώθητε).
- **πορείαις** [*journey, business activity*]: 1:11.
- **ὑψει** [*height, high rank*]: 1:9 (ὑψει), 4:10 (ὑψώσει). Both times the word occurs with the word **ταπεινός**: 1:9 (ταπεινός) and 4:10 (ταπεινώθητε).
- **πλούσιος** [*rich, in abundance*]: 1:10 (πλούσιος), 1:11 (πλούσιος), 2:5 (πλουσίους), 2:6 (πλούσιοι), 5:1 (πλούσιοι). Used only once in a positive sense (2:5: 'rich in faith').
- **προσώπου** [*face, person, surface*]: 1:11 (προσώπου), 1:23 (πρόσωπον).
- **Μακάριος** [*happy, blessed*]: 1:12 (Μακάριος), 1:25 (Μακάριος).
- **άγαπάω** [*love, show love*]: 1:12 (άγαπῶσιν), 1:16 (άγαπητοί), 1:19 (άγαπητοί), 2:5 (άγαπητοί/ άγαπῶσιν), 2:8 (Άγαπήσεις). Found three times as a direct address, 'my beloved brothers' in 1:16, 19; 2:5.
- **έπηγγείλατο** [*promise*]: 1:12 (έπηγγείλατο), 2:5 (έπηγγείλατο).
- **έπιθυμίας** [*deep desire, lust*]: 1:14 (έπιθυμίας), 1:15 (έπιθυμία), 4:2 (έπιθυμείτε).

- **ἄμαρτία** [*sin*]: 1:15 (ἄμαρτία), 2:9 (ἄμαρτιάν), 4:8 (ἄμαρτωλοί), 4:17 (ἄμαρτία), 5:15 (ἄμαρτίας), 5:16 (ἄμαρτίας), 5:20 (ἄμαρτωλὸν/ἄμαρτιῶν). Note the three occurrences in 5:15-20.
- **θάνατος** [*death*]: 1:15 (θάνατον), 5:20 (θανάτου).
- **πλανᾶω** [*deceive*]: 1:16 (πλανᾶσθε), 5:19 (πλανηθῆ), 5:20 (πλάνης).
- **πατήρ** [*father*]: 1:17 (πατρός), 1:27 (πατρὶ), 2:21 (πατήρ), 3:9 (πατέρα).
- **ἀποκύει** [*cause a state, cause to exist*]: 1:15 (ἀποκύει), 1:18 (ἀπεκύησεν).
- **ἀληθείας** [*truth*]: 1:18 (ἀληθείας), 3:14 (ἀληθείας), 5:19 (ἀληθείας).
- **λόγος** [*word*]: 1:18 (λόγῳ), 1:21 (λόγον), 1:22 (λόγου), 1:23 (λόγου), 3:2 (λόγῳ).
- **ἡμᾶς/ἡμῶν** [*I, me*]: 1:18 (2); 2:1, 21; 3:3, 6; 4:5; 5:3, 5, 17.
- **βουληθεῖς** [*desire, intend*]: 1:18 (βουληθεῖς), 3:4 (βούλεται), 4:4 (βουληθῆ).
- **λαλέω** [*to speak*]: 1:19 (λαλήσαι); 2:12 (λαλεῖτε); 4:11 (καταλαλεῖτε/καταλαλῶν/καταλαλεῖ); 5:10 (ἐλάλησαν). In the form of a negative command in all its occurrences except 5:10.
- **δικαιοσύνην** [*righteousness*]: 1:20 (δικαιοσύνην), 2:21 (ἐδικαιώθη), 2:23 (δικαιοσύνην), 2:24 (δικαιοῦται), 2:25 (ἐδικαιώθη), 3:18 (δικαιοσύνης), 5:6 (δίκαιον), 5:16 (δικαίου).
- **σῶσαι** [*save*]: 1:21 (σῶσαι), 2:14 (σῶσαι), 4:12 (σῶσαι), 5:15 (σώσει), 5:20 (σώσει).
- **ψυχὴ** [*inner self, life, soul*]: 1:21 (ψυχὰς), 3:15 (ψυχική), 5:20 (ψυχὴν).
- **ποιέω/ποιητής** [*doer, one who does*]: 1:22 (ποιηταὶ), 1:23 (ποιητής), 1:25 (ποιητής), 2:8 (ποιεῖτε), 2:12 (ποιεῖτε), 2:13 (ποιήσαντι), 2:19 (ποιεῖς), 3:12 (ποιῆσαι/ποιῆσαι), 3:18 (ποιοῦσιν), 4:11 (ποιητής), 4:13 (ποιήσομεν), 4:15 (ποιήσομεν), 4:17 (ποιεῖν/ποιοῦντι), 5:15 (πεποιηκώς).
- **δυνάμενον** [*to be able, to have the power to do something*]: (1:21 (δυνάμενον), 2:14 (δύναται), 3:8 (δύναται), 3:12 (δύναται), 4:2 (δύνασθε), 4:12 (δυνάμενος).
- **ἐλευθερίας** [*freedom, liberty*]: 1:25 (ἐλευθερίας), 2:12 (ἐλευθερίας). Both occurrences of the word are found in relation to the law - 'law of liberty'.
- **ἐπιλησμονῆς** [*to forget*]: 1:24 (ἐπελάθετο), 1:25 (ἐπιλησμονῆς).



- νόμος [*law*]: 1:25 (νόμον), 2:8 (νόμον), 2:9 (νόμου), 2:10 (νόμον); 2:11 (νόμου), 2:12 (νόμου), 4:11 (νόμου / νόμον / νόμον / νόμου); 4:12 (νομοθέτης). Note the clusters of the word in 2:8-12 and 4:11-12.
- χαλιναγωγῶν [*to exercise self control*]: 1:26 (χαλιναγωγῶν), 3:2 (χαλιναγωγῆσαι), 3:3 (χαλινοῦς). Used in relation to the tongue in the letter.
- γλῶσσα [*tongue*]: 1:26 (γλῶσσαν), 3:5 (γλῶσσα), 3:6 (γλῶσσα/ γλῶσσα), 3:8 (γλῶσσαν).
- καρδία [*heart*]: 1:26 (καρδίαν), 3:14 (καρδίᾳ), 4:8 (καρδίας), 5:5 (καρδίας), 5:8 (καρδίας). All occurrences of the word are in the negative.
- κόσμος [*earth, world*]: 1:27 (κόσμου), 2:5 (κόσμῳ), 3:6 (κόσμος), 4:4 (κόσμου/ κόσμου).
- προσωποληψίαις [*partiality*]: 2:1 (προσωποληψίαις), 2:9 (προσωπολημπτεῖτε).
- πτωχὸς [*poor, of little value*]: 2:2 (πτωχὸς), 2:3 (πτωχῶ), 2:5 (πτωχοῦς), 2:6 (πτωχόν).
- κριτής [*judge, to judge*]: 2:4 (κριταὶ), 2:12 (κρίνεσθαι), 2:13 (κρίσις/κρίσεως), 3:1 (κρίμα), 4:11 (κρίνων/κρίνει/κρίνεις /κριτής), 4:12 (κριτῆς/κρίνων), 5:9 (κριθῆτε/κριτῆς), 5:12 (κρίσιν). Words relating to judgement are found in clusters in 2:12-13, 4:11-12 and 5:9, 12.
- καλός [*good, fitting*]: 2:7 (καλὸν), 2:8 (καλῶς), 2:19 (καλῶς); 3:13 (καλῆς), 4:17 (καλὸν). Always used in relation to something done correctly in the eyes of God.
- ὄνομα [*name*]: 2:7 (ὄνομα), 5:10 (ὀνόματι), 5:14 (ὀνόματι).
- πλησίον [*neighbour*]: 2:8 (πλησίον), 4:12 (πλησίον).
- ὅλος [*whole, complete*]: 2:10 (ὅλον), 3:2 (ὅλον), 3:3 (ὅλον), 3:6 (ὅλον).
- φονεύσης [*to murder*]: 2:11 (φονεύσης/φονεύεις), 4:2 (φονεύετε), 5:6 (ἐφονεύσατε).
- σῶμα [*body*]: 2:16 (σώματος), 2:26 (σῶμα), 3:2 (σῶμα), 3:3 (σῶμα), 3:6 (σῶμα).
- νεκρός [*dead, useless*]: 2:17 (νεκρά), 2:26 (νεκρά).
- θέλεις [*desire, wish*]: 2:20 (θέλεις), 4:15 (θελήση).

- φίλος [*friend*]: 2:23 (φίλος), 4:4 (φιλία).
- πνεῦμα [*spirit, inner being*]: 2:26 (πνεύματος), 4:5 (πνεῦμα).
- ἰδοῦ [*look, indeed!*]: 3:4, 3:5; 5:4, 5:7, 5:9, 5:11.
- μέλος [*body part, member*]: 3:5 (μέλος), 3:6 (μέλεσιν), 4:1 (μέλεσιν).
- πῦρ [*fire*]: 3:5 (πῦρ), 3:6 (πῦρ), 5:3 (πῦρ).
- καθίσταται [*appoint, cause to be*]: 3:6 (καθίσταται), 4:4 (καθίσταται).
- μεστή [*very full, completely*]: 3:8, 3:17.
- ἰοῦ [*poison*]: 3:8 (ίου), 5:3 (ίου).
- ζῆλος [*zeal, jealousy*]: 3:14 (ζῆλον), 3:16 (ζῆλος), 4:2 (ζηλοῦτε).
- καρπός [*fruit*]: 3:17 (καρπῶν), 3:18 (καρπός), 5:7 (καρπῶν), 5:18 (καρπῶν).
- ἀντιτάσσεται [*to oppose, resist*]: 4:6 (ἀντιτάσσεται), 5:6 (ἀντιτάσσεται).
- ἐγγίσατε [*to come near*]: 4:8 (ἐγγίσατε / ἐγγιεῖ), 5:8 (ἤγγικεν).
- κλαύσατε [*to weep*]: 4:9 (κλαύσατε), 5:1 (κλαύσατε).
- Ἄγε νῦν [*come now, stand to attention*]: 4:13, 5:1.
- γῆς [*earth, land*]: 5:5 (γῆς), 5:7 (γῆς), 5:12 (γῆν), 5:17 (γῆς), 5:18 (γῆ).
- μακροθυμέω [*patience*]: 5:7 (Μακροθυμήσατε/μακροθυμῶν), 5:8 (μακροθυμήσατε), 5:10 (μακροθυμίας). Note the relationship to ὑπομονη earlier in the letter.
- παρουσία [*presence, arrival*]: 5:7 (παρουσίας), 5:8 (παρουσία). Possible allusion to the *parousia* of the lord in 5:9: ἰδοὺ ὁ κριτῆς πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν ἔστηκεν.
- κακοπαθίας [*suffering distress*]: 5:10 (κακοπαθίας), 5:13 (Κακοπαθεῖ).
- οὐρανὸν [*heaven*]: 5:12 (οὐρανὸν), 5:18 (οὐρανός).
- προσευχέσθω· [*to pray, prayer*]: 5:13 (προσευχέσθω·), 5:14 (προσευξάσθωσαν), 5:17 (προσευχῆ / προσήξατο), 5:18 (προσηύξατο). Note also 5:15 (εὐχὴ) and 5:16 (εὐχεσθε).

## 1.1 - Evaluating the Vocabulary of James

As we can see from this vocabulary list, the author discusses a variety of topics, with some evidence that he uses the same word, or concept, regularly throughout his letter. Some brief observations can be made about this list, and indeed the usage of the words found there. This will provide some groundwork for the task of finding an overall structure and unity in the letter in the proceeding chapters.

Words related to testing and temptation, πειρασμός/ πειραζόμενος/ πειράζομαι/ ἀπείραστός/ πειράζεται, are found grouped together at the beginning of the letter, with a particularly strong concentration in 1:12-14. Note also the related words δοκίμιον/δόκιμος in 1:3 and 1:12, found *only* at the beginning of the letter. The theme of testing does not recur anywhere else in the letter. This is not to say that the author abandoned completely his thought on testing and temptation when formulating ideas elsewhere in the letter, but merely shows that testing, as his primary focus, concludes in 1:12-15.

Words related to patience and endurance make an appearance at the very beginning of the letter and do not return until the end of the letter - the word ὑπομονή is found in 1:3 (ὑπομονήν) and 1:4 (ὑπομονή), while at the end of the letter we find: 5:7 (μακροθυμήσατε/μακροθυμῶν), 5:8 (μακροθυμήσατε) and 5:11 (ὑπομείναντας).

The majority of words related to perfection are confined to the beginning of the letter - τέλειος/τελειόω is found in 1:4 (τέλειον/τέλειοι), 1:17 (τέλειον), 1:25 (τέλειον), 2:8 (τελείτε), 2:22 (ἔτελειώθη), and 3:1 (τέλειος). It is absent in the closing of the letter. Also absent at the end of the letter is the word δίψυχος, a notable absence given its prominence as a contrast to τέλειος at the start of the letter. The word δίψυχος is found only twice in the letter - 1:8 (δίψυχος) and 4:8 (δίψυχοι). The theme of wisdom, σοφία, occurs in 1:5 (σοφίας) and after a lengthy absence occurs again in 3:13-18 where the word frames the unit - 3:13 (σοφίας), 3:15 (σοφία), and 3:17 (σοφία).

The theme of faith and works is found clustered heavily in 2:14-26: 2:14 (πίστιν/πίστις); 2:17 (πίστις); 2:18 (πίστιν/πίστιν/πίστιν); 2:20 (πίστις); 2:22 (πίστις/πίστις); 2:24 (πίστεως); and 2:26 (πίστις). The theme itself frames this section. The clustering of the theme in 2:14-26 may suggest that the author is finalising his thought on the idea of faith introduced in the beginning of chapter 2 [2:1

(πίστιν); 2:5 (πίστει)], since the use of faith in this context occurs nowhere else in the letter. One final occurrence of the word faith appears at the close of the letter in 5:15 (πίστεως), however, it is introduced into the context of a different topic - prayer. The use of the word ἔργον is also confined to the earlier chapters, 1:4, 25; 2:14, 17, 18 (3), 20, 21, 22 (2), 24, 25, 26; with only one occurrence of the word in the later chapters (3:13). Again, we find a cluster of the word in 2:14-26, like the word 'faith', suggesting that the use of the word reaches its conclusion in 2:14-26.

Words related to prayer are common in the letter. The author makes mention of his readers asking of God in 1:5 (αἰτείτω), 1:6 (αἰτείτω), 4:2 (αἰτείσθαι) and 4:3 (αἰτεῖτε/αἰτεῖσθε). Note, however, that the more explicit reference to prayer is clustered and confined near the end of the letter - 5:13 (προσευχέσθω), 5:14 (προσευξάσθωσαν), 5:17 (προσευχῆ / προσήξατο), 5:18 (προσηύξατο), as well as 5:15 (εὐχῆ) and 5:16 (εὐχεσθε).

Words related to poverty and wealth are found at the beginning of the letter: 1:9 (ταπεινός), 1:10 (πλούσιος), 1:11 (πλούσιος). Poverty and wealth are issues introduced again in the beginning of chapter 2 (2:2 -πτωχός, 2:3 - πτωχῶ, 2:5 - πτωχοῦς, 2:5 - πλουσίους and 2:6 - πλούσιοι, 2:6 - πτωχόν). Lowliness returns in 4:6 and 4:10 - 4:6 (ταπεινοῖς), 4:10 (ταπεινώθητε), where again we find the word ὑψει used again as it was in relation to lowliness in 1:9 (1:9: ὑψει/ταπεινός; 4:10: ὑψώσει/ταπεινώθητε). The author returns to using words related to the rich at the end of the letter where we find a large section (4:13-5:4) devoted in some way to the notion of wealth, with the word πλούσιοι occurring again in 5:1.

Words relating to discrimination, judgment, the law, and partiality occur numerous times in the letter, but one may note large clusters of words relating to these issues in 2:1-13 and 4:11-12 and 5:9-12: 2:1 (προσωποληψίας); 2:9 (προσωπολημπτεῖτε); 2:4 (κριταί), 2:12 (κρίνεσθαι), 2:13 (κρίσις/κρίσεως), 3:1 (κρίμα), 4:11 (κρίνων/κρίνει/κρίνεις /κριτής), 4:12 (κριτής/κρίνων), 5:9 (κριθῆτε/κριτής), 5:12 (κρίσιν). The word νόμος occurs for the first time in 1:25 where it is referred to as a perfect law of liberty. A high concentration is to be found in 2:8-11, where the word νόμος occurs five times, one in each verse (2:8 - νόμον, 2:9 - νόμου, 2:10 - νόμον; 2:11 - νόμου, 2:12 - νόμου). The law returns in 4:11-12 after a

long absence, where it is found four times in 4:11 (νόμου / νόμον / νόμον / νόμου); and one times as lawgiver (νομοθέτης) in 4:12.

A notable grouping of words is to be found near the beginning and end of the letter, where the author uses the same words in each section to describe how truth can lead to salvation and save one's soul from deception, sin and death. Note how the author uses words related to this issue in the beginning of the letter: 1:15 (ἁμαρτία), 1:15 (θάνατον), 1:16 (πλανᾶσθε), 1:18 (ἀληθείας) and 1:21 (σῶσαι). Note how the same words are used at the end of the letter: 5:15 (σῶσει), 5:15 (ἁμαρτίας), 5:16 (ἁμαρτίας), 5:19 (ἀληθείας), 5:19 (πλανηθῆ), 5:20 (ἁμαρτωλὸν / ἁμαρτιῶν), 5:20 (πλάνης), 5:20 (σῶσει), and 5:20 (θανάτου).

Finally we may see how the author introduces new words and concepts into his letter as a means of possibly showing the beginning of a new section. Sometimes the author moves to a new thought but still works within the same theme or concept. This can be noted in 2:1-13 where it is clear the author is introducing a new section by introducing a new line of thought - partiality, judgement and the treatment of the poor. Even though it is a new section several words and themes are brought forward from the earlier chapter - liberty (1:25 - ἐλευθερίας, 2:12 - ἐλευθερίας), salvation (2:14 - σῶσαι), love (1:12 - ἀγαπῶσιν, 1:16 - ἀγαπητοί, 1:19 - ἀγαπητοί, 2:5 - ἀγαπητοί/ ἀγαπῶσιν, 2:8 - Ἀγαπήσεις), care for the lowly in the world (1:26-27//2:1-5), the law, and righteousness (1:20 - δικαιοσύνην, 2:21 - ἐδικαιώθη, 2:23 - δικαιοσύνην, 2:24 - δικαιοῦται, 2:25 - ἐδικαιώθη). This may perhaps show a relationship between chaps. I and II in terms of how the author structures his thought process. We will aim to show just how much overlap like this occurs throughout the letter when we conduct a fuller study in the proceeding chapters. Some of these groupings of words may indicate a continuation of the author's argument, while the absence of such overlap may indicate the presence of the beginning of a new section in the structure of the letter. Let us look now at some of the techniques our author may use in defining and delimiting sections and units within his letter.

## 2. Delimiting Units

W. Egger and P. Wick, in their book *Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament*, set out a number of elements that should be analysed when one is endeavouring to

establish the arrangement or organisation of a text - repetitions or words and phrases, the presence of chiasmic structures, changes from narrative to direct speech, changes of theme, changes of place and time, the introduction of new actors on the scene, syntactic, stylistic and semantic analyses, and so on.<sup>5</sup> There are a number of elements that can assist the reader in delimiting textual units.

- The vocative ἀδελφοί μου is frequently used at the beginning of units in the letters of the NT as, for example, in 1 Cor. 1:10; 2:1; Gal. 1:11; 6:1; Heb. 3:1; 1 Thess. 2:1, 17; 4:1, 13; 5:1, 12; 2 Thess. 2:1; 3:1, 6; it is also used in the speech of James in Acts 15:13. It is used in James in the same way.
- A question may signal the beginning of a unit as it does, for example, in parables in the NT (cf. Matt. 18:12-14; Lk. 15:8-10) or at the beginning of paragraphs in Gal. 3:1-6, 19-25 or 4:21-31 or Rom. 11:1-6. Questions are to be found in James and some have usually been taken to mark the beginning of new units. This is the case, for example, in 2:14 (Τί τὸ ὄφελος, ἀδελφοί μου, ἐὰν πίστιν λέγη τις ἔχειν ἔργα δὲ μὴ ἔχη; μὴ δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν), 3:13 (Τίς σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν; δειξάτω ἐκ τῆς καλῆς ἀναστροφῆς τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ἐν πραύτητι σοφίας) and 4:1 (Πόθεν πόλεμοι καὶ πόθεν μάχαι ἐν ὑμῖν; οὐκ ἐντεῦθεν, ἐκ τῶν ἡδονῶν ὑμῶν τῶν στρατευομένων ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑμῶν). The presence of a question in a verse does not always indicate a new beginning, and other evidence must be found to substantiate the decision to treat it as marking the beginning of a new unit.
- Grammatical changes can also be significant in indicating the beginning of a new unit. The change from the indicative to an imperative can often signal the beginning of a unit as, for example, in 2 Cor. 11:16, Phil. 1:12; 2 Thess. 3:1; Heb. 3:1; 12:3; 13:17. The imperative at the beginning of a small unit is found in Jas. 1:16 and 1:22, for example, and in a larger unit in 2:1.
- A change in theme or topic (cf. Mk. 1:16; Lk. 4:14; 6:1; Jn. 1:19; 1 Thess. 4:1; etc.) or vocabulary (cf. Matt. 5:13-16, 17-20, 21-48; Lk. 11:14) may signal a new beginning or a change of scene (cf. Mk. 1:16, 21, 29, 35; Mt. 5:1; Lk. 1:26; 39; 6:1, 12, 17, etc.) or time (cf. Matt. 11:25; Lk. 1:26; 2:1; 3:1; 6:1; Jn.

<sup>5</sup> See W. Egger, P. Wick, *Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament*, 6th edition, (Freiburg: Herder, 2011), pp. 125-26.

1:29, 35, 43; 2:1; etc.) or the introduction of new persons.

- Catchwords can link sentences, or even units, together. Word links can bind verses together, together with conjunctions such as δὲ, οὖν and γὰρ. Words of contrast can sometimes help bind these word links together. For instance in the letter of James there exists several word links between 1:12-15 with contrasting words of themes bracketing that section - ζῶης (1:12) and θάνατον (1:15). Contrasting themes, notably ‘deception’ (πλανᾶσθε) in Jas. 1:16 and ‘truth’ (ἀληθείας) in Jas. 1:18, can indicate the limits or the framework of a unit.
- The change from narrative to direct speech or vice-versa may be indicative of a new beginning (cf. Lk. 5:39 and 6:1; Lk. 6:49 and 7:1; etc.).
- Particular phrases may mark the beginning of a new unit as, for example, ἐγένετο δὲ (cf. Lk. 6:1, 6, 12; 11:27), or καὶ ἐγένετο (Lk. 7:11; 11:1).<sup>6</sup>

## 2.1 - The Use of Repetition as a Means of Delimiting Units

While the list above can help in many ways with identifying the beginning and end of units in literary works such as James, we may draw upon other indicators for help. Repetitions are very important in indicating the limits or the framework of units whether small or great. Repetitions may be of various kinds. Lausberg in his study of rhetoric devotes a substantial amount of study into the repetitions of various kinds (*inclusio*, anaphoric-type and epiphoric-type repetitions, etc.).

### 2.1.1 - *Inclusio*

One of the best known and most frequently appealed-to uses of repetition is the inclusion or *inclusio*, that is, where a repetition provides a framework for a unit, indicating its limits. Quintilian (IX, 3.34) describes it as the correspondence between the end and the beginning. The rhetorician refers the inclusion to a sentence (cf. Lausberg) but the same phenomenon may be observed in paragraphs or in larger units.

The repetition may be of a word or a phrase. In Luke’s gospel, for example, the micro unit 1:5-7 is framed by occurrences of the phrase ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις in 1:5 and 1:7, but an inclusion also marks the beginning and end of the opening scene of Luke’s gospel, 1:5-25, which is framed by ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις of 1:5 and ἐν ἡμέραις of

---

<sup>6</sup> See Jeremias, *Die Sprache des Lukas Evangeliums*, KEK, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980), p. 25.

1:25. The term εὐαγγελίου provides an inclusion for Mk. 1:1-15 (1:1, 15: τοῦ εὐαγγελίου[...]τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ). The story of the preaching of the gospel in Samaria narrated in Acts 8:4-25 is framed by references to the preaching of the word in 8:4 (οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες[...]εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον) and 8:25 (οἱ μὲν οὖν διαμαρτυράμενοι[...]τὸν λόγον[...]εὐηγγελίζοντο).<sup>7</sup>

The letter to the Romans is framed by references to Jesus and the gospel that occur in 1:1 (Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ[...]εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ) and in 16:25-28 (vv. 25, 28: τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου[...]Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).<sup>8</sup> Rom. 1:16-2:11 is framed by the inclusion Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι found in 1:16 and 2:10 (Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι / Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι).

A. Vanhoye made much use of *inclusio* in his study of the literary structure of Hebrews, describing it as the bracketing of a pericope by making a statement at the beginning of the section, an approximation of which is repeated at the conclusion of the section.<sup>9</sup> Inclusions in Hebrews frame the units 1:5-13 (1:5: Τίνοι γὰρ εἶπέν ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων / 1:13: πρὸς τίνα δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων) and 3:1-4:14 (3:1: Ὅθεν, ἀδελφοὶ ἅγιοι, κλήσεως ἐπουρανίου μέτοχοι, κατανοήσατε τὸν ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν / 4:14: Ἐχοντες οὖν ἀρχιερέα μέγαν διεληλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, κρατῶμεν τῆς ὁμολογίας).

In James examples of inclusions may be pointed out in the micro-unit 1:22-25 (1:22: ποιηταῖ[...]ἀκροατὰ; 1:25: ἀκροατῆς[...]ποιητῆς) and in the larger units 1:12-25 (1:12, 25: μακάριος / μακάριος) and 2:14-26 (2:14, 26: πίστιν[...]ἔργα / πίστις[...]ἔργων). and 3:1-12 (3:1, 12: ἀδελφοί μου / ἀδελφοί μου). Taylor saw an inclusion between 2:12-13 and 4:11-12 based upon lexical and thematic parallels between both these verses.<sup>10</sup> This inclusion is not seen by the majority of scholars. Some of the more popular examples of inclusion in James can be found between 1:12 and 1:25 (Μακάριος / μακάριος) and an inclusion found between 2:14 and 2:26 (πίστιν[...]ἔργα / πίστις[...]ἔργων).

<sup>7</sup> See Ps. 8

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Acts 8:4-25.

<sup>9</sup> A. Vanhoye, *La Structure littéraire de L'Épître aux Hébreux*, pp. 223, 271-303. Cited in G. H. Guthrie, *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis*, (Leiden; New York; Köln: Brill, 1994), p. 15.

<sup>10</sup> Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, pp. 64-65.



It is often difficult to say whether a repetition marks an inclusion. Take the case of the term πειρασμός in Jas. 1:2 (πειρασμοῖς) and 1:12 (πειρασμόν). It has been seen as an inclusion by many commentators who see the introduction to James as extending to 1:12, but this position has not always been agreed upon in other studies on James.

### 2.1.2 - Anaphoric-type Repetitions

Other types of repetitions that may point towards the arrangement of the letter include anaphoric-type repetitions, that is, repetitions that mark beginnings. For rhetoricians the anaphora or epanaphora<sup>11</sup> is a repetition that marks successive beginnings of phrases.<sup>12</sup> Examples may be found in Ps. 28, in the recurrence of φωνὴ κυρίου in 28:3a, 4a, 4b, 5a and 7a, 8a, 9a, and possibly also in Acts 3:13a in the recurrence of ὁ θεός (ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραάμ καὶ [ὁ θεὸς] Ἰσαὰκ καὶ [ὁ θεὸς] Ἰακώβ, ὁ θεὸς τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν). But as with the inclusion, the phenomenon that is observable in the phrase or sentence is also observable in larger units. In Luke's gospel, for example, ἐγένετο marks the beginning of two successive micro-units 1:5-7 and 1:8-10 (1:5: ἐγένετο; 1:8: ἐγένετο δέ). The opening words of Lk 5:1 (ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ) are recalled at the opening of 5:12 (καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ) and 5:17 (καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ).<sup>13</sup> The term λατρείας of Heb. 9:1-5 (v.1) is repeated at the beginning of the following paragraph in 9:6-10.<sup>14</sup>

In Acts the report of the Christians fleeing from Rome in 8:4 (Οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες διήλθον[...]τὸν λόγον) is recalled in 11:19 (Οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες[...]τὸν λόγον), the repetition marking the beginning of a new section. The repetition of terms from Acts 15:41 (διήρχετο[...]ἐπιστηρίζων τὰς ἐκκλησίας) in 18:23 (διερχόμενος[...]ἐπιστηρίζων πάντας τοὺς μαθητάς) also marks a

<sup>11</sup> It is referred to as 'repetitio' in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* IV.13.19 while the second century rhetorician Alexander referred to it with the term *epanaphora*. See Lausberg, Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, pp. 281-84.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Lausberg, *Handbuch*, 318: 'Die absatzmäßige Wiederholung des Anfangs eines Kolon oder eines Komma[...]/(x.../x...), that is, the repetition at intervals or intermittently of the beginning of a colon or comma'. See Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 4,13.19. Cf. Ó Fearghail, "Literary Structure", p. 74 n. 62.

<sup>13</sup> See also Lk 6:1a (Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν σαββάτῳ), 6a (Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ἑτέρῳ σαββάτῳ) and 12a (Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις); cf. 12:4a, 8a (λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν).

<sup>14</sup> Πίστει is repeated eighteen times in 11:2-31 mostly in successive sentences and occasionally at the beginning of paragraphs as in 11:17 and 23.

beginning.<sup>15</sup> One may also cite the repetitions of 'Αδελφοί μου[...]πίστιν of Jas. 2:1 in Jas. 2:14 ('Αδελφοί μου[...]πίστιν).

### 2.1.3 - Epiphoric-type Repetitions

For rhetoricians the epiphora is a repetition that marks the endings of successive phrases or sentences. Lausberg describes it as the 'intermittent repetition of the conclusion of a colon or comma (/...x/...x)'.<sup>16</sup> Such a repetition is to be found in Rev 7:5b-7, for example (ἐκ φυλῆς 'Ρουβὴν δώδεκα χιλιάδες, ἐκ φυλῆς Γὰδ δώδεκα χιλιάδες, ἐκ φυλῆς 'Ασὴρ δώδεκα χιλιάδες, ἐκ φυλῆς Νεφθαλὶμ δώδεκα χιλιάδες, ἐκ φυλῆς Μανασσῆ δώδεκα χιλιάδες, ἐκ φυλῆς Συμεὼν δώδεκα χιλιάδες, ἐκ φυλῆς Λευὶ δώδεκα χιλιάδες, ἐκ φυλῆς 'Ισσαχάρ δώδεκα χιλιάδες). As with the *inclusio* and the *anaphora*, epiphoric-type repetitions are to be found marking conclusions in larger units. There are several examples of epiphoric-type repetitions in the NT. In the small unit of 1 Cor. 7:11-13 there is the repetition of the verb ἀφίημι of 7:11 (ἄνδρα γυναῖκα μὴ ἀφιέναι) in 7:12 (μὴ ἀφιέτω αὐτήν) and 7:13 (ἢ ἀφιέτω τὸν ἄνδρα) and of ἵνα[...]κερδήσω in a succession of phrases in 1 Cor 9:19, 20a, 20b, 21 and 22a. The repetition of ἀρχιερεὺς κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισέδεκ of Heb. 5:10 in 6:20 (κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισέδεκ ἀρχιερεὺς) is a correspondence between the conclusions of two successive sections.

### 3. On the use of Rhetoric to structure James

Since the 1970s a number of scholars have subjected James (and parts of James) to rhetorical analysis with, as we have noted in chap. I, varying results.<sup>17</sup> The issue of whether rules for speeches should apply to the letter of James as a whole is a much discussed issue. And the search for a rhetorical disposition (*dispositio*) of the letter as a whole - setting out its *proemium*, introduction or *exordium*;<sup>18</sup> a statement of

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 74, n. 62.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, p. 281; cf. Quint., *Inst. Or.* IX.3.30; Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium* IV.13.19 in Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, pp. 281-83. See Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', p. 74 n. 62.

<sup>17</sup> See W. G. Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1973); D. F. Watson, 'Rhetorical Criticism of the Pauline Epistles since 1975', *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 3 (1995), 219-48.

<sup>18</sup> See H. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric. A Foundation for Literary Study*, trans. M. T. Bliss, A. Jansen and D. E. Orton (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p. 121; 'the beginning of a speech[...]It is the goal of the exordium to gain sympathy of the judge (or, in broader terms, of the audience) for the (biasedly presented) topic of the speech'. See Quint., *Inst.* 4.1.1; *Rhet. Her.* 1.4; Cic., *Inv.* 1.20; Arist., *Rhet.* 3.14. Also known as the *proemium* (Quint., *Inst.* 3.9.1) or *prologue* (Brun. 3.14.1),

facts or *narratio*;<sup>19</sup> a division or *partitio*,<sup>20</sup> a proof or *confirmatio*;<sup>21</sup> and a conclusion or *peroratio* is not an easy task and indeed has come in for much criticism.<sup>22</sup>

H. J. Klauck,<sup>23</sup> for example, is critical of the application of rhetoric to parts of James, asking how one can justify ‘applying a structural model developed from self-contained complete speeches to individual chapters of a letter?’<sup>24</sup> He cautions against the application of rhetoric to letters, noting that the analysis of epistolary theory with the help of rhetoric ‘must not fall subconsciously into the error of valuing speaking higher than writing[...]or of regarding writing and the written material in a letter as a surrogate for speaking or as a makeshift solution’. He adds that its ‘writteness (*sic*) is part of the essence of the letter that deserves to be respected, not dissolved’.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, he adds that there must be a division in applying rhetoric to NT texts in terms of *elocutio* (antithesis, parallelism, sentence structure, rhetorical figures), and rhetoric as a whole. In his 1996 article on the letter of James, F. Ó Fearghail finds a real difficulty in applying to letters the rules designed for speeches. The ancient rhetorical handbooks had ‘very little to say on letter writing apart from some statements relating to the style in which letters should be written’. He goes on to say that we would hardly expect a ‘conversation with a friend’, as Cicero described a letter (*Ad Atticum* VIII:14.1), or ‘one of the two sides of a dialogue’, as Artemon describes it (Dem., *De Elocutione* IV:223), ‘to be subjected to the same rigorous

---

(Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, pp. 120-21). See also the references to *exordium* in F. Ó Fearghail, *The Introduction to Luke-Acts, A Study of the Role of Lk 1,1-4, 44 in the Composition of Luke's Two-Volume Work*, *Analecta Biblica* 126 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1991), pp. 111-12.

<sup>19</sup> See Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, p. 136; he describes the *narratio* as a ‘statement of the facts (to be proved in the *argumentatio*)’ (Quint., *Inst.* 4.2.1); also known as the *prothesis* (Arist., *Rhet.* 3.13, 1414b, 19) or *propositio* (Quint., *Inst.* 3.9.5; 4.2.7; 4.2.30). Cicero, *De inventione* 1.19.27 described this as ‘an exposition of events that have occurred or are supposed to have occurred’ (Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, p. 136). See also D. H. Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor? The Social Setting of the Letter of James* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), p. 159f.

<sup>20</sup> The *partitio* (Quint., *Inst.* 4.5.1) or *enumeratio* (*Rhet. Her.* 1.17) is an ‘introductory listing of the points to be treated’; see Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, p. 160. There is often a ‘predilection for the tripartite *partitio*’ (Quint., *Inst.* 4.5.3; *Rhet. Her.* 1.17; see Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, p. 160).

<sup>21</sup> The *confirmatio* (Cic., *Inv.* 1.34) or *argumentatio* (Fortun. 2.23) is the ‘central, decisive part of the speech, which is prepared for by the exordium and the *narratio*’; see Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, pp. 160-61.

<sup>22</sup> The *peroratio* (Sulp. Vic. 23; Fortun. 2.12; Quint., *Inst.* 6.1.1) or *conclusio* (Cic., *Inv.* 1.98; *Rhet. Her.* 2.47) or *epilogus* (Quint., *Inst.* 6.1.7). The *peroratio* has two objectives - refresh the memory and influence the emotions; see Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, p. 204.

<sup>23</sup> H. J. Klauck, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament: A Guide to Context and Exegesis* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), p. 223.

<sup>24</sup> Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, p. 223.

<sup>25</sup> Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, p. 209.

arrangement as a forensic, deliberative or epideictic speech'.<sup>26</sup> In his view the influence of Greco-Roman rhetoric is more likely to be found in the style of the letter rather than in its '*dispositio*'.<sup>27</sup> B. Lategan believes that there is no need to force a rhetorical structure or framework, which was originally designed for oral use, on letters by categorizing them as 'speech at a distance' or 'deferred speech'.<sup>28</sup>

Ancient writers distinguished rules laid out for speeches and rules for letter writing. Julius Victor, *Ars Rhetorica (De Epistolis)* 27:8-9, advocated the use of epistolary customs in the composition of a letter - 'the openings and conclusions of letters[...]should be written according to customary practice'.<sup>29</sup> Demetrius warns against the comparison of a letter to a dialogue noting that 'the letter should be a little more studied than the dialogue, since the latter reproduces an extemporary utterance, while the former is committed to writing and is (in a way) sent as a gift' (224). He further notes that the 'gift of imitating conversation is less appropriate to writing than to a speech in a debate' (226). He notes also that letters should be restricted in length for those 'that are too long, not to mention too inflated in style, are not in any true sense letters at all but treatises with the heading - *χαίρειν* (228). He further notes that it was good practice in letter writing to have sentences that were 'fairly loosely structured', noting it was 'absurd to build up periods, as if you were writing not a letter but a speech for the law courts' (229).

Rhetorical analyses can have an important function in mapping out the argumentative strategy of James in smaller sections of the letter, as may be seen in the studies of Watson and Wachob, but applying it to the letter as a whole is fraught with difficulty. This can be seen from the studies in chap. I which attempt to apply the rules of the *dispositio* to the letter as a whole. Many of the suggestions of scholars for where the *exordium* begins and ends differ significantly (cf. Wuellner). The addition

---

<sup>26</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 72.

<sup>27</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 72.

<sup>28</sup> B. Lategan, 'Textual Space as Rhetorical Device', in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement series 90, ed. by S. E. Porter and T. H. Olbricht (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 397-407. While noting the similarity between the epistolary and rhetorical genres, specifically between types of letters, and the three sub-species of rhetoric (*deliberative, forensic, epideictic*), J. T. Reed, in 'Using Ancient Rhetorical Categories to Interpret Paul's Letters: A Question of Genre', in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement series 90, ed. by S. E. Porter and T. H. Olbricht (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), p. 299, argues that such parallels do not prove 'a direct borrowing from rhetorical categories. Rather, the similarities are probably due to common communicative practices in the culture. In other words, argumentation is universal'.

<sup>29</sup> Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, p. 65.

of a *propositio* in some studies of James is also not very convincing. Another area which is problematic is the use of the terms *exordium* and *peroratio*. One would expect the *exordium* and *peroratio* to have some overlap with one another, in the manner of a true *exordium* and *peroratio*; this is not the case in what is suggested for James. If a rhetorical analysis was to be proposed for James, scholars must be clear in how they define the parts of the *dispositio*, before they apply them to James. While a rhetorical analysis for James may yet yield positive results in the future, the scholarship on the matter so far has not been entirely convincing. For this reason a rhetorical analysis of the letter of James will not be the focus of this thesis.

#### 4. Literary Form and Genre

As K. Berger and others have pointed out, beginnings are crucially important when trying to establish literary form or genre.<sup>30</sup> The *proemium* or prologue of a literary work usually indicates the literary form or genre of the work. This may be seen, for example, in the historical writings of Josephus or Thucydides, the biographies of Philostratus or Plutarch, or the rhetorical works of Quintillian.<sup>31</sup> The epilogue is also important since it summarises the narrative proper and also indicates the nature of the work. The beginning and end of the narrative proper are also important.<sup>32</sup> So, too, is the arrangement or literary structure of the work, the vocabulary and grammar. For Berger 'Form' is 'the sum of the linguistic characteristics of a text'.<sup>33</sup>

When endeavouring to establish the literary form of a work one must take into account all aspects of the work, its literary structure, style, vocabulary, themes, and the content and purpose of the work. It is evident that there are various forms present in James such as, for example, invective (4:1-4; 5:1-6), diatribe (2:14-26), *paraenesis*, epistolary greeting (1:1), macarism or beatitude (1:12), rhetorical questions, a catalogue (3:17), sayings of various kinds, and catchwords. Dibelius describes 2:1-12 and 2:14-16 as 'treatises'. Berger applies the term 'paränetische Ketzerschluss' or an

---

<sup>30</sup> K. Berger, *Exegese des Neuen Testaments*, p. 17ff.; F. Lentzen-Deis, 'Methodische Überlegungen zur Bestimmung literarischer Gattungen im Neuen Testament', *Biblica* 62 (1981), 14-15.

<sup>31</sup> See Ó Fearghail, *The Introduction to Luke-Acts*, pp. 161-62.

<sup>32</sup> Ó Fearghail, *The Introduction to Luke-Acts*, p. 164, n. 73.

<sup>33</sup> K. Berger, *Formen und Gattungen im Neuen Testament*, Tübingen-Basle, A Francke, 2005, p. 1 ('die Summe der sprachlichen Merkmale eines Textes').

exhortation to those who stray to 5:19-20, adducing parallels in a number of NT letters.<sup>34</sup>

Exhortation is certainly present throughout the letter, interspersed with words of encouragement, admonition, advice, argumentation, diatribal elements, harsh words of warning and words of dissuasion. Given the number of imperatives in the letter (54 in 108 verses), it is not surprising that a number of scholars have classified it as a sermon or homily.

The issue of whether James is or is not a letter comes up again and again. For Dibelius, James lacks an epistolary situation, has no epistolary remarks and cannot be considered an 'actual letter'. The question is whether the position of Dibelius is tenable today. It is important in answering this question that we compare James fairly with contemporary letters, not just from the New Testament, but also from the writings of Josephus, the Books of Maccabees and elsewhere.

In assessing the possibility that James is a letter, account should also be taken of ancient Hellenistic letters. From the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC right up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD the letter remained constant in its overall literary form and structure, with an introduction (prescript, greeting), a main body introduced with characteristic formulae and a conclusion with greetings, wishes, and prayers.

It is also important to take note of ancient discussions on letter writing found in handbooks. The first extensive discussion of letter writing is to be found in the treatise *De Elocutione*, which is attributed to Demetrius, usually dated from the late first century BC to the first century AD.<sup>35</sup> Demetrius notes that the letter style should be plain and somewhat composed as if one of the two sides of a dialogue (223-234). He criticized both Plato and Thucydides for their letter writing calling their letters treatises with letter headings (229). Other manuals on letter writing include two handbooks, which list various types of letters. The older of the two, *Epistolary Types*, is attributed to Ps. Demetrius, and is dated in a time frame ranging from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. It lists twenty-one types of exhortative letters: commendatory, blaming, reproachful, consoling, censorious, admonishing, threatening, vituperative, praising, advisory, supplicatory, inquiring, responding, allegorical, accounting, accusing, apologetic, congratulatory, ironic and thankful.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> Berger, *Formen und Gattungen*, p. 203.

<sup>35</sup> Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> See Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, p. 31.

The manual attributed to PS. Libanius in *Epistolary Styles*, a writer who is dated from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, lists forty-one types of letter.<sup>37</sup> Pseudo-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types* 1, notes that letters ‘can be composed in a great number of styles, but are written in those which always fit the particular circumstance (to which they are addressed)’. He notes that they are ‘composed indifferently by those who undertake such services for men in public office’. These ‘handbooks’ may have something to contribute to the identification of the literary form of James.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have set out a plan of campaign, so to speak, for the rest of this thesis. In particular we have sought to outline the method by which we will approach the text in search of its literary structure, using a variety of methods in our analysis. We made a detailed list of the various significant words within James, a significance based upon their recurrence throughout the text and the manner in which they are used. Defining and delimiting the various unit boundaries in James has always caused debate. We gave a listing of some possible indicators of delimitation, so as to be better able to identify such markers later on when we conduct our study of the literary structure of the letter. Repetitions can be an important means by which we may delimit units or sections in James. We took a look at some important types of repetition, such as *inclusio*, anaphoric-type repetitions and epiphoric-type repetitions, some of which were used with varying degrees of success by scholars to delimit an introduction, main body and conclusion in James. Examples of these types of repetition were given so as to better facilitate the reader in identifying such markers in James, and to better understand our rationale for delimiting certain sections or units in James later on in the thesis. This chapter will lay the foundations, enabling us to endeavour to identify first the smaller units of which the text is composed. We will look especially at thematic and verbal links between these smaller units to identify its larger sections also.

In going forward with our methods for finding an introduction, main body and conclusion in James, we looked at the various literary forms which one could

---

<sup>37</sup> These types are the *paraenetic*, blaming, requesting, commending, ironic, thankful, friendly, praying, threatening, denying, commanding, repenting, reproaching, sympathetic, conciliatory, congratulatory, contemptuous, counter-accusing, replying, provoking, consoling, insulting, reporting, angry, diplomatic, praising, didactic, reproving, maligning, censorious, inquiring, encouraging, consulting, declaratory, mocking, submissive, enigmatic, suggestive, grieving, erotic and mixed; see Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, pp. 67-73.

apply to James. We investigated some rhetorical analyses of James, and their usefulness for letters such as James. The studies we highlighted in chapter I do not seem overly convincing however. There is also the issue of whether the rules of the *dispositio* were properly understood by past scholars, particularly in how they were applied to James. Ultimately we decided there was not enough evidence within James to pursue a full scale rhetorical analysis of the letter, in terms of its form and structure. Instead we decided to pursue other literary forms, such as the epistolary form. The epistolary worth of the letter of James comes up time and time again. In assessing its epistolary worth we laid out some groundwork for the task, namely, researching the ancient handbooks on letters and looking at other letters, both in antiquity and in the NT, to better assess whether James can be considered an actual letter. We looked briefly at the exhortative character of James. This too will be expanded upon further in the later chapters of this thesis in understanding the overall structure, form and unity of James.

The next task of this thesis is to examine the opening of James. Using the methods outlined here, we will endeavour to locate an opening unit in James that can be adequately described as an introduction to the letter as a whole.



## **Chapter IV**

### **Finding an Introductory Section in the Letter of James**

#### **Introduction**

It is clear from the review of the literature on the letter of James in chaps. I and II that finding a coherent structure for the letter involves first of all establishing the nature and extent of its introduction. As has been noted earlier, there continues to be much debate about the extent of the letter's introduction and many solutions have been proposed. We have seen in the previous chapter on methodology that the first chapter bears witness to a large number of themes and restatements of words. We made note of some of the links, which occur between verses, such as word links and conjunctions. In this chapter we will look more closely at these links and suggest other links which can help bind the opening verses of the letter together and help us frame an introductory section. Any successful proposal for an introductory section in James must ensure that themes can be seen to be expanded in other parts of the letter from the introduction. A successful thematic representation of such words and themes in the main body can help delimit an introductory section in the letter. An important indicator in the text of an introductory section may lie in the large number of repetitions in the letter. Do these repetitions indicate that the introductory themes are now ready to be restated, as if beginning the main body proper, or do they point to other introductory sections, as some scholars have suggested? Such questions will be assessed in this chapter. But before endeavouring to establish the extent of the introduction to the letter it is necessary to look at the epistolary prescript in 1:1, which some scholars have taken as part of the introduction, and examine its role in the letter.

## 1. The Function of 1:1 in the Letter of James

The letter of James opens with an epistolary prescript in tripartite form - the sender (in the nominative), the addressees (dative) and the greeting *χαίρειν* (infinitive).<sup>1</sup> The author describes himself as 'James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ'.<sup>2</sup> The addressees are identified as 'the twelve tribes of the diaspora'. The prescript which forms a single sentence concludes with the greeting or salutation *χαίρειν*.

The opening verse 1:1 is usually treated as separate from the rest of the introduction. J. P. Lange in 1862, however, and more recently C. Burchard, took 1:1 as part of the letter's opening section.<sup>3</sup> Scholars such as F. Spitta (1896) and L. Massebieau (1895) did not see 1:1 as an original part of the letter of James because of the lack of reference to Jesus Christ in the rest of James. Their viewpoint however has received little support.<sup>4</sup> Should 1:1 be seen as standing on its own as a prescript in isolation from the rest of the letter or should it be taken with what follows? An examination of some elements of 1:1 should help to throw light on the issue.

### 1.1 - *δοῦλος* in the Letter of James

In 1:1 the author refers to himself simply as James, a 'servant' or 'slave' of God and of the lord Jesus Christ. The term *δοῦλος* signifies a slave or servant, someone who is under the absolute authority of another. It is used in the LXX for the Israelites who were slaves in Egypt (Deut. 6:12). It is used with reference to God's servants, the prophets (Jer. 25:4; Ezek. 38:17; Amos 3:7; Zech. 1:6), and as a title of honour for Moses (Num. 12:7; Ps. 105:26) and for Joshua (Jdg. 2:8) who used it himself in a prayer of self-humiliation (Josh. 5:14). It is used for Samuel (1 Sam. 3:9-10), David (2 Sam. 3:18; 7:5, 8; Ps. 89:3; 131:10; 1 Kgs. 8:25, 66) and Solomon (1 Kgs. 8:30).

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Klauck, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament*, pp. 17-20; for examples of the simplest form see Exler, *A Study in Greek Epistolography*, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> This translation is from the Revised Standard Version which, unless otherwise stated, is the English version used in this thesis.

<sup>3</sup> See Lange, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, pp. 22, 25; Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 47 ('Eingang').

<sup>4</sup> See F. Spitta, 'Der Brief des Jakobus', in F. Spitta, *Zur Geschichte und Litteratur des Urchristentums*, 3 vols (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1896), pp. 4-5; L. Massebieau, 'L'Épître de Jacques est-elle L'oeuvre d'un Chrétien', *RHR* 32 (1895), 249-83. A more recent supporter of the unoriginality of 1:1 is S. R. Llewelyn, 'The Prescript of James', *Novum Testamentum* 39 (1997), 385-93.

In the NT, Simeon uses the term *δοῦλος* in reference to himself (Lk. 2:29) and it is used by early Christians in reference to themselves (Acts 4:29; 1 Pet. 2:16). Paul uses it in the beginning of his letter to the Romans, for example, in reference to himself as a servant of Christ (Rom. 1:1). He also uses it in Phil. 1:1 and Tit. 1:1 where he describes himself as 'a servant of God'. The author of 2 Peter introduces himself as a 'servant and apostle' of Jesus Christ (1:1), while the author of Jude introduces himself as a servant of Jesus Christ (Jude 1). How exactly is the term *δοῦλος* to be interpreted in 1:1? Is the author thinking of himself in the same vein as the great servants of God in the OT or is he using the term as a special mark of humility?

Dibelius notes that the 'only question with regard to our passage is whether a relationship to God is ascribed to James in the same sense as it would refer to Christians in general, or whether it is meant to characterise James in some special sense',<sup>5</sup> and he suggests that the author has 'something special' in mind and is comparing himself to 'Israel's men of God rather than to the mass of Christians'.<sup>6</sup> He saw James's status as *δοῦλος* in the same vein as Moses, David and the prophets, to whom the title *δοῦλος* was applied (cf. Mal. 4:6; Isa. 34:23; Amos 3:7). Hort took the term to express 'in the widest way the personal relation of servant to master'.<sup>7</sup> Davids sees *δοῦλος* as an indication of humility, 'for the servant does not come in his own name'.<sup>8</sup> This is the position also adopted by Moo.<sup>9</sup> For Ropes the term *δοῦλος* does not indicate a special humility 'nor is it to be understood as involving a claim to the rank of a prophet or a distinguished leader'. Instead he sees *δοῦλος* in the letter of James as denoting a sense of 'equal comradeship in faith', with the author equating himself with his brotherly worshippers.<sup>10</sup> But does the use of *δοῦλος* here have a bearing on the rest of the letter? What relationship if any has it to what follows?

For some authors the term *δοῦλος* provides a link between 1:1 and 5:19-20. Wall, for example, takes the title *δοῦλος* to evoke the servant figure of Isaiah through

---

<sup>5</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 65.

<sup>6</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 66. The reasoning for this interpretation is that Dibelius saw the letter as pseudonymous and that the actual writer chose the name James because he attached some significance to the figure, comparing him to other prestigious 'slaves' such as Moses and David. See also Vouga, *Jacques*, p. 37.

<sup>7</sup> Hort, *James*, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 63.

<sup>9</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 57.

<sup>10</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 118. See also S. Laws, *The Epistle of James*, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1980), p. 46; and Sidebottom, *James*, p. 26.

whom Israel might be gathered to God (cf. Isa. 49:5-6) and be saved through their obedience to the voice of the servant (cf. Isa. 50:10). He sees the role of James in his letter in a similar vein to the servant, namely 'gathering his dispersed readers together to hear of a promised salvation from a latter day Servant'.<sup>11</sup> In this sense a link may possibly be seen between 1:1 and 5:19-20.

For Cargal also the term δούλος evokes the 'servant of Yahweh' imagery among the readers of the letter, and he sees this specific 'servant' image as one of great importance to the implied readers, 'since it was chosen for use at the outset of the Epistle to establish the fiduciary contract between the author and readers'.<sup>12</sup> Cargal sees the term δούλος as linked to 5:19-20. He argues that the author of James presents himself as a servant of God because he plays a role similar to God in restoring those who have wandered from the truth. He takes the term διασπορᾶ in 1:1 to mean 'scattered', in the sense that the people in question are separated from God. It is the author's role as δούλος to restore 'those who wander from the truth [5:19-20] by acting as God acts in doing good and providing for the needs of others'.<sup>13</sup> Cargal sees this slave/master imagery as reflecting the author's conviction that the believers must adopt God's will as their own so that their actions might arise from the divine will rather than their own desires. For Cargal 'doing the word' in 1:22-25 is 'serving God'.<sup>14</sup>

Edgar sees the writer's designation of himself as 'servant' as fulfilling several important functions within the letter of James. The author places himself under the supreme authority of God and Jesus.<sup>15</sup> With this self presentation of himself as 'servant' comes authority which may be seen, for example, through his role of teacher (cf. 3:1).<sup>16</sup>

Let us look briefly at the letters of Paul and examine how the title used by him in his epistolary prescript relates to the rest of the letter. R. Russell, in an article

---

<sup>11</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 41.

<sup>12</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 212.

<sup>13</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 213.

<sup>14</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 213.

<sup>15</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 50.

<sup>16</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 56. Edgar notes that this role of servant of both God and Jesus Christ may give the author the authority to address the 'twelve tribes of the diaspora' (p. 98). Wachob, *The Voice of Jesus*, p. 137, takes δούλος to denote an honoured status for the author whom he sees as making a 'bold claim' to be a leader of authority for the community addressed. The epistolary prescript claims for the writer 'the status of a client; his patrons, those for whom he speaks, are God and the Lord Jesus Messiah'. He sees himself as their spokesperson and representative who is channelling the wise sayings of Jesus through his letter.

from 1982, suggested that there was a correlation between Paul's designation of himself as δοῦλος in the introduction to the letter to the Philippians, and the themes of 'servant' and 'imprisonment' in the body of the letter (cf. Phil. 1:13, 17; 2:7, 22). For him the 'meaning of being a servant of Christ and the related experience of suffering are definite themes throughout the letter'.<sup>17</sup> G. F. Hawthorne, in his commentary on Philippians from 1983<sup>18</sup> and A. H. Snyman in an article from 2004 argued that the theme of δοῦλος in the prescript was developed in the body of the letter. They believed that in view of the prominence given to the subject of humility in the letter of Philippians, the word δοῦλος is exploiting the reference to lowly service, to humility.<sup>19</sup>

D. A. Black (1995) recognises certain themes within the main body of Philippians which are dependant on the prescript in 1:1-2. In particular he notes that the title δοῦλοι in 1:1 strikes a note of humility, which he sees as a sub-theme that Paul develops in the body of the letter when he calls upon the Philippians to 'serve' (δοῦλου) one another just as Christ served them (cf. Phil. 2:7).<sup>20</sup> Paul himself describes Timothy as having served (ἐδούλευσεν) with him in the gospel (Phil. 2:22). In his letter to the Romans he returns to the theme of service on a number of occasions (cf. 7:6; 12:11; 14:18).

A reading of the letter of James suggests that the author's description of himself as servant or slave of God and of the lord Jesus Christ is a significant element in the letter. Here in 1:1 the term is used with the connotations of humility, lowliness, absolute commitment and submission to God and the Lord Jesus Christ. It has a positive sense here. It is something in which to rejoice. The author strikes this positive note with the first words he addresses to his hearers after the greeting. This positive sense of δοῦλος is reflected in the author's exhortation to the 'lowly person' (ταπεινός) in 1:9 to rejoice in his exaltation (ἐν τῷ ὕψει). It is to the humble (ταπεινός) that God gives grace (4:6), the author tells his addressees, and it is to God that one must submit oneself (ὑποτάγητε), he tells them in the following verse. The verb ὑποτάγητε denotes 'to be subject to, to be under the authority of another'. It

<sup>17</sup> R. Russell, 'Pauline Letter Structure in Philippians', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 25 (1982), 297.

<sup>18</sup> G. F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 43 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004), p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> A. H. Snyman, 'A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians 1:1-11', *Acta Theologica* 2 (2004), 87.

<sup>20</sup> D. A. Black, 'The Discourse Structure of Philippians: A Study in Textlinguistics', *Novum Testamentum* 37 (1995), 23.

conveys the notion of voluntary submission to God and evokes James's description of himself in 1:1 as a δοῦλος of God. Indeed the whole section 4:7-10 could be said to evoke the writer's initial description of himself since it begins with an imperative urging submission to God and ends with another imperative in 4:10 urging his readers or hearers to humble themselves before God (ταπεινώθητε ἐνώπιον κυρίου), assuring them that God will lift them up (ὑψώσει ὑμᾶς). The addressees should share the attitudes reflected in the author's servitude of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## 1.2 - The Twelve Tribes in the *Diaspora*

The 'twelve tribes' (δώδεκα φυλαίς) refers to the tribes that traditionally made up 'all Israel' (cf. Exod. 24:4, 28:21; 39:14; Josh. 3:12; Ezek. 47:13; Sir. 44:23). They are mentioned in the gospels in Matt. 19:28 and Lk. 22:30 in the words of Jesus. In Acts 26:6-7 Paul states that he is on trial 'for hope in the promise made by God to our fathers, to which our twelve tribes hope to attain'. Paul is portrayed here speaking to his Jewish hearers about the hope of Judaism as one who belongs to the Jewish people. To whom does the phrase the 'twelve tribes' refer in Jas. 1:1?

Hort take the phrase to be the equivalent of 'Israel in its fullness and completeness'. In his view James uses this phrase to mark out the Israel which believed in Christ as 'the only true Israel'.<sup>21</sup> Ropes take the term 'twelve tribes' to refer to the new Israel. For him the Christian church is not merely designated as the 'new Israel' but 'is further described by ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ as now dispersed in an alien world'.<sup>22</sup> Drawing on Gal. 4:6, Phil. 3:20 and 1 Pet. (1:1, 17) he argues that the new Israel has a 'heavenly metropolis' which is the seat of its 'commonwealth', but it resides for the present 'in exile'.<sup>23</sup>

The 'twelve tribes' are described in Jas. 1:1 as 'in the diaspora' (ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ). The term διασπορᾷ literally means 'scattering' or 'dispersion'. It is used in the LXX of the places outside Israel where Jews were scattered (cf. Deut. 28:25; Neh. 1:9; Jdt. 5:19), or for the scattered population (Isa. 49:6; Jer. 41:17; 2 Macc.

<sup>21</sup> Hort, *James*, pp. 2-3; see also Davids, *James*, p. 64; Hiebert, *James*, p. 33; Moo, *James*, p. 50.

<sup>22</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 124.

<sup>23</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 124; likewise Dibelius, *James*, p. 66; Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, pp. 54-57; Johnson, *James*, pp. 170-71. Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, pp. 418-19, takes the designation 'twelve tribes in the diaspora' to refer to 'true Jews' in the diaspora and points towards the areas located in 1 Peter 1:1 as specific places where the letter of James could have been sent.

1:27; Pss. Sol. 8:28).<sup>24</sup> This is the sense of the term in the *Testament of Asher* (VII, 3). The scattering of the Jews is seen in the LXX as a punishment (cf. Deut. 28:25; Jer. 15:7) but there is also the positive message in the LXX of return and recovery (cf. Isa. 49:6). In Jn. 7:35 it refers to the Jews scattered among the Gentiles. According to Josephus in his *Antiquities* the Jews had made their way ‘into every city’, and it was not easy to find ‘any place in the habitable world which has not received this nation’ (XIV, 115);<sup>25</sup> in his *Jewish War* he writes that ‘there is not a people in the world which does not contain a portion of our race’ (II, 398) and that the Jewish race are ‘densely interspersed among the native populations of every portion of the world’ (VII, 43).<sup>26</sup> The list of Jews from various nations present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost according to Acts 2:9-11 is also of note - Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians. In 1 Pet. 1:1 the term διασπορα is specified as referring to people living in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia - all places in northern Asia Minor. It is here that the addressees of 1 Peter are located. The related verb διεσπάρησαν is used in Acts 8:1, 4 and 11:19 with reference to the ‘scattering’ of Christians from Jerusalem because of the persecution that followed the stoning of Stephen. Philo uses it in a spiritual sense in *On Rewards and Punishments* §115 when he writes of being restored to the land of wisdom and virtue ‘from the spiritual dispersion’ (ἐκ διασπορᾶς ψυχικῆς) which ‘vice’ (κακία) has wrought.

It is difficult to decide what exactly the phrase ‘the twelve tribes in the diaspora’ signifies in Jas. 1:1. If one were to take the term διασπορα in a spiritual sense, as Philo does in *On Rewards and Punishments* §115 (see above), then one could argue for a link with 5:19-20 and the brother who has strayed from the truth.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Cf. K. L. Schmidt, ‘diaspora’, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, Vol. II (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 98-104.

<sup>25</sup> Translation from R. Marcus, *Josephus, Jewish Antiquities*, Books XIII-XIV, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1976).

<sup>26</sup> Translation from H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus, The Jewish War*, Loeb Classical Library, (London: William Heinemann, 1979). See also lists of places in Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* §281-3 (Egypt, Phoenecia, Syria, Pamphylia, Cilicia, most of Asia up to Bithynia, Pontus, Thessaly, Boetia, Macedonia, Aetolia, Attica, Argos, Corinth, the islands of Euboea, Cyprus, Crete, countries beyond the Euphrates - ‘in every region of the inhabited world whether in Europe or in Asia or in Libya’ (Translation from F. H. Colson, *Philo*, Loeb Classical Library, vols. I-X [London: William Heinemann, 1971]).

<sup>27</sup> See Cargal’s position outlined above.

### 1.3 - The Salutation

The salutation *χαίρειν* in 1:1 is found elsewhere in the NT in two brief letters embedded in the Acts of the Apostles, one communicating the decisions of the Council of Jerusalem (15:23-29), the other, a letter of Claudius Lysias to Felix (23:26-30) about the affair involving Paul and the Jews. It is a standard letter component in Greco-Roman letters,<sup>28</sup> and is common in Hellenistic Jewish letters, as may be seen in the letters in 1 Maccabees (10:18-20, 25-45; 11:30-31, 32-37; 12:6-18, 20-23; 13:36-40; 15:2-9), 2 Maccabees (1:1-9, 1:10-2:18; 9:19-27; 11:16-21, 22-26, 27-33, 34-38), 3 Maccabees (3:12-30; 7:1-9), 1 Esdra (6:8-22; 8:9), the *Antiquities* of Josephus (XI, 104, 123, 273; XII, 51; etc) or in his own autobiography (*Life* §§217-8, 226-7), or in the *Letter of Aristeas* §41. In many of these letters there is also the farewell *ἔρρωσθε*, as, for example, in 2 Macc. 11:21 and 33, the *Letter of Aristeas* §41, Jos., *Life* I.227 and Acts 15:29.<sup>29</sup> But its absence is not unusual, as one can see from a number of letters in 1 Maccabees which open with the greeting *χαίρειν* and close without a farewell (cf. 1 Macc. 10:18-20, 25-45; 11:30-31, 32-37; 12:5-10, 20-23; 13:36-41; etc.).<sup>30</sup> The letter of Claudius Lysias in Acts 23:26-30 also opens with a greeting and closes without a farewell.

The greeting *χαίρειν* is followed immediately by the exhortation *Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε*. Many have noted the link between *χαίρειν* in 1:1 and *χαρὰν* in 1:2 including Ropes who pointed out a similar use of joy in the opening of a letter in Tob. 5:10,<sup>31</sup> and Dibelius who saw the catchword association between *χαίρειν* (1:1) and *Πᾶσαν χαρὰν* (1:2) as intentional.<sup>32</sup> As a parallel for the link between Jas. 1:1 and 1:2 both of them cite Pseudo-Plato, *Ep.* 8.352B: 'Plato to the relatives and companions of Dion wishes well-doing. The policy which would best serve to secure your real "well-doing" is that which I shall now endeavour as best I can to describe to you'.<sup>33</sup> Here the underlying sense of the greeting is taken up in the following sentence

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Exler, *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter*, pp. 24-44; Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, pp. 9-21; Mayor, *James*, pp. 31-32; Ropes, *James*, pp. 127-28.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. 3 Macc. 7:1-9.

<sup>30</sup> See also 1 Esd. 6:7; *Ep. Arist.* 41; greeting and farewell (*chairein...erróste*) in 2 Macc. 11:16-21, 27-33; 3 Macc. 7:1-9.

<sup>31</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 131. He notes that similar uses of joy which open letters are found in Tob. 5:10 and Ps. Plato, *Ep.* 3, 315 A, B, p. 131.

<sup>32</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 37, notes other instances of wordplay in the letter: *διεκρίθητε* / *κριται* (2:4); *ἔργων* / *ἄργη* (2:20); *ἀδιάκριτος* / *ἀνυπόκριτος* (3:17); and *φαινομένη* / *ἀφανιζομένη* (4:14). See also Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 62.

<sup>33</sup> Dibelius, *James*, 68, n. 32. This greeting is also found elsewhere in letters of Plato who prefers it to *χαίρειν*; cf. Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, p. 20.



which introduces the letter itself. One could also cite the letter of King Demetrius to the 'nation of the Jews' in 1 Maccabees (10:25-45) in which the note of joy in the greeting *χαίρειν* of 10:25 is picked up in the following verse (10:26) by *ἐχάρημεν*. This is the case also in the brief letter of the rulers and the city of the Spartans to the Jews in 1 Maccabees 14:20-23 (14:20: *χαίρειν*; 14:21: *ἠύφρανθημεν*). J. L. White provides examples from the papyri of expressions of joy that follow the greeting *χαίρειν* (in his examples the expressions are tied to the arrival of a letter).<sup>34</sup> In the NT one can point, for example, to the echoing of the greeting of 1 Cor. 1:3 (*χάρις ὑμῖν[...]ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς*) in 1:4 (*Εὐχαριστοῦ[...]ἐπὶ τῇ χάριτι τοῦ θεοῦ*), that of 2 Tim. 1:2 (*χάρις[...]πρὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς*) in 1:3 (*Χάριν ἔχω τῷ θεῷ*), Gal 1:3 (*χάρις ὑμῖν[...]ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς*) in 1:6 (*ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς ἐν χάριτι Χριστοῦ*) and in 2 John 1:3 (*χάρις*) and 1:4 (*Ἐχάρην*). It may also be noted that the note of joy sounded in *χαίρειν* of Jas. 1:1 and again in *Πᾶσαν χαρὰν* (1:2) is picked up in the imperative *Καυχάσθω* of 1:9.

That the salutation in Jas. 1:1 should be treated as an integral part of the letter, as suggested by its links with what follows, has been argued by Thurén from a rhetorical standpoint. He takes the prescript to be an 'an integral part of the exordium' which, in his view, extends to 1:1-4 and shapes the letter's original rhetorical situation.<sup>35</sup> He argues that the note of joy emphasised by *χαίρειν/χαρὰν* creates a positive atmosphere<sup>36</sup> which lends itself to the tasks outlined in the *exordium*. Wachob takes the epistolary prescript in 1:1 to be an essential part of the *exordium*, since both 'introduce the author and the audience, help to establish the *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* of the letter, and prepare for the topics that are used in developing the discourse'.<sup>37</sup>

Ó Fearghail suggests that the epistolary prescript in 1:1 'with its personal greeting designed to arrest the attention of the hearer' may be seen to function as an element typical of a *proemium*.<sup>38</sup> In the beginning of a letter, as in the opening of a speech, the writer seeks to gain the attention of the reader or hearer and to make him or her well-disposed towards the writer's message. The prescript in 1:1 is calculated

<sup>34</sup> J. L. White, *The Form and Function of the Body of the Greek Letter: A Study of the Letter Body in the Non-Literary Papyri and in Paul the Apostle*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 2 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1972), pp. 22-23.

<sup>35</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 270.

<sup>36</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 270-71.

<sup>37</sup> Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, p. 163.

<sup>38</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 8.

to achieve just that, not least because of the Jewish and Christian elements it contains, elements that must surely have caught the attention of the reader or hearer. M. L. Reid argued that even if the ancient rhetorical handbooks did not include the prescript 'as part of the rhetorical discourse, it does function much like the exordium by establishing the ethos of the speaker, introducing topics, and making the audience well-disposed',<sup>39</sup> and he identified the prescript in Romans (1:1) as a 'quasi-exordium'.<sup>40</sup>

Another aspect of the epistolary prescript that should be noted is that elements of it can be seen to make reappearances in the rest of the letter. This may be seen, for instance, in examples provided by Exler from the papyri where the opening salutation is closely linked to a wish that follows immediately on from the salutation.<sup>41</sup> It may be seen in the letter prefaced to 2 Maccabees where the element of peace in the salutation χαίρειν[...]εἰρήνην ἀγαθήν of 2 Macc. 1:1 is picked up again in 1:4 where the author prays that God may send the addressees peace (εἰρήνην). It may be pointed out in a number of NT letters. The elements of grace and peace of the greeting χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη of Rom. 1:7 are recalled in the rest of the letter in which χάρις, in the sense of 'grace', recurs frequently (cf. 3:24; 5:2, 15, 17, 20, 21; etc.) and εἰρήνη, less so (1:16, 2:10; 8:6; 14:7). This is true of the same greeting found in 1 Cor. 1:3 with χάρις (1:4; 3:10; 15:10; 16:3) and εἰρήνη (7:15; 16:11) recurring in the rest of the letter. This is also to be found in the case of the greeting in Gal. 1:3 (χάρις: 1:6, 15; 2:9, 21; 3:19; 5:4; εἰρήνη: 5:22; 6:15), Eph. 1:2 (χάρις: 1:6, 7; 2:5, 7, 8; 3:1, 2, 7, 8; 4:7, 29; εἰρήνη: 1:2; 2:14; 6:23) and 2 Tim. 1:2 (χάρις: 1:3, 9; 2:1; εἰρήνη: 2:22). Of note is how Paul returns later in the letters to his description of himself as an apostle in the prescript in Romans and 1 Corinthians (cf. ἀπόστολος: Rom. 1:1; 11:13; 1 Cor. 1:1, 9:1, 2; 15:9).<sup>42</sup>

In his rhetorical analysis of the letter to the Romans, Wuellner identifies the first part of the *exordium* (1:1-15) with the 'letter prescript', that is, with Rom. 1:1-7, and comments on the 'often noted expansions' that link the prescript to various parts

<sup>39</sup> M. L. Reid, 'A Consideration of the Function of Rom 1:8-15 in Light of Greco Roman Rhetoric', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 38 (1995), 264.

<sup>40</sup> Reid, 'A Consideration of the Function of Rom 1:8', 187-88.

<sup>41</sup> See the examples listed in Exler, *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter*, pp. 105-106. (e.g. *chairein kai errōsithai. erromai de kautos...*).

<sup>42</sup> See also 1 Tim. 1:1 and 2:7, 2 Tim. 1:1 and 1:11.

of the body of the letter.<sup>43</sup> He gave the example of Paul's role as an agent of the Gospel to Jerusalem and to the ends of the earth (1:1-5; cf. 15:15-22) and to the church(es) of Rome (1:6-15; cf. 15:23-24, 29; 12:1-15:13).<sup>44</sup> He finds links between the *exordium* (1:1-5) and *peroratio* (15:15-22) and chapters 1-4 and 9-11, and between 1:6-15 and 12:1-15:12.<sup>45</sup> Longenecker points out that Paul, in the opening to his letter to the Galatians, sets out two main issues that are dealt with in the letter, namely, the nature of his apostleship and the nature of the Christian gospel.<sup>46</sup> The prescript in 1 Peter is also worthy of note (1:1-2), for here themes are signalled that, as Senior points out, 'will be amplified later in the letter'.<sup>47</sup> One clear link that stands out between the prescript and the body of the letter is that created by the description of the addressees as 'elect sojourners' in 1:1 (ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις), a description that is echoed in 2:9 (Ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτόν). Of note also are the verbal links between 1 Pet. 1:2 (θεοῦ πατρὸς[...]'Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ) and the immediately following words of praise in 1:3 (ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

#### 1.4 - The Introduction to the Letter (1:2-11)

The letters of the NT, apart from a few (Galatians, 2 Corinthians, Titus) follow the opening salutation with a thanksgiving (Rom. 1:8-12; 1 Cor. 1:4-9; Phil. 1:3-5; Col. 1:3-8; 2 Tim. 1:3; Phlm. 4-5) but this is not the case in the letter of James. The opening sentence of James, Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις, with its imperative ἠγήσασθε and its reference to πειρασμοῖς makes clear to the reader that here we have a new beginning, and while the note of joy in the greeting χαίρειν is picked up by χαρὰν, the mood has changed. This is clearly not a thanksgiving. The author of the letter wastes no time in getting down to his message, and the term πειρασμοῖς already conveys something of the challenge that the writer is laying down for his readers or hearers.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup> W. Wuellner, 'Paul's Rhetoric of Argumentation in Romans. An Alternative to the Donfried-Karris Debate over Romans', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 38 (1976), 335; this article also appeared in K. P. Donfried, *The Romans Debate*, Novum Testamentum Supplements, Vol. 38 (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 128-46.

<sup>44</sup> Wuellner, 'Paul's Rhetoric of Argumentation in Romans', 335.

<sup>45</sup> Wuellner, 'Paul's Rhetoric of Argumentation in Romans', 348.

<sup>46</sup> R. L. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary 41 (Dallas TX: Word, 1990), p. 10.

<sup>47</sup> D. Senior and D. J. Harrington (ed.), *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, Sacra Pagina Series, Vol. 15 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008), p. 25.

<sup>48</sup> Pseudo-Libanius notes that it was good practice to keep to the customary practices regarding the letter opening, specifically the transition from the prescript to the rest of the letter as 'it benefits someone who wishes to add an address to the letter type, not to chatter on, indeed, not to use

As we have seen above, it is not unusual to find an expression of joy following on immediately from the salutation. It is a feature, for example, of the letter of King Demetrius to the 'nation of the Jews' in 1 Macc. 10:25 (χαίρειν) and 10:26 (ἐχάρημεν) and in the letter of the Spartans to the Jews in 1 Macc. 14:20 (χαίρειν) and 21 (ἠὺφράνθημεν). It may also be pointed out in a letter of Josephus in his *Life* (§226: χαίρειν[...]ἡδομαι), in the NT in Paul's letter to the Philippians (1:2: χαίρειν; 1:4: μετὰ χαρᾶς),<sup>49</sup> and in the second letter of John (1:3: χάρις; 1:4: Ἐχάρην). This last example is one of those used by Klauck to support his argument that the expression of joy is a standard component of an 'epistolary proem'.<sup>50</sup>

The qualification of χαρὰν by the intensifying adjective πᾶς is of note because the adjective is frequently found in *proemia* or at the beginnings of letters. Examples may be cited from the writings of Josephus (*Ant.* I, 5; *Life* I, 4; *C. Apion.* I, 3), from the *proemia* of Luke-Acts (Lk. 1:3; Acts 1:1; 10:35) and Hebrews (1:3), and from the beginnings of other NT letters (Rom. 1:5, 7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; Phil. 1:3, 4; Col. 1:4). The presence of the imperative ἡγήσασθε is also an indicator of a new beginning, for with it the writer calls the attention of the reader in a way quite different from the prescript.

The use of the familiar ἀδελφοί μου is another sign that a new beginning is being made in 1:2. As White and others have observed the term ἀδελφοί is found in letters of Paul signalling a new beginning (cf. Gal. 1:11, Rom. 1:13, 1 Thess. 2:1, Phil. 1:12 and 2 Cor. 1:8).<sup>51</sup> This feature has also been noted for ἀδελφοί μου in Jas. 1:2. Indeed the vocative ἀδελφοί/ἀδελφοί μου is found elsewhere in this short letter on ten occasions, mostly marking the beginning of a unit, whether small or large (cf. 1:16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1; 5:7, 19), but in 3:12 it appears at the conclusion of a unit, and in 3:10 it is used to intensify the writer's appeal to those he is addressing.<sup>52</sup>

---

adjectives' (See text in A. J. Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study 19 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988), p. 75.

<sup>49</sup> J. L. White, 'Introductory Formulae in the Body of the Pauline Letter', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90 (1971), 95, gives the examples of Phil. 1:7 (χάριτος). He also points to Phil. 4:10 (Ἐχάρην), feeling that this may belong to a letter that was once independent. J. Gnilka, *Der Philemonbrief*, Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, Vol. 10.4 (Freiburg: Herder, 1982), p. 38, highlights the note of joy in Phlm. 1:7 (χαρὰν) in what he takes to be the *proemium* of Paul's letter to Philemon (1:4-7).

<sup>50</sup> Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, pp. 338, 343 and 32-33.

<sup>51</sup> White 'Introductory Formulae', 94.

<sup>52</sup> See also Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, pp. 338-39, who notes that the address, ἀδελφοί μου, is indicative of a beginning.

The object of the opening *ἄσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου*, becomes clearer when the author mentions the theme of *πειρασμοῖς*. ‘Consider it all joy, my brothers’, he urges his addressees, ‘whenever you fall into various trials’. The occurrence of the term *πειρασμοῖς* - trials or temptations - sets the tone for the letter. The trials or temptations are not specified in this case and have a broad general sense (unlike the situation in 1:13-14). This makes it suitable for the opening of the letter. The question is how far does the unit which begins in 1:2 extend and what is its role in the letter of James?

The sentence begun in 1:2 continues in 1:3 with the author giving the grounds for considering the trials or temptations a reason for joy. Trials or temptations may be seen in a positive light when one recognises or acknowledges the good that can come about through them. Laws compares this with what she describes as ‘the paradox of exulting in persecutions’ in 1 Pet. 1:6-7.<sup>53</sup> What the author of James states in 1:3 is that the testing of the faith of the addressees (*δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως*) produces endurance or steadfastness (*ὑπομονήν*). The present participle *γινώσκοντες* may refer to a familiar tradition or a shared knowledge (‘since you know’),<sup>54</sup> that is to say, this is something of which his addressees are already aware. For Cantinat, steadfastness is the fruit of faith purified by trials.<sup>55</sup> The theme of the testing of one’s faith is also found in 1 Pet. 1:7, Heb. 11:17 and 2 Cor. 13:5.<sup>56</sup>

The theme of ‘steadfastness’ (*ὑπομονήν*) of 1:3 is picked up in 1:4a by the catchword *ὑπομονή*. The enclitic *δὲ* is transitional rather than adversative with the following exhortation indicating that something more is needed than just endurance or steadfastness. The addressees are exhorted to let endurance or steadfastness produce a ‘perfect work’ (*ἔργον τέλειον*), or as Johnson renders it, ‘yield a perfect product’ (cf. 2:22).<sup>57</sup> The purpose of this is that the person be perfect (*τέλειοι*) and whole or complete (*ὀλόκληροι*), lacking in nothing (*ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι*), the reference being, as Johnson points out, to moral or spiritual realities.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Laws, *James*, p. 55.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Johnson, *James*, p. 177; Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 55.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Cantinat, *Jacques*, p. 65: ‘le fruit de la foi purifiée par les épreuves’.

<sup>56</sup> See Schneider, *Der Jakobusbrief*, Regensburger Neues Testament (Regensburg: Pustet, 1987), pp. 28-30, on joy in suffering in the NT and Judaism, citing Rom. 5:3-5 and 1 Pet. 1:6-7 and Jubilees.

<sup>57</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 178.

<sup>58</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 179.

The final phrase of 1:2-4, ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι, is picked up in the first phrase of 1:5a via the catchword λείπεται. The author introduces the theme of wisdom (σοφίας) here in the opening of the letter, thus indicating its importance in the context of the letter as a whole. The person who lacks wisdom is exhorted 'to ask' (αἰτείτω) God for it, for he, as the addressees know, is the source of wisdom (cf. Prov. 8:22-21; 1 Kgs. 3:5-15; Wis. 7:7). The author assures them that God will answer their prayer, for he gives 'to all' without hesitation (ἀπλῶς) or reproach (μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος), that is to say that he gives with complete generosity (cf. Matt. 7:7). The author goes on to make clear that the person must pray (αἰτείτω) 'with faith' (ἐν πίστει), 'without doubting' (μηδὲν διακρινόμενος), that is, the person must pray with complete trust in God (cf. Matt. 21:21).

The reference to 'doubting' in the participle διακρινόμενος leads to a new development in 1:6b with the one who doubts (διακρινόμενος) being compared to a wave of the sea which is tossed about and driven by the wind. The image is certainly an eloquent and a suitable one (cf. Isa. 57:20). In 1:7 the author draws out the implications for the one who doubts. In contrast to the person who asks with faith (1:5-6), that person (ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος) will not receive anything from the Lord.<sup>59</sup> He goes on in the following verse (1:8) to describe the one who doubts as a 'double minded man' (ἀνὴρ δίψυχος), inconsistent or unstable (ἀκατάστατος) in all his ways (ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς).<sup>60</sup> This brings the tight-knit unit 1:5-8 to a close.

The beginning of a new unit in 1:9a is marked by the imperative Καυχάσθω which recalls the imperative ἠγήσασθε in the opening phrase of 1:2,<sup>61</sup> the occurrence of ἀδελφὸς which recalls the plural ἀδελφοί of 1:2, and the introduction of a new theme with the term ταπεινός. The enclitic δὲ has a transitional function. The imperative Καυχάσθω has a positive sense here as the 'lowly brother' (ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινός) is urged to boast in his 'exaltation' (ὑψεῖ).<sup>62</sup> The imperative also applies to the rich man (πλούσιος) who should also be considered a 'brother',<sup>63</sup> and who is urged to boast - the verb Καυχάσθω also applies to him - but in this case he is urged

<sup>59</sup> See Jesus' teaching on prayer in Matt. 7:8.

<sup>60</sup> Note the use of ὁδοῦ in 5:20 - turning a brother from the way of error.

<sup>61</sup> See comment of Ropes, *James*, p. 145.

<sup>62</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 185, notes that the exaltation can be read as including the future reward of the one who endures which is promised in 1:12 (cf. Dibelius, *James*, p. 84), but it has already been realised in God's election of the poor to be rich in faith (2:5).

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Martin, *James*, p. 25; Ropes, *James*, p. 146.

to boast in his ‘lowliness’ or ‘humiliation’ (τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ). What exactly this ‘lowliness’ or ‘humiliation’ or ‘humbling’ means is difficult to say. W. Grundmann interpreted the ‘lowliness’ of the rich as his ‘subjection to death’.<sup>64</sup> Ropes saw it as indicating the bringing low of the rich through loss of property (and referred to Lk. 1:48).<sup>65</sup> The positive sense of the verb suggests that the enclitic δε is not adversative here. The immediate context with its reference to the wild flower (flower of the grass) passing away is important for the interpretation of ταπεινώσει here. The exhortation to the rich to boast in his ‘lowliness’ or ‘humiliation’ because ‘as a flower of the grass he will pass away’ is elaborated on in 1:11 (γὰρ) which attributes the passing away of the flower to the sun ‘with its burning heat’. The author goes on to say that the rich man will likewise wither or waste away ἐν ταῖς πορείαις, which may refer to his ways of behaving or to his activities or undertakings.<sup>66</sup> These two images suggest that ταπεινώσει refers to the rich person’s loss of wealth or riches. For him this is a great trial (just as Jesus’ invitation to the rich young man in the gospels was) but for the Christian it should be a source of joy.

The phrase ἐν ταῖς πορείαις of 1:11 recalls that of ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ in 1:8 and provides a conclusion to 1:9-11. The correspondence between ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ and ἐν ταῖς πορείαις may be regarded as an *epiphora* - a rhetorical feature mentioned by Quintilian.<sup>67</sup>

Hort sees 1:9-11 as a return to the original theme of 1:2 taking it to contain ‘the characteristic contrast of rich and poor as a special application of the principle of rejoicing in trials’.<sup>68</sup> Ropes remarks that the writer returns to the πειρασμοῖς of 1:2.<sup>69</sup> He goes on to suggest that for the poor man, being afflicted with them, is an ‘elevation’ and a reason for boasting, while for the rich man brought low by adversity, losing his riches in a way ‘which conduces to his moral welfare’ should also be an occasion of boasting.<sup>70</sup> Both poor and rich are capable of being tested in their different circumstances, and this testing provides them with a positive opportunity.

<sup>64</sup> W. Grundman, ‘Tapeinos’, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, Vol. VIII (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972), 21-22.

<sup>65</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 146.

<sup>66</sup> On this see Johnson, *James*, p. 187.

<sup>67</sup> See chapter III of this thesis on methodology.

<sup>68</sup> Hort, *James*, p. 14.

<sup>69</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 144.

<sup>70</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 144.

There are then three units in 1:2-11 which are interlinked - the themes of testing and faith linking 1:2-4 and 1:5-8, while 1:9-11 has links with both.

## 2. The Position and Function of 1:12

As has been seen in the survey of literature on James above, of particular importance for the literary structure of the letter of James is the verse 1:12. Where does it fit? Is it to be treated as an isolated verse, detached from 1:2-11 and from what follows? Is it to be taken with 1:2-11 to form the unit 1:2-12? Is it to be seen as part of a larger unit - 1:2-15, 1:2-18 or 1:2-27? Or is it to be seen as beginning a new section which may be the beginning of the body of the letter or part of a larger unit?

While noting links between 1:2-4 and 1:12, Dibelius takes 1:12 to be 'an isolated saying which is connected neither with what precedes nor with what follows'.<sup>71</sup> Pfeiffer and Cladder, however, took 1:12 to bring to an end the thought of 1:2-4.<sup>72</sup> The obvious relationship between 1:2-4 and 1:12 has led many others to see 1:2-12 as forming a unit. Crucial for them is the presence in both 1:2-4 and 1:12 of the theme of testing represented by the noun *πειρασμοῦς*, and they take the correspondences between 1:2-4 and 1:12 to form an inclusion (*inclusio*) for the unit 1:2-12.<sup>73</sup> Crotty takes 1:2-15 as a unit on testing and temptation which is divided into 1:2-12 and 1:13-15.<sup>74</sup> A number of scholars such as Cornely, Francis, Davids and others take 1:2-11 to form a unit which is part of a larger unit - 1:2-18 or 1:2-27.<sup>75</sup> Ó Fearghail takes 1:12 to mark the beginning of the body of the letter,<sup>76</sup> while Burchard

---

<sup>71</sup> Dibelius, *James*, pp. 88: 'For the harsh judgement which vv.9-11 render with regard to the rich man excludes the possibility that here he is praised as 'blessed''.

<sup>72</sup> Pfeiffer, 'Jakobusbriefes', pp. 165-66; Cladder, 'Die Anlage', 50; 'Der formale Aufbau des Jakobusbriefes', *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 28 (1904), 298-99; cf. Ropes, *James*, p. 150.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Robert and Feuillet, 'James', p. 554; Sidebottom, *James*, p. 29; R. Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund des Jakobusbriefes* Forschung zur Bibel, (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1985), pp. 40-43; P. U. Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth in James* (Maryknoll, NY, Orbis Books, p. 39; Bassland, 'Literarische Form, Thematik', 3661; von Lips, 'Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament', pp. 414-15; Hiebert, *James*, pp. 82, 89; Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 59; Frankemölle, 'Jakobusbriefes', 171; Johnson, *James*, p. 189; Klein, *Jakobusbriefes*, pp. 39, 44-45; Penner, *James and Eschatology*, pp. 143-49; Elliott, 'James', 71-72; Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, p. 158; Moo, *James*, pp. 71-72; Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, p. 48; Taylor and Guthrie, 'James', 686; T. Kot, *La Lettre de Jacques La Foi, chemin de la vie*, ReSem 2 (Paris: Lethielleux, 2006), pp. 279-81; McCartney, *James*, p. 100.

<sup>74</sup> Crotty, 'Literary Structure', 47.

<sup>75</sup> See Cornely, *Introductionis*, p. 589 (as part of 1:2-18); Francis, 'Form and Function', 118; Davids, *James*, pp. 79-81; Martin, *James*, p. 30; Perkins, *James*, p. 92; Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 282 (1:2-18); Hartin, *James*, p. 103 (1:2-27); Tollefson, 'James', 21; Sleeper, *James*, pp. 53-55; Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, pp. 150-53 (1:2-18); Blomberg and Karmel, *James*, pp. 43-44 (1:2-27); Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 432 (1:2-18).

<sup>76</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 73-76. See Wall, *Community of the Wise*, pp. 54-55.



sees it as opening the body of the letter, 1:12-5:6.<sup>77</sup> Clearly, the repetition in 1:12 of terms from 1:2-4 is a decisive factor in deciding the role of 1:12 in the letter.

Let us look more closely at 1:12 and at its links to 1:2-4 and to 1:13-14. As we have seen above, the three units 1:2-4, 1:5-8 and 1:9-11 form a tight unit, with 1:2-4 and 1:5-8 very closely linked and 1:9-11 having links with 1:2-4 and 1:5-8. There is a change of tone in 1:12 as the familiar ἀδελφοί μου is replaced by the impersonal ἀνὴρ and the second person plural by the third person singular. Let us look at 1:2-4 and 1:12-15:

<sup>2</sup> Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγάσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσῃτε ποικίλοις, <sup>3</sup> γινώσκοντες ὅτι τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν. <sup>4</sup> ἡ δὲ ὑπομονή ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω, ἵνα ᾦτε τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι. <sup>5</sup> Εἰ δέ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας, αἰτείτω παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος καὶ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ  
(1:2-4)

<sup>12</sup> Μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν, ὅτι δόκιμος γενόμενος λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν.  
<sup>13</sup> μηδεὶς πειραζόμενος λεγέτω ὅτι Ἄπο θεοῦ πειράζομαι· ὁ γὰρ θεὸς ἀπείραστός ἐστιν κακῶν, πειράζει δὲ αὐτὸς οὐδένα. <sup>14</sup> ἕκαστος δὲ πειράζεται ὑπὸ τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας ἐξελκόμενος καὶ δελεαζόμενος· <sup>15</sup> εἶτα ἡ ἐπιθυμία συλλαβοῦσα τίκτει ἁμαρτίαν, ἡ δὲ ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα ἀποκύει θάνατον  
(1:12-15)

The most significant links between 1:2-4 and 1:12 are forged by the themes of trial (πειρασμοῖς 1:2 / πειρασμόν 1:12), endurance (ὑπομονήν 1:3 / ὑπομένει 1:12) and testing (δοκίμιον 1:3 / δόκιμος 1:12). Let us investigate other links between the two sections.

The verse opens with the term Μακάριος which introduces a beatitude in which the author declares blessed the man who endures temptation. While Μακάριος

---

<sup>77</sup> Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, pp. 12, 67.

recalls the note of joy in *χαρὰν*, the tone of 1:12 is different from that of 1:2-4. The thrust of the exhortation to the brothers in 1:2-4 to consider it altogether a matter of joy whenever they fall into ‘various temptations’ is that the testing of faith produces endurance which ultimately can lead to the brother becoming the perfect person (1:3-4). In 1:12 the author declares blessed the man who endures temptation, the reason being that he will receive the crown of life which is promised (by God - note the divine passive) to those who love him (cf. 1:5).

While there are links between 1:12 and 1:2-4 and 1:5-8, there are also links between 1:12 and 1:13-14. The catchword links that characterise 1:2-8 return in 1:12-14 in the shape of *πειρασμόν* (1:12a), *πειραζόμενος* (1:13a), *πειράζομαι* (1:13b), *ἀπείραστός* (1:13c), *πειράζει* (1:13c) and *πειράζεται* (1:14a), catchwords that suggest that 1:12 be taken with 1:13-14 in which the author is considering a specific case of testing, namely, the ascription of temptation to God. The links between 1:12 and 1:13-14 suggest that 1:12 forms not the end of a unit but the beginning of a new section. The repetitions in 1:12 of terms from 1:2-4 do not form an inclusion or *inclusio* but should be seen rather as anaphoric-type repetitions, that is, repetitions that mark beginnings.<sup>78</sup>

### 3. The Introductory Role of 1:2-11 in the Letter of James

The relationship of 1:1 to the rest of the letter of James has been discussed above and does not need to be looked at here. Ó Fearghail has argued that themes which appear in 1:2-11 and reappear later in the letter justify treating 1:2-11 as an introduction to the letter of James.<sup>79</sup> Burchard, in his commentary on the letter, takes 1:1-11 to function as the ‘entrance’ (‘Eingang’) to the letter, with 1:2-11 introducing what is to come (‘Was im Brief kommt’). He describes 1:2-11 as a ‘summary exposition’ (‘summarische Exposition’).<sup>80</sup>

Reading through the letter it becomes clear that themes found in 1:2-11 recur in the body of the letter. These include the themes of joy (1:1, 2, 9), brotherhood (1:2, 9-10), faith (1:3), testing (1:2-3), steadfastness or endurance (1:3-4), wisdom (1:5), prayer (1:6), doubt (1:6), lowly or humble and rich (1:9-11). Being perfect (1:4) and being doubleminded (1:8) are other important themes in 1:2-11. Let us look more

<sup>78</sup> See chap. III of this thesis.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, ‘Literary Structure’, 76.

<sup>80</sup> Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, pp. 47, 51.

closely at the relationship between themes found in 1:2-11 and the rest of the letter of James.

### 3.1 - Joy

As has been noted above, the theme of joy is present in the greeting χαίρειν in 1:1 and in the phrase Πᾶσαν χαρὰν of 1:2. The occasion for joy is the ‘various trials’ which the brothers may undergo. The note of joy is also present in the imperative Καυχᾶσθω of 1:9 as the lowly brother is urged to boast in his exaltation, the rich man in his lowliness.

The theme of joy is echoed in the beatitude of 1:12 (Μακάριος). The person who endures testing is declared blessed, for he will receive the crown of life. Again in 5:11a those who have endured are called blessed (μακαρίζομεν). The person who has gazed into the perfect law of freedom and has remained there, the one who is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the word (1:25), is also declared blessed (Μακάριος). In 5:13 those who are in good spirits or feeling good are urged to sing, presumably to the Lord (ψαλλέτω).

### 3.2 - Brotherhood

In his use of Ἀδελφοί μου in 1:2, the author of the letter uses language that, as Johnson has pointed out, is ‘particularly pervasive’ in Christianity.<sup>81</sup> Through his use of this ‘kinship language’ the author indicates to his addressees his closeness to them, highlighting their unity and equality. He goes on to use the term ἀδελφός in 1:9 in reference to the ‘lowly’ and the ‘rich’ - both of who can be seen as Christians. The term is subsequently used in 1:16 and 1:19 where its sense is intensified by the use of the adjective ἀγαπητοί (‘beloved’). The address Ἀδελφοί μου is used again in 2:1 as the author introduces a warning about showing partiality and is again qualified by ἀγαπητοί in 2:5 as the author reminds his brethren that God has chosen the poor to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom and rebukes them for dishonouring the poor and showing partiality to the rich (2:6). He reverts to Ἀδελφοί μου as he opens the section 2:14-26 on a critical note. He uses it again in 3:1 as he addresses a note of warning to his addressees about becoming teachers, and he uses it in 3:10 and 3:12 to underline words of warning. While the term is absent in 4:1-10, it is used on three

---

<sup>81</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 51.

occasions in 4:11, emphasising not only the close bond between the author and his readers, but one which is to be expected among the readers themselves. It is used without qualification in 5:7 in his words of exhortation to patience and in 5:9 where the author calls on his brothers not to grumble against one another and again in 5:12, this time qualified by the personal pronoun (Ἀδελφοί μου) as he urges his brethren not to swear. He uses Ἀδελφοί μου for the last time in 5:19 as he introduces his final exhortation and his final words of promise designed to raise the spirit of brotherhood.

The use of the language of kinship - ἀδελφός, ἀδελφή, Ἀδελφοί μου and Ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί - in the letter conveys to the addressees how close the writer is to them even when he is criticising their behaviour towards 'a brother or a sister' in 2:15, for example. Despite the authoritative tone that shines through the frequent exhortations and the harsh words from time to time, the intense use of the language of kinship indicates the warmth of the relationship between the author and those to whom the letter is addressed. The note that is struck in 1:2 by Ἀδελφοί μου is carried right through the letter.

### 3.3 - Faith

The theme of faith is introduced in 1:3 in the context of faith being tested. The testing of one's faith (τὸ δοκίμιον[...]*τῆς πίστεως*), the author writes, produces 'endurance' or 'steadfastness' (ὑπομονήν) and endurance in turn can lead to one becoming perfect and complete. In 1:6 the addressees are urged to pray with faith (ἐν πίστει), if they lack wisdom, and should not doubt.

In the body of the letter the theme of faith is explicitly mentioned in 2:1 at the very beginning of the unit 2:1-13. The addressees are called upon to emulate the faith of Christ and not to show partiality (προσωποληψία). The addressees should realise that God chose the poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith (πλουσίους ἐν πίστει) and heirs of the kingdom promised to those who love God. Their faith should not permit them to discriminate or dishonour the poor but should be accompanied by fulfilment of the law of love (2:8).

The theme of faith (πίστιν) and works (ἔργα) dominates the unit 2:14-26 which is seen by many as standing at the theological heart of the letter.<sup>82</sup> For Cantinat,

---

<sup>82</sup> Cf. W. Pratscher, *Der Herrenbruder Jakobus und die Jakobustradition* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1987), pp. 213-16.

the affirmation in 1:3, that faith purified by trial or testing produces perseverance or steadfastness, links up with what the author writes in 2:1, 5, showing that for James faith must be active and not a simple intellectual adhesion, as the writer goes on to state in 2:14ff.<sup>83</sup> The noun ἔργον occurs with πίστιν already in 1:4 where the addressees are urged to let steadfastness yield or produce literally a perfect work (ἔργον τέλειον). Already here in 1:4, the beginning of the letter, faith is linked to its product or expression. Johnson sees 2:22 with its statement that faith was perfected by deeds as corresponding to the thought expressed in 1:4.<sup>84</sup> In 1:22-25 the author had already insisted on the necessity of the addressees being not only hearers of the word but doers also (Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου καὶ μὴ μόνον ἀκροαταὶ), and in 1:26-27 he had pointed out that visiting orphans and widows in their distress was a mark of true religion. Now here in 2:14-26, in discussing the nature of genuine faith, he argues that faith and works must go hand in hand, that faith must find a practical expression, and he rejects the claim that faith and works or deeds do not need to go hand in hand, that one can separate them. Without works faith is dead, he writes in 2:17, and the illustration he adduces is of the poor brother and sister who are comforted in word but not in deed (2:15-16). Faith, if it is genuine, will express itself in deeds. The two are inseparable. Such was the faith of Abraham and Rahab. Abraham's faith was perfected (ἐτελειώθη) by his deeds (cf. Gen. 22). Abraham's faith is not just intellectual assent to a promise (cf. Gen. 15:5-6) but is an operative faith (cf. Gen. 22:2-12) and it is in the light of this operative faith that the statement of Gen. 15:6 is ultimately fulfilled, namely, that Abraham is reckoned as righteous by God. He is considered righteous by his works (cf. Gen. 22) and not by faith alone (cf. Gen. 15:6). The same may be shown in the case of Rahab who believed that the Lord had given Joshua the land. She professed her faith in the God of Israel and acted in favour of the spies. For the author of James her actions completed her faith. She was 'justified' by her works when she received the messengers and showed them another way to escape. Again the author of the letter makes the point that faith without works is dead - lifeless, just like the body without the spirit. For James faith and works must be a living entity.

The theme of faith returns in 5:13-18 in the context of prayer (as in 1:6), but more particularly in the context of weakness and illness (Κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν).

<sup>83</sup> Cantinat, *Jacques*, p. 65.

<sup>84</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 178.

The person who is ill is exhorted to call the 'elders of the church' who will pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith (εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως) will save the sick person (σώσει τὸν κάμνοντα) and the Lord will raise him (5:14-15). It is the prayer made with faith that is effective, the prayer that does not doubt (cf. 1:6). It is such a prayer that will heal or restore to health (σώσει) the sick person (cf. Matt. 9:22; Mk. 5:23, 28, 34; Lk. 17:19; 18:42) and the Lord will raise him up. And, the writer adds, if the sick person has sinned, 'he will be forgiven'. The prayer of faith leads to a total healing.

### 3.4 - Trial and Testing

The theme of testing, trial, or temptation, is introduced in 1:2-4 in a general form. The addressees are to count trials or temptations into which they may fall as occasions of rejoicing, for such trials test one's faith (δοκίμιον[...]τῆς πίστεως) and the testing of one's faith produces steadfastness or endurance which in turn leads one to become perfect, lacking in nothing. The theme of trial and testing may also be present in 1:9-11 where both rich and poor are tested.

The theme of πειρασμοῖς reappears in 1:12 and here the author assures the addressees that the one who is tested (δοκίμιον) and endures (ὑπομονήν) will receive the crown of life (στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς). The theme of temptation dominates 1:13-15 with the verb πειράζομαι being used on four occasions. The addressees are urged not to ascribe the experience of being tempted (πειραζόμενος) to God who cannot be tempted (ἀπειραστός) and who does not tempt anyone. The addressees should rather realise that temptations come from within oneself, from one's own desires.

The theme is present elsewhere in the letter though not expressed with this terminology. The temptation to give oneself over to anger (1:19-20), to be a hearer of the word only and not a doer (1:22), to think oneself religious while giving free rein to the tongue (1:26), to discriminate against one's fellow Christian (2:1-6), can all be seen as extensions of the theme of temptation. The tongue returns as a formidable test in 3:1-12 since it can be so devastating. Friendship with the world can lead to all kinds of tests for the Christian (cf. 4:1-10). The temptation to judge a brother (4:11-12), to boast in their arrogance (4:13-17), to store up riches and ignore the cries of the workers (5:1-6), can be seen as failure in these tests. Illness can also be seen as a test of faith to which one responds with a prayer of faith (cf. 5:13-18). As we have seen

above, Abraham in 2:21-24 and Rahab in 2:25 are given as examples from scripture of people being tested. Job and Elijah, in 5:10-11 and 5:17-18 can also be seen as examples from scripture of those who were tested. The farmer in 5:7 may also be seen as a more basic, though relevant, example of one who is tested by nature to which he responds with patience.

### 3.5 - Steadfastness

In the introduction (1:3-4), the writer makes the point forcefully that the testing of one's faith produces endurance or steadfastness. He returns to this theme in 1:12 at the beginning of the body of the letter and declares blessed the man who endures trial or temptation (Μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν). Having been tested he will receive the crown of life (λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς). The notion of steadfastness is also present in the verb παραμένω (1:25), used in 1:22-25 where the writer is endeavouring to impress on the addressees the need to be doers of the word and not hearers only (1:22). The one who looks intently into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres (παραμείνας), he writes, being no hearer that forgets, but a doer that acts, he shall be blessed in his doing or action (μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται).

In 5:7-12 the writer repeatedly urges his addressees to be patient. He uses the verbs μακροθυμέω which means to be patient, to be forbearing, and ὑπομένω which means to be steadfast. The exhortation to be patient and steadfast dominates these verses 5:7-11 - 5:7, 8, 10 and 11 (5:7: Μακροθυμήσατε[...] ἐκδέχεται [...] μακροθυμῶν; 5:8: μακροθυμήσατε; 5:10: μακροθυμίας; 5:11: ὑπομείναντας· [...] ὑπομονήν). The brothers are urged to await patiently the παρουσία (5:7-8). The example of the steadfastness of the prophets is used in 5:10 (ὑπόδειγμα[...] τῆς μακροθυμίας τοῦς προφήτας), that of Job in 5:11 (τὴν ὑπομονὴν Ἰὼβ). There is a clear echo of 1:12 in 5:11a: μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομείναντας. Elsewhere in the body of the letter one may say that the admonition in 1:19 to be slow to anger and slow to speak requires a steadfast spirit as does keeping oneself unstained from the world (1:27: ἄσπιλον ἑαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου). Controlling the tongue (χαλιναγωγῶν) also requires great steadfastness, if one is not to 'fall' in a word (3:2: ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει).

### 3.6 - Wisdom

The theme of wisdom (σοφία), introduced in 1:5, is clearly an important theme for the author. Its absence is a critical one for the addressees, as lacking wisdom causes one to be imperfect. The one who is lacking wisdom must ask God for it with faith and is assured that God will answer a prayer made with faith. Wisdom is presented then as a gift of God, who gives to all generously so that one may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

The theme of wisdom returns explicitly in 3:13 where those who are wise (σοφός) and understanding (ἐπιστήμων) are called upon to show their 'works' in the meekness of wisdom (ἐν πραύτητι σοφίας). A contrast is made in 3:14-17 between wisdom from above (σοφία ἄνωθεν) and wisdom that is earthly (ἐπίγειος), natural (ψυχική) and devilish (δαμονιώδης). The latter involves bitter jealousy (ζῆλον πικρὸν) and selfish ambition (ἐριθείαν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ), boasting (κατακαυχᾶσθε) and being false to the truth (ψεύδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας) - this is the wisdom (3:16) that leads to disorder (ἀκαταστασία) and every vile practice. The wisdom from above, on the other hand (3:17), is pure (ἄγνή), peaceable (εἰρηνική), gentle (ἐπιεικής), open to reason (εὐπειθής), full of mercy and good fruits (μεστὴ ἐλέους καὶ καρπῶν ἀγαθῶν), and without uncertainty (ἀδιάκριτος) or insincerity (ἀνυπόκριτος). The wisdom that James speaks of is a wisdom that enables one to be perfect and complete (1:4).

### 3.7 - Prayer

The theme of prayer is introduced in 1:5-8 where the person who is lacking in some way is urged to pray to God who gives generously and without recrimination (1:5-6). In particular, if anyone lacks wisdom he is urged to pray with faith (ἐν πίστει) to God who gives generously, and is assured that it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith, not doubting anything (μηδὲν διακρινόμενος), for the one who doubts will not receive anything from the Lord (1:7).

The advice of 1:5-7 is echoed in 4:2-3 ('You desire and do not have[...]You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly'). The verb αἰτείτω of 1:5 and 1:6 is echoed in 4:2-3, as the trouble caused is ascribed to the fact that the troublemakers ask (αἰτεῖσθαι) and do not receive (οὐ λαμβάνετε) because they ask wrongly or wickedly (κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε). They pray to



God with wicked intent or evil motives, namely, to spend it on their desires. The prayer that will be heard is very different. One must submit oneself to God (4:7), draw near to him (4:8a) and humble oneself before him (4:10a), and pray with humility (4:15). Like the publican in Luke's parable, the prayer that is heard is the humble prayer (cf. Lk. 18:9-14).

The theme of prayer returns explicitly in 5:13-18 where the verbs προσεύχομαι (5:13, 14, 17, 18) and εὔχομαι (5:16) and the nouns εὐχή (5:15), δέησις (5:16) and προσευχή (5:17) recur. The person who is suffering is urged to pray (5:13a). The person who is ill is urged to call the presbyters of the church who will pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the lord. The prayer made with faith (εὐχή τῆς πίστεως) will heal the person who is ill and the Lord will raise him up. The 'brothers' are also urged to confess their sins to one another and to pray (εὔχεσθε) for one another in order that they may be healed (5:16a). In 5:16b the author makes a statement on the power of the prayer of the righteous person, a statement that is supported by the examples that follow. The sense of the comment is that the prayer of supplication of the righteous person can achieve much when it is made in faith (πολὺ ἰσχύει δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη). Johnson renders it, 'A righteous person's prayer is able to have a strong effect'.<sup>85</sup> Whatever the translation, the emphasis is on the power of prayer which is illustrated by examples from the ministry of Elijah as recounted in 1 Kgs. 18-18 (cf. Sir. 48:3; Lk. 4:25). Elijah's prayer led to a drought (cf. 1 Kgs. 17:10) for three years and six months and a second prayer led to the return of the rains (cf. 1 Kgs. 18:44).

### 3.8 - τέλειος and δίψυχος

The adjective τέλειος is introduced in 1:4 and is a key term for the letter of James. It is also found in 1:17, 1:25 and 3:2 while the verb τελείτε occurs in 2:8 and 2:22. The term is first found in 1:4a in the phrase ἔργον τέλειον which has been translated as 'full effect' or 'perfect work'.<sup>86</sup> The author has stated in 1:3 that the

<sup>85</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 325. See also Adamson, *James*, p. 199: 'very powerful in its operation'; Mayor, *James*, p. 178: 'when it is actualized'. Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 204: 'Viel vermag Fürbitte eines Gerechten, energisch betrieben'; Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 225: 'Viel vermag ein kraftvolles Gebet eines Gerechten'.

<sup>86</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 74, argues that the author of James is saying that the addressees are the perfect work themselves who integrate their faith with actions becoming complete people - 'Only this interpretation is justified both by the correspondence between 'perfect' [...] and 'perfect work' [...] and by the schema of the concatenation; furthermore, it creates no linguistic difficulties'.

testing of faith leads to endurance and in 1:4a he urges the addressees to allow this endurance or steadfastness to produce the ‘perfect work’, to achieve its ‘full effect’ (ἔργον τέλειον), in other words, so that they may become ‘perfect and complete’ (τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι), lacking in nothing. This theme of perfection is a central theme in the introduction. The one example of something that may be lacking given by the author is wisdom, which is clearly important to him. Its presence is necessary for the person to be perfect or mature and complete.<sup>87</sup>

The term τέλειος is found, as we have noted above, in 1:17 where the author affirms that every good gift or endowment and every perfect gift (πᾶν δῶρημα τέλειον) is from above, that is, from God. It occurs in 1:25 where it qualifies the law (νόμον τέλειον). The author is exhorting the addressees to be doers as well as hearers of the word (1:22-25). The perfect law here is the law of freedom. The verb τελέω is found in 2:8 in the sense of perform completely in relation to the ‘royal law’ according to the scriptures. The verb is also present in 2:22 in relation to Abraham and his works, clearly picking up ἔργον τέλειον of 1:4. The adjective is found again in 3:2 where the author is warning his audience about becoming teachers because of the severity of the judgement they will receive (3:1). With its reference to the person, it again recalls 1:4 where the adjective relates to the person who allows endurance achieve a perfect work in order to be ‘perfect and complete’. All fall in many ways, the author writes in 3:2. The person who does not fail in speech is perfect (τέλειος). These are the instances where τέλειος or τελέω are to be found in the letter. There are also instances through the letter where the term could be understood as applying to the man who endures temptation and receives the crown of life (1:12), the person who is ‘quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger (1:19b), who receives with meekness the implanted word (1:21), who is a doer of the word and not a hearer only (1:22), who perseveres in the perfect law of liberty (1:25), who cares for the vulnerable (1:27a), who keeps unstained from the world (1:27), who does not show partiality or make distinctions (2:1-5) but fulfils the royal law (2:8), whose faith is completed by works, as was the faith of Abraham (2:22-23) and Rahab (2:25), whose wisdom

---

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Mayor, *James*, p. 346, who notes ‘it is not “perfect” in the strict sense of the term’ and sees it as maturity - ‘Christians who have attained maturity of character and understanding’. Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, p. 62, sees it as ‘mature’. The term ὀλόκληρος which has been taken to mean ‘whole, complete, intact’ is rare, being found only here and 1 Thess. 5:23; Martin, *James*, p. 16, takes it to mean a ‘growth in perfection and a reaching of full maturity’.

comes from above (3:17), who does not speak evil of another (4:11), who is patient and steadfast (5:7-11), who does not swear (5:12) and who prays faithfully (5:13-18).

The person to whom τέλειος cannot be applied in 1:2-11 is the person who lacks σοφία (1:4c) and whose prayer is afflicted with doubt - like a wave of the sea that is tossed and turned by the wind, a double-minded person (δίψυχος), unstable (ἀκατάστατος) in all his ways. This person provides a sharp contrast to the one who is 'perfect and complete' and lacking in nothing.

In the body of the letter the double-minded person may be identified with those who when tempted gives the excuse that they are 'tempted by God' (1:13-15), those who are hearers of the word only and not doers, deceiving themselves (cf. 1:22), could be said to fit into the category of the double-minded person (cf. 1:22-25); likewise the person who thinks he is religious but does not bridle the tongue (1:26) and the brothers who discriminate against the poor person in the assembly (cf. 2:1-4, 8-13). In doing so they are 'divided within themselves' (διεκρίθητε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς) and are judges of evil thoughts (κριταὶ διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν). The δίψυχοι or double-minded could be also said to include the one whose faith does not express itself in deeds (2:14), the one whose tongue blesses the father and curses those made according to God's likeness (3:9), the one who has bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in his heart and is false to the truth (3:14), the one whose wisdom is earthly and devilish, accompanied by jealousy and selfish ambition and disorder of every kind, this in contrast to the one whose wisdom comes from above, is filled with good fruits, and is undivided and sincere (3:15-17). The δίψυχος may be identified with the one who asks wrongly for what he wants and for the wrong reason (4:3), the one who speaks evil against another (4:11), the one who knows what is right to do and fails to do it (4:17), sharing greedy and discriminatory characteristics normally associated with the rich (5:1-6). It is this double minded man who can be seen to be most susceptible to wandering (5:19-20).

### 3.9 - The Lowly and the Rich

In 1:9 the author calls on the lowly brother (ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινός) to boast (Καυχάσθω) in his exaltation (ἐν τῷ ὕψει). The same call is addressed to the rich person (πλούσιος) to boast in his humiliation (ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει). The rich man is part of the Christian community and is also a care for the author.<sup>88</sup>

In 1:26-27 the authors defines 'pure and undefiled religion with God' in terms of assisting 'orphans and widows' (ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ὀρφανούς καὶ χήρας), that is, visiting and assisting those who were the vulnerable and impoverished. In making this point the author puts the poor at the heart of a true religion.

The theme of rich and poor is found in 2:1-5 in the context of the liturgical assembly. The rich man and the poor man are treated quite differently in the assembly. The rich man 'with gold rings and in fine clothing' is treated with deference and partiality and given a good seat. The poor man 'in filthy clothing' is treated quite differently. He is given the option of standing or being seated on the ground. This is all the more reprehensible since it is the poor (πτωχός) that God has chosen to be rich in faith (πλουσίους ἐν πίστει) and heirs of the kingdom promised to those who love God. The poor, in other words, are the elect of God. The author reprimands his audience for dishonouring the poor person (τὸν πτωχόν). They themselves, he reminds them in 2:6, are oppressed by the rich (πλούσιοι) and dragged before the courts by those people who blaspheme the name that is invoked over them.

With a quote from Scripture in 4:6 the author reminds his audience that God gives grace to the lowly (ταπεινός). He calls on them to humble themselves (ταπεινώθητε) before the Lord who, he assures them, will exalt them. Here we have a clear echo of 1:9.

In 4:13-15 there is a sharp critique of the rich with the author criticising the merchant's arrogant planning for the future without reference to God (4:13-14). They trade and make gain (μπορευσόμεθα καὶ κερδήσομεν) without a care for tomorrow. Their description, and the reference to the transience of their lives, that they are like a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes (4:14b), recalls 1:11c where

---

<sup>88</sup> For the rich man as a Christian see Dibelius, *James*, pp. 85-87; Davids, *James*, pp. 76-77; Laws, *James*, pp. 62-64; Martin, *James*, pp. 25-26; Penner, *James and Eschatology*, pp. 204-10; Hartin, *James*, p. 62. See also Johnson, *James*, pp. 190-91. Those who view the rich man as being outside the Christian community include Mayor, *James*, pp. 45-46, 189; Ropes, *James*, pp. 145-146; Hort, *James*, p. 14; Adamson, *James*, pp. 76-77; Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 74; Hiebert, *James*, p. 78; Frankemölle, 'Jakobusbriefes', 241; Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 56; Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 148.

reference is made to the rich man fading away in the midst of his undertakings (ἐν ταῖς πορείαις). The attitude of the merchants should be one of submission to the will of God (cf. 4:15). Instead they boast in their arrogance (καυχᾶσθε ἐν ταῖς ἀλαζονείαις). Such boasting is evil, he tells them (4:16b).

In 5:1-6 the author denounces the rich (οἱ πλούσιοι) in surprisingly sharp tones, addressing them directly. In 5:1 he calls upon them to weep for the miseries that are coming. Their riches have become corrupted, their garments, moth eaten, their silver and gold, 'rusted', he tells them. They have 'laid up treasure' (ἐθησαυρίσατε) for the last days (5:3) which will not avail them. He accuses them of defrauding the labourers who have harvested their fields by holding back their wages. The prophets Jeremiah (22:13) and Malachi (3:5) condemned those who did not pay day labourers on the day (see also Tob. 4:14). Here in James the cries of the reapers are said to have reached the ears of the Lord (5:4). The author goes on to accuse the rich of having lived luxuriously on the earth (5:5a) and of having overindulged themselves. They have, he tells them, oppressed, and killed the righteous one who did not oppose them (5:6).

## **Conclusion**

We began this chapter by looking at the function of the epistolary prescript of 1:1 in the letter and argued that it should be seen as part and parcel of the letter, and in particular as part of the author's introduction. Apart from actually greeting the readers or hearers, this epistolary prescript has the function of making the audience well-disposed for what is to follow. The author's presentation of himself as a 'servant' or 'slave' of God and the Lord Jesus Christ is echoed several times in the letter suggesting that the author wishes his readers to adopt a similar attitude. Other themes in the prescript such as the 'twelve tribes' and the 'diaspora' are less evident, although there is the possibility that the theme of 'diaspora' may be echoed in the the final verses of James, in the reference to the one who strays from the truth. The term 'diaspora' as an address may be taken in its normal sense. There are many places to which the letter could have been sent. It is not impossible, nor is it difficult, to see it as a real address. We will look more closely at this issue of epistolary form and epistolary worth in chap. VI.

The prescript of 1:1 is followed by the unit 1:2-11 which may be divided into three smaller units (1:2-4, 5-8, 9-11), held together by catchwords and other links with the beatitude of 1:12 marking the beginning of the body of the letter. The repetition of testing in 1:12 from 1:2-4 should not be seen as an inclusion, that is, as repetitions that delimit units. Given the strong links between 1:12 and 1:13-15, as well as the shift in tone and sense of testing in 1:12 the repetition does not signal the conclusion of a section. It should be seen instead as an anaphoric-type repetition that marks the beginning of a new section.

Finally, in this chapter we looked at the themes of 1:2-11 and found significant restatements and occurrences of those themes and associated themes in the rest of the letter. The links created between 1:2-11 and the rest of the letter suggest that these verses may be seen to have a true introductory role in the letter. In its original sense of a paving of the way, the term *proemium* could be used to describe the role of 1:1-11 (1:1, 2-11), since it prepares the audience for what is to come in the body of the letter.

Having looked at 1:1-11, our attention now turns to the rest of the letter, 1:12-5:20. We will attempt to delimit other units in James and look closely at links there to see how these individual units fit together into a cohesive and unified whole.

## Chapter V

### The literary Structure of Jas. 1:12-5:20

#### Introduction

In the previous chapter it was argued that Jas. 1:2-11 forms a unit, which, with 1:1, introduces the body of the letter of James which opens with the beatitude of 1:12. As we have seen in chap. I, there has been substantial disagreement over the years on the extent and literary structure of the body of the letter. This chapter will assess how far the opening in 1:12 extends and what other units can be formed from the main body, and how they can link together into a cohesive whole. We looked in chap. III at how the various units may be delimited in James, providing some of the groundwork for this chapter.

The various opinions on the main body of the letter are indeed striking. A great number of studies take 2:1 to begin the letter body. Our study, which takes 1:12 as the beginning of the main body, though not an uncommon position to take, still falls into the category of a minority opinion. As we move through the various units in the main body we will consider the positions of other scholars and show the limits of such studies, while drawing upon the suggestions of others. It is our hope that an attempt to find a logical and structurally sound division of the main body is not as difficult as the studies on James in chapter I would suggest. In our chapter on methodological considerations in chapter III we looked at possible ways in which the text of James can be divided up, looking at the various markers by which units can be delimited in James. This chapter aims to look more closely at how these units can be delimited in the letter by a variety of literary techniques and other indicators. We will also look at how these units may be seen to be held together thematically. Finally, we will consider throughout this chapter the various ways these units can be seen to fit

together into a cohesive whole, so as to show that the letter moves forward from the introduction in a logical and structured way.

## 1. Jas. 1:12-2:26

### 1.1 - Jas. 1:12-15

As was suggested in the previous chapter, the beatitude of 1:12 opens the body of the letter, declaring blessed (Μακάριος) the man who has endured temptation or trial (ὑπομένει/πειρασμόν). Having been tested (δόκιμος) he will 'receive' (λήμψεται) the crown of life promised by God to those who love Him. While there are clear links between 1:12 and 1:2-4, it has been argued above that the repetitions in 1:12 are to be seen not as forming an inclusion but, instead are best seen as forming anaphoric-type repetitions, that is, repetitions that mark the beginning of a new section. That 1:12 is to be seen as more closely linked to what follows than what has gone before is also suggested by the clear verbal links between 1:12 and 1:13, and specifically between the noun πειρασμόν of 1:12 and the various occurrences of the verb πειράζομαι in 1:13-14a (πειραζόμενος[...]πειράζομαι[...]πειράζει [...] πειράζεται) and between πειρασμόν of 1:12 and ἀπίραστός of 1:13. The close links between 1:12 and 1:13-14 suggest that the term πειρασμόν has an internal dimension in 1:12,<sup>1</sup> as the verb has in 1:13-14 where the context indicates that the author is thinking of ordinary temptations rather than external persecutions. There is a less positive attitude towards trial or temptation in 1:12 than in 1:2-4 with the possibility of failure implied in 1:12, an attitude that paves the way for the negative attitude found in 1:14.<sup>2</sup> Thus 1:12 fits better into the context of 1:12-15. In 1:14 the author states that each person is tempted (πειράζεται) when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. The term 'desire' (ἐπιθυμίας) from 1:14 is picked up in 1:15 which describes the practical result of desire, namely, sin (ἁμαρτίαν), and sin, when fully-grown or completed, brings forth death (θάνατον). The very last word in 1:15, θάνατον, contrasts with the term ζωῆς of 1:12 and can be seen to form a thematic link between the two verses, framing 1:12-15. While the one who endures temptation will receive the crown of life (ζωῆς), the one who succumbs to temptation and desire

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 85; also Martin, *James*, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Laws, *James*, pp. 69-70.



will receive a very different ‘reward’ - θάνατον (1:15).<sup>3</sup> It is clear from the verbal and thematic links between these verses that 1:12-15 may be considered a unit.

## 1.2 - Jas. 1:16-18

The beginning of a new unit in 1:16 is signalled by the imperative Μὴ πλανᾶσθε and the repetition of ἀδελφοί μου of 1:2, used in 1:19 in the beginning of a new section. A new theme is introduced as the author calls on his beloved brethren not to be deceived or led astray (1:16). The reason for the admonition is made clear in the following verse where the author asserts that ‘every good endowment and every perfect gift’ comes from above, from the ‘Father of lights’, that is, from God. In 1:18 the author goes on to specify that the father of lights brings the readers forth by his own choice or purpose by the ‘word of truth’ (λόγω ἀληθείας), that is, by the gospel. Contrasting themes, notably ‘deception’ (πλανᾶσθε) in 1:16 and ‘truth’ (ἀληθείας) in 1:18, help frame the unit.

Now that we have two units, we may ask what links can be seen between them? Scholars view 1:16-18 in a variety of ways, taking it as part of the previous section, or as part of what follows, even as the beginning of a new unit.<sup>4</sup> The verb ἀποκυέω, ‘to bring forth’, which occurs in 1:15 and 1:18, provides a significant link between 1:12-15 and 1:16-18. The verb is found in contrasting contexts - in 1:15 where desire is said to give birth to sin (ἁμαρτίαν) and in 1:18 where God is said to bring us forth by the word of truth (λόγω ἀληθείας). It is of note that the verb occurs towards the conclusion of both units, in 1:15b and 1:18a: δὲ ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα ἀποκύει θάνατον[...].βουληθεῖς ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς λόγω ἀληθείας. Lausberg points out examples of such correspondences between the conclusions of units. The term used for such correspondences is ‘epiphora’. Such epiphoric-type repetitions could be found here. Another possible link is found between 1:17, with its statement that every good gift and every perfect endowment comes from God, and 1:12, which mentions the crown of life as coming from God also, promised to those who love God.

<sup>3</sup> So notes Davids, *James*, p. 81; Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 62; Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 153. Hartin, *James*, p. 103, takes 1:12-15 as a section, within 1:12-18.

<sup>4</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 86, takes 1:16 to begin a new section, acting as a bridge between 1:12-15 and 1:17ff. Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, pp. 79-82, sees 1:16 as the conclusion of 1:13, seeing a link between being deceived in 1:16 and the various temptations in 1:13-15. Sleeper, *James*, p. 55, takes 1:12-16 as a sub-section within the unit 1:2-18. Moo, *James*, p. 72, takes 1:16-18 as a conclusion to the argument of 1:13-15.

### 1.3 - Jas. 1:19-25

That 1:19a marks the beginning of a unit is signalled by the imperative ἴστε (cf. 1:9, 1:16)<sup>5</sup> and by the occurrence of ἀδελφοί μου which has already been used to mark the beginning of a unit in 1:2 and 1:16 and which will be used again in 2:1, 2:5, 3:1 and 3:10. Even more telling in the case of 1:19a is the presence of the phrase ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί which is repeated from 1:16. This anaphoric-type repetition marks 1:19a as a new beginning. Some who see the letter as having the rhetorical structure of a speech see 1:19 as the beginning of the *propositio*.<sup>6</sup> Although some scholars such as Vouga and Martin see 1:19a as forming a conclusion to the opening section of the letter (1:2-19a),<sup>7</sup> most authors are in agreement with seeing 1:19a as beginning a new unit. Pfeiffer and Cladder have argued as much and have been followed by many other commentators on James.<sup>8</sup> The opening imperative of 1:19a is followed by a three-part admonition in 1:19b introduced by another imperative ἔστω ‘let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger’. In 1:20 the author picks up the third part of the triple injunction (βραδύς εἰς ὀργήν·) and provides the reason for the statement (γάρ), namely, that the anger of man (ὀργή γὰρ ἀνδρός) does not accomplish or produce the righteousness of God. The exhortation in 1:21 stands in a causal connection with 1:20 through the introductory διὸ (‘wherefore’). Because the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God, the author’s readers or hearers are urged to put away or get rid of all ‘filthiness’ (ῥυπαρίαν) and ‘evil superfluities’ (περισσεΐαν κακίας). While the grammatical connection between 1:20 and 1:21 is evident, the logical connection between them is by no means as clear. The main verb in 1:21 is the imperative δέξασθε, and with it the writer exhorts his addressees to ‘receive’ with meekness or humility (πραΰτητι) the ‘implanted word’ (ἐμφυτον λόγον) which has the power to save (σῶσαι) their souls (1:21b). This

<sup>5</sup> The verb ἴστε may be an indicative or imperative; for the imperative see Mayor, *James*, pp. 64-65; Chaine, *Jacques*, p. 27; Reike, *James*, pp. 19-20; Hiebert, *James*, p. 110; Johnson, *James*, pp. 198-99. For those who view it as indicative see Ropes, *James*, p. 168; Dibelius, *James*, pp. 108-09; Davids, *James*, p. 91; Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 69; Hartin, *James*, p. 95.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Klein, *Jakobusbriefes*, pp. 39-40; Thurén, ‘Risky Rhetoric’, 282; Witherington, *Letters and Homilies* p. 436. From a non-rhetorical point of view, the triple admonition, ‘let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger’, was taken by Pfeiffer to provide a key for the structure of most of the letter. In his view the triple admonition set the agenda for the ensuing three sections 1:21-2:26, 3:1-18 and 4:1-17 (See Pfeiffer, ‘Jacobusbrief’, 167-78; the rest of the letter, in his view, is closely linked to chapter 4 [p. 179]).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Vouga, *Jacques*, p. 20; Martin, *James*, pp. cii-ciii.

<sup>8</sup> On 1:19a as a beginning see Pfeiffer, ‘Der Zusammenhang des Jakobusbriefes’, 167, 172-73; Cladder, ‘Die Anlage’, 52; also Francis, ‘Form and Function’, 118; Thurén, ‘Risky Rhetoric’, 272; Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 419.

exhortation is made more specific in the following verse (note the catchword λόγος in 1:21b and 22a). In 1:22 the author introduces his statement with an adversative δὲ since he is going to make the point that more is required than just receiving the word (λόγος). In 1:22b he demands that his audience ‘be’ or ‘become’ ‘doers of the word’ (ποιηταὶ λόγου) and not ‘hearers only’ (μὴ μόνον ἀκροαταὶ), deceiving themselves (παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς). The author picks up the point of being a hearer of the word and not a doer in 1:23 and pursues it with the help of a comparison in 1:23-24. Here he compares the one who is a hearer only (and not a doer) to a man who observes his natural face - the face he was given - in a mirror. He observes or looks at himself, and then goes away and immediately forgets what he is like. The comparison in 1:25 provides a contrast (note the adversative δὲ) with that of 1:23-24. This time the comparison is with the person who is both a hearer and a doer of the word (cf. 1:23). The person who looks intently into the perfect law of liberty and perseveres - he is not a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts. He puts into action what he hears. He is the person who will be blessed (μακάριος). 1:19-25 is thus a well crafted unit which flows from 1:19 to 1:25 building upon the author’s arguments concerning the doing of the word.

The sections 1:12-18 and 1:19-25 are linked in a number of ways. The recurrence of the term μακάριος in 1:25 recalls its occurrence at the opening of 1:12 and can be said to form an inclusion (1:12: μακάριος; 1:25: μακάριος). The participle παραμείνας (‘persevere’), used of the person who looks intently into the perfect law (unlike the man who looks at himself in the mirror) and perseveres, echoes the verb ὑπομένει of 1:12, both evoking a sense of persevering. The theme of the ‘word’ introduced in 1:18 is found throughout 1:19-25, with specific references to the ‘word of truth’ in 1:18 (λόγῳ ἀληθείας),<sup>9</sup> the implanted word in 1:21 (ἐμφυτον λόγον), the doer of the word in 1:22 (ποιηταὶ λόγου) and the hearer of the word in 1:23 (ἀκροατῆς λόγου). The perfect law of 1:25 (νόμον τέλειον) recalls the perfect gift (δῶρημα τέλειον) of 1:17 also.

#### 1.4 - 1:26-27

The introduction of the theme of religion (θρησκεία) in 1:26a signals the beginning of a new unit, 1:26-27, which is composed of two sentences linked together

<sup>9</sup> See Ropes, *James*, pp. 168-169; Adamson, *James*, p. 78; Hort, *James*, pp. 35-36.

by the occurrence of θρησκὸς in 1:26 and of θρησκείαι in 1:27. Links with the preceding verses may be seen already in the opening words of 1:26a, Ἐἴ τις, which recall the opening words of 1:23a, ὅτι εἴ τις (cf. 1:5). The one who thinks himself religious but does not bridle or control the tongue of 1:26a may be compared to the person who is a hearer but not a doer of the word. The injunction of 1:26a may also be seen to echo the injunctions of 1:19b: ‘be slow to speak, slow to anger’. Bridling or controlling the tongue may be seen to fulfil the second and third parts of the injunction in 1:19, and thus may be seen as an extension of that injunction. The reference to deceiving the heart (ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ) in 1:26 recalls the reference to deception in 1:22 (παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς) and the call in 1:16 not to be deceived (Μὴ πλανᾶσθε). Chaine describes 1:26-27 as an application of the thesis enunciated in 1:22 and he entitles it ‘Application pratique’.<sup>10</sup> The practical nature of religion is described in 1:27: ‘visiting widows and orphans and keeping oneself unstained from the world’.

Other links between 1:26-27 and the preceding verses include: the practical nature of religion in 1:26-27 being an extension of the injunction of 1:22 to be doers of the word.<sup>11</sup> We may also note the reference to pure and undefiled religion in 1:27 (θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος) offering a contrast to the filthiness and abundance of wickedness of 1:21 (ῥυπαρίαν καὶ περισσεΐαν κακίας), while the reference to the father in 1:27 (πατρι) recalls a similar reference in 1:17 (πατρὸς).<sup>12</sup>

From these links it is evident that the unit 1:26-27 is closely linked to what precedes in 1:12-25. At the same time though these verses may be seen as preparing for what is to come and thus may be seen to have a transitional function.<sup>13</sup> The practical nature of religion as set out in 1:27, controlling the tongue, visiting widows and orphans - the ‘helpless’ and the vulnerable in society - and keeping oneself unstained from the world, may be seen as providing a transition to what follows. The theme of controlling the tongue (1:26a: χαλιναγωγῶν γλῶσσαν) is developed especially in 3:1-12 but it is echoed also in 4:11-12 in its criticism of slander (Μὴ καταλαλεῖτε ἀλλήλων). The exhortation to show concern for the vulnerable

<sup>10</sup> Chaine, *Jacques*, p. 34: ‘une application de le thèse énoncée au v. 22’.

<sup>11</sup> Chaine, *Jacques*, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup> Wuellner, ‘Jakobusbrief’, 47, noted a possible inclusion between 1:17 and 1:27 through the word πατρὸς and πατρι.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Johnson, *James*, p. 236: ‘Just as 1:26-27 could be seen as a transitional statement that both recapitulated the development in 1:2-25 and looked forward to the argument of 2:14-26’.

expressed in 1:27 is echoed in 2:1-13 in the injunctions not to discriminate against the poor in the assembly (2:1-4) - the poor that God chose to be rich in faith (2:5). Such discrimination against the poor and in favour of the rich goes against the 'royal law' - 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself' (Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν). The injunctions of 1:27 may also be seen as preparing the argument of 2:14-26 with its emphasis on the necessity of a faith that is active. Therefore, while bringing the unit 1:12-25 to a close, 1:26-27 can be seen to introduce what follows, and thus fulfils a transitional function.

### 1.5 - Jas. 2:1-13

The opening vocative Ἀδελφοί μου ('my brothers') marks the beginning of a new unit in 2:1 (cf. 1:2; 2:14), as does the elaborate reference to Jesus Christ as the Lord of 'glory' (δόξης), a term that is not found elsewhere in the letter. White has pointed to the use of the vocative in the body of non-literary papyrus letters where transitions occur.<sup>14</sup> Although his examples with ἀδελφός are rather late, the point he makes is borne out in the letter of James where Ἀδελφοί marks transitions or new beginnings (cf. 1:16, 19a; 2:14; 3:1; 5:7). A new topic, that of showing partiality (προσωποληψία), is introduced in 2:1, which opens with an imperative (μὴ...ἔχετε), as in other 'beginnings' in the letter of James.<sup>15</sup>

The author begins by exhorting the addressees not to hold their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ with partiality (ἐν προσωποληψίαις), an important topic which will run several verses in this section. For the author discrimination is a serious lapse on the part of those who believe in Christ. The situation in 2:2-3 he portrays is that of two men entering the assembly, a 'rich man', a man with gold rings and fine clothing and a 'poor man' in filthy clothing. A strong contrast is deliberately drawn between the two. The author accuses the addressees of taking notice of the one wearing the fine clothes, showing him more favour and offering him a seat of honour in the assembly. The poor man, on the other hand, is simply told to stand or sit under the speaker's footstool. With a rhetorical question the author points out that in doing this they have made 'distinctions' (διεκρίθητε) among themselves; they have discriminated against the poor man; they have become judges with false standards of

---

<sup>14</sup> White, *Form and Function*, p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> On the problem of an imperative or indicative see Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 115 n. 1.

judgement (κριταὶ διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν). They are judges with evil intent. This notion of unfair distinctions (διεκρίθητε) in 2:4 clarifies the concept of partiality introduced in 2:1.

The imperative 'hear' or 'listen' (Ἀκούσατε) and the anaphoric-type repetitions of Ἀδελφοί μου and πίστις of 2:1 in 2:5 signal the beginning of a new section.<sup>16</sup> The author calls on his audience to listen to what he has to say, going on to develop further the topic of partiality or discrimination and its compatibility with the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. We may note also how the language of the opening of 2:5 recalls that of opening of the body of the letter (1:12c: ν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν; 2:5c: ἧς ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν). The theme of judgement and discrimination continues on to 2:8 where we find the beginning of a new development in the argument. It is marked by εἰ μέντοι. Here the author appeals to the law as he addresses his audience directly, telling them that if they really fulfil the royal (or supreme) law (νόμον... βασιλικόν) according to the scripture - 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself' (Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν) they do well (καλῶς ποιεῖτε). Returning to the issue of discrimination in 2:9,<sup>17</sup> he tells his audience that if they discriminate or show partiality (εἰ δὲ προσωπολημπτεῖτε), they commit sin (ἁμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε). The author continues to develop his argument about the law (γὰρ), making the point that whoever tries to keep the whole law (ὅλον τὸν νόμον) but stumbles in one thing or in one aspect of it, is guilty in respect of all aspects of the law. By way of explanation of this remark (γὰρ- causal) the author goes on in 2:11 to argue from the Decalogue, illustrating his point by referring to two important laws - adultery and murder, both of which relate to ethical conduct and both of which clearly break the law of love. Their inclusion here underlines how serious the author is about discrimination. The author notes that keeping one commandment but failing in the other will still lead to the brother being labelled as a transgressor of the law (παραβάτης νόμου). In effect what the author is saying here is that those who discriminate, who show favouritism, are lawbreakers. What is needed in this situation is appropriate action: 'thus you shall speak and thus

---

<sup>16</sup> On the *anaphora* see above and Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, pp. 281-83.

<sup>17</sup> Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, p. 64, sees an inclusion between 2:1 and 2:9 as both deal with partiality but notes that an *'inclusio'* does not have to occur at the exact beginning and termination points of a discourse unit'. He thus notes that the verses following 2:9, 10-13, are integral to the argument of 2:1-9.

you shall act as being about to be judged (μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι) by the law of freedom (διὰ νόμου ἐλευθερίας). The double οὕτως and two imperatives λαλεῖτε and ποιεῖτε in 2:12a underline the urgency of this call to action in the light of the judgement to come. The author reinforces the call of 2:12 with an additional warning, namely, that judgement is without mercy to the one not showing mercy.

The unit 2:1-13 concludes on a positive note with the affirmation that ‘mercy triumphs over judgement’ (κατακαυχᾶται ἔλεος κρίσεως). The theme of judgement found in 2:12-13 (κρίνεσθαι[...]κρίσις[...]κρίσεως) and 2:4 (κριταὶ) provides a framework for the unit while διεκρίθητε [...] κριται of 2:4 and κρίνεσθαι[...]κρίσις[...]κρίσεως of 2:12-13 represent correspondences between two conclusions - what may be described as an epiphoric-type correspondence (see above).<sup>18</sup> But while 2:12-13 brings the unit 2:1-13 to a close, Johnson argues that it should also be considered ‘a sort of bridge between parts of James’ argument’, with the discussion in 2:14-26 anticipated in 2:12 and 13.<sup>19</sup>

#### 1.6 - Jas. 2:14-26

The anaphoric-type repetition of ἀδελφοί μου of 2:1 in 2:14 signals the beginning of a new unit. In addition there is a marked change of tone as the author addresses a question to his audience on the theme of faith (πίστις) and works (ἔργα). The new unit begins with two rhetorical questions addressed directly to the audience and couched in the lively dialogical or argumentative style typical of the diatribe. The opening phrase Τί τὸ ὄφελος which recurs in 2:16 expects a negative answer. In the first of the two questions the author asks what gain or profit it is if a person claims to have faith but does not have works. In the second he asks, can such a faith save that person? (δύναται ἡ πίστις σώσαι αὐτόν). Here the definite article makes clear that he is referring back to 2:14a. The problem raised in 2:14 is clarified in 2:15 in which the author gives a concrete example of an inauthentic faith which may depict a real-life situation in the church. If a brother or sister - the author is referring to members of the community - is poorly clothed and lacking daily sustenance the author asks what benefit is it if they are merely offered words of apparent comfort but nothing is done

---

<sup>18</sup> Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, pp. 283-84.

<sup>19</sup> See Johnson, *James*, p. 236.

to meet their needs - what use is it? (Τί τὸ ὄφελος).<sup>20</sup> A new speaker enters the scene in 2:18, the imaginary interlocutor,<sup>21</sup> and this gives rise to a new development in the argument but one which is also closely linked to what precedes, indicated not least by the recurrence of the terms faith and works (πίστις, ἔργα) and by the introductory Ἄλλ' ἐρεῖ τις ('but someone will say'). The author's sarcastic response in 2:19 to the imaginary interlocutor 'You believe that God is one' (σὺ πιστεύεις ὅτι εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ θεός; Deut. 6:4), 'You do well' (καλῶς ποιεῖς), offers a striking contrast with the thrust of καλῶς ποιεῖτε in 2:8 where it is used in relation to the fulfilling of the 'royal law'.<sup>22</sup> A question follows in 2:20 (cf. 4:4: οὐκ οἴδατε) as the author continues to address the interlocutor directly, addressing him here as an 'empty man' or 'fool'. As has often been noted, both the type of question (θέλεις δὲ γινῶναι) and the direct address (ὦ ἄνθρωπε κενέ) are common features of the diatribe.<sup>23</sup> The author is endeavouring to convey to the imaginary interlocutor the error of his position. The interlocutor does not realise that faith without works (ἔργα) is worthless (ἀργή) and the author is anxious that he would understand or recognise this, by using two examples from scripture - Abraham and Rahab. Abraham's faith in particular was 'completed' (ἐτελειώθη) by his works in 2:22. The author brings the development to a close with a comparison introduced by ὥσπερ γὰρ - as the body (σῶμα) without the spirit (χωρὶς πνεύματος) is dead (νεκρόν) or lifeless, he writes, so also is faith without works (χωρὶς ἔργων) dead. For the author faith and works must be a living breathing unity. Faith cannot remain at the level of intellectual assent but must express itself in action. What Martin describes as a 'rhetorical proverb' (2:26) rounds off the discussion in 2:14-26 and brings the section to a close.<sup>24</sup>

The unit 2:14-26 forms a tight knit unit dominated by the theme of faith and works. The occurrences of the terms 'faith' and 'works' in 2:14 and 2:26 form an inclusion for 2:14-26, but the two terms are found right throughout the unit (πίστις: 2:14a, 14b, 17, 18a, 18b, 18c, 20, 22a, 22b, 24, 26; ἔργων: 2:14, 17, 18a, 18b, 18c, 20, 21, 22a, 22b, 24, 25, 26). The term χωρὶς is found in 2:18, 20, 26a and 26b. Another significant term is νεκρός which is found with faith and works in 2:17 at the

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Ropes, *James*, p. 216; Johnson, *James*, p. 241; Moo, *James*, p. 131.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Dibelius, *James*, p. 154; Ropes, *James*, p. 218; Johnson, *James*, p. 239.

<sup>22</sup> See comment of Johnson, *James*, p. 241.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Ropes, *James*, p. 216; Johnson, *James*, p. 241; Moo, *James*, p. 131.

<sup>24</sup> Martin, *James*, p. 103.



end of the first development of 2:14-26, and with *pistis* and *ergon* in 2:26, at the end of the second development. The correspondences between 2:17 (ἡ πίστις[...]ἔργα, νεκρά) and 2:26 (νεκρόν[...]πίστις χωρὶς ἔργων νεκρά) are in the nature of epiphoric-type correspondences, that is, correspondences between conclusions.

### 1.7 - The unit Jas. 2:1-26

Just as we saw links between the various smaller units in 1:12-26, some scholars wondered what the larger relationship between 2:1-13 and 2:14-26 could be, or if indeed there was any links at all. Some scholars were not convinced by such a link. According to Dibelius a 'connection between this treatise [2:14-26] and the preceding one cannot be established'.<sup>25</sup> Others, however, do see a link between the two units. Davids, for example, sees 2:13 as a transitional verse - 'an excellent bridge in that it captures and summarizes aspects of what precedes and yet throws thought forward into the topic of charity, which the following verses will take up'.<sup>26</sup> He disagrees with Dibelius' view that 2:14-26 has no connection with its context and in particular with 2:1-13, and he sees the examples of 2:15-16 and 2:22-26 as the merciful deeds of charity that 2:13 has already suggested.<sup>27</sup> Martin finds a number of links between 2:1-13 and 2:14-26 that are 'too strong to be overlooked'.<sup>28</sup> These are the opening address 'my brothers' in 2:1 and 2:14, the theme of faith in 2:1 and 2:14, the references to ill-clad persons in 2:2 and 15, the theme of faith in 2:5 that is found throughout 2:14-26, the phrase *καλῶς ποιεῖτε* of 2:8 which is also found in 2:19 (*καλῶς ποιεῖς*), and the references to being called in 2:7 and 2:23. Common to both sections is 'the use of diatribe and polemical illustration' and the same 'disdain for the poor'.<sup>29</sup> For Martin these two units form part of the larger unit 1:19b-3:18.<sup>30</sup>

For Johnson 2:1-13 and 2:14-26 clearly form a unit. Indeed of all the parts of the letter this one he finds to be the 'most unified and coherent'.<sup>31</sup> He points out characteristic features of the Greco-Roman diatribe in 2:1-26 - direct address (2:1, 5, 14), rhetorical questions (2:4, 5, 7, 14, 20), the use of the hypothetical example (2:2-3,

---

<sup>25</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 149.

<sup>26</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 118.

<sup>27</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 120. Dibelius had rejected the connection between 2:15-16 and 2:13 because he saw 2:13 as an 'isolated saying' (*James*, p. 147).

<sup>28</sup> Martin, *James*, p. 78.

<sup>29</sup> Martin, *James*, pp. 78-79.

<sup>30</sup> Martin, *James*, p. civ.

<sup>31</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 218.

15-16), the use of illustrations cited from the Torah (2:8-11, 21-25) and the presence of *paronomasia* (2:4, 13, 20).<sup>32</sup> Moreover, in his view, the chapter develops a single argument - faith and its deeds.<sup>33</sup> Francis also sees 2:1-13 and 2:14-26 as forming a unit.<sup>34</sup> The repetition of the phrase *καλῶς ποιεῖτε* of 2:8 in 2:19 (*καλῶς ποιεῖς*) is a significant link between the two units. Also of note is a word link between *ἐτελειώθη* in 2:22 and *τελεῖτε* in 2:8, both of which convey the sense of completion in relation to faith and works. The most notable link between the two units, however, is that forged by the theme of faith, *πίστις* being found in 2:1 and 2:5 and on ten occasions in 2:14-26. The repetition of the term *πίστις* of 2:1 (*τὴν πίστιν*) in 2:26b (*ἡ πίστις*) forms an inclusion for the unit 2:1-26.<sup>35</sup> Given the evidence above and the clear verbal and thematic links between the two units, it is best to see 2:1-26 as one unit.

### 1.8 - The unity of Jas. 1:12-2:26

As we moved through 1:12 right down to 2:26 we have already been noticing the recurrences of certain words and themes, often building upon one another. It has already been noted that 1:12-27 and 2:1-26 should be seen as units within the letter of James, and the transitional nature of 1:26-27 has been noted. One can go further, though, and maintain that verbal and thematic relationships between 1:12-27 and 2:1-26 suggest that 1:12-2:26 should be treated as a unit within the letter.

The term *ἔργων* which is found in 1:25 in the phrase *οἰητῆς ἔργου*, a doer of the work, is found in the plural in 2:14, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22a, 22b, 24, 25 and 26. The verb *ποιητῆς* of 1:25 recurs in 2:8, 12, 13 and 19. The theme of the law which is found in 1:25 (*νόμον τέλειον*) is found also in 2:8 (*νόμον*), 2:9 (*νόμον*), 2:10 (*νόμον*) and 2:12 (*νόμου ἐλευθερίας*). The term *θάνατον* (1:15) is echoed in 2:17 (*νεκρά*) and 2:26 (*νεκρά*) where faith without works is declared to be dead. The theme of salvation present in the form of attaining the crown of life in 1:12 (*τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς*) and in the reference to the implanted word which can save souls (*τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον τὸν δυνάμενον σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν*) of 1:21 finds an echo in the question put to

<sup>32</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 218.

<sup>33</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 219; see also his comments on p. 246.

<sup>34</sup> See Francis, 'Form and Function', 118.

<sup>35</sup> See the comments in Popkes, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, p. 153.

the interlocutor in 2:14: can that faith save you? (μή δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν).<sup>36</sup>

## 2. Jas. 3:1-4:12

### 2.1 - Jas. 3:1-12

The author begins a new section in 3:1 signalled by the recurrence of the vocative ἀδελφοί μου (cf. 1:2; 2:1; 2:14), the imperative Μή[...]γίνεσθε (cf. 1:16: Μή πλανᾶσθε) and the change in theme from faith in the previous section to the power of the tongue. The beginning of a new section is also indicated by the anaphoric-type repetition of the verb λαμβάνω of 1:12 (λήμψεται) in 3:1b (λημψόμεθα). Similar repetitions have been noted earlier in the letter (Μακάριος in 1:12 and 1:25; ἀδελφοί μου in 1:16 and 1:19). The phrase ἀδελφοί μου forms an inclusion for the unit, occurring as it does in 3:1 (ἀδελφοί μου) and 3:12 (ἀδελφοί μου). This would indicate, as we suggested previously, that 1:12-2:26 forms a unit distinct from 3:1 onwards. The anaphoric-type repetition in 3:1 from 1:12 would lend some weight to this argument and given the change in both theme and verb, one could argue that the author of James intended us to read it as such - the beginning of a new section of thought. Interestingly, as we will see soon, both sections can be seen to refer to a type of 'gift' on account of whether one is perfect or not. In 1:12 the gift for being perfect, via 1:2-4, is the crown of life, while in 3:1-2, the one who is not perfect will receive a more harsher 'gift' - strict judgement. One may also note a return of the term ἀνὴρ in 3:2 from 1:12, the only two occurrences of the term used in a positive sense, the man who is blessed in 1:12 and the man who is perfect in 3:2. Previous to this the term ἀνὴρ was used in a negative sense (1:20, 23; 2:2).

Various views have been expressed on how far the section which begins in 3:1 extends. Dibelius took 3:1-12 to form a unit on its own, unconnected with 2:14-26 or 3:13-18.<sup>37</sup> Popkes takes 3:1-12 in a similar vein, but saw a new section beginning in 3:13 and extending to 5:6.<sup>38</sup> Ropes took the section beginning in 3:1 to extend to 3:18,<sup>39</sup> as does McCartney.<sup>40</sup> While Martin sees 3:1-12 as linked to what has preceded

<sup>36</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 94, sees a link between 2:26 and 1:21.

<sup>37</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 181f.

<sup>38</sup> Popkes, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, pp. 215, 238.

<sup>39</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 226.

it, he also sees it as linked to 3:13-18 and as part of 1:19b-3:18 which he takes to form a unit.<sup>41</sup> In much the same vein Hiebert takes 3:1-12 to form part of the unit 1:19-3:18.<sup>42</sup> Edgar sees 3:1-12 in rhetorical terms as part of the *proof* of the letter (2:1-3:12).<sup>43</sup> Others who have emphasised the links between 3:1-12 and what has gone before include Cladder who took 2:1-3:12, the first part of his central section, to form a unit centred on the dangers of the tongue and its hindrance to doing the word and works of God.<sup>44</sup> In his Introduction to the New Testament, Cornely preferred to see 3:1 as beginning a new section and put 3:1-4:12 forward as the second major part of the letter of James.<sup>45</sup> Others who have taken 3:1-4:12 to form a unit include Davids, Moo, Tsuji, Hartin, Ó Fearghail, Cargal, Blomberg and Kamell.<sup>46</sup> Francis, however, sees the section that begins in 3:1 as extending to 5:6.<sup>47</sup> Let us look more closely at 3:1-12 and the following units.

The unit 3:1-12, which Moo presents as developing in four stages (3:1-2, 3-6, 7-8, 9-12),<sup>48</sup> opens with a warning to the brothers that not many of them should become teachers (Μὴ πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε). The author justifies his warning in 3:2 (γὰρ) with the statement that all stumble or fall in many ways, and includes himself among those who stumble or fall (note the change from the 2nd to the 1st person). He goes on to give a specific example relating to speech: ‘If anyone does not err/stumble in speech’ (εἴ τις ἐν λόγῳ οὐ παταίει), he writes, ‘he is a perfect man able to control the whole body’ (τέλειος ἀνὴρ δυνατὸς χαλιναγωγῆσαι καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα).

A series of comparisons and contrasts can be seen to lead to the second stage of the development of 3:1-12 which highlights the extraordinary power of the tongue which has influence far beyond its size. The noun χαλινοῦς of 3:3a picks up the verb

<sup>40</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 176.

<sup>41</sup> Martin, *James*, p. cii. The unit ‘expounds Christian experience in a two-part way: a practicing of the word and a call to resistance’.

<sup>42</sup> Hiebert, *James*, p. 107.

<sup>43</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, pp. 160-161. Edgar takes 1:19-27 to introduce themes which are found throughout 2:1-3:18 (p. 158). He sees 1:19-3:18 as framed by two positive admonitions in 1:21 and 3:13 relating to conduct in harmony with God’s standards with the phrase ἐν πραΰτητι (1:21; 3:13) forming an *inclusio* for the unit. See also Baasland, ‘Literarische Form, Thematik’, p. 3656, who takes 2:1-3:10a as a *confirmatio*.

<sup>44</sup> Cladder, ‘Die Anlage’, 57.

<sup>45</sup> Cornely, *Introductionis*, p. 589.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Cornely, *Introductionis*, p. 589; Davids, *James*, p. 135; Moo, *James*, p. 143; Tsuji, *Glaube*, p. 79; Hartin, *James*, p. 181; Ó Fearghail, ‘Literary Structure’, 83; Blomberg and Kamell, *James*, p. 151.

<sup>47</sup> Francis, ‘Form and Function’, 118.

<sup>48</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 148.

χαλιναγωγῆσαι of 3:2 while σῶμα of 3:2 is repeated in 3:3. The tongue is compared successively to the bit that is put into the mouth of the horse to control him (3:3), to the small rudder that steers the large ship (3:4) and to the spark that causes a forest fire (3:5). The author contrasts the great ships driven by rough and powerful winds and the tiny rudder which is capable of controlling them in such rough winds and can steer them wherever the will of the pilot wishes.<sup>49</sup> This example is elaborated upon in a negative statement - the small tongue is a fire which can destroy large things.<sup>50</sup> The author is emphasising the dangerous, destructive nature of the tongue - it represents an unrighteous world, it defiles the whole body (cf. 1:27: ἄσπιλον), it inflames everything with which it comes into contact, and is itself set on fire by Gehenna. It is a restless evil (ἀκατάστατον κακόν), he adds, full of deadly poison. The use of the term ἀκατάστατος recalls its use in the introduction to James (1:8) where it is associated with the double-minded person (δίψυχος ἀκατάστατος).<sup>51</sup> The author concludes this section on the tongue with two illustrations, again, a set of contrasts, couched in the form of questions expecting a negative answer. He asks: can a spring or fountain of water gush forth from the same opening sweet and bitter water? The second rhetorical question is again addressed to the brethren with ἀδελφοί μου repeated: is it possible that a fig tree can produce olives or vine figs? The expected answer to both is of course no. This statement brings to a close this closely knit unit focussed on the power and capacity for evil of the tongue.<sup>52</sup>

## 2.2 - Jas. 3:13-18

A rhetorical question in 3:13a introduced by Τίς, typical of the diatribe (Τίς σοφός καὶ ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν), and focusing on the person who is wise and understanding, initiates a new section. The interrogative Τίς and the reference to the wise (σοφός) may refer back to the διδάσκαλοι of 3:1, including them here,<sup>53</sup> but the reference to those who understand suggests that the audience is much broader than

---

<sup>50</sup> As Moo, *James*, p. 148, comments, 'not only does the tiny tongue - like the bit and the rudder - possess power all out of proportion to its size; it also has the potential to bring disaster - like the spark in a dry forest'. See also Ropes, *James*, p. 231, cites parallels from Plutarch and Philo; see also Johnson, *James*, p. 258; Moo, *James*, p. 154.

<sup>51</sup> Martin, *James*, p. 117.

<sup>52</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 263.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Adamson, *James*, p. 151; Martin, *James*, p. 188; McCartney, *James*, p. 198. Ropes, *James*, p. 244, takes *sophos* as a technical name for teachers.

that. In 3:13b the author calls on those he is addressing to show from his good conduct (δειξάτω ἐκ τῆς καλῆς ἀναστροφῆς) the works or deeds (τὰ ἔργα) he has done in the humility or meekness that stems from wisdom (ἐν πραύτητι σοφίας).<sup>54</sup> In referring here to practical wisdom, the author is recalling 2:14-26 and his emphasis there on faith that is operative. Here the point he is making is that true wisdom should be demonstrated by good conduct, works done in the humility that comes from wisdom. What follows in 3:14 is in strong contrast to what has gone before (δὲ) in 3:13. Here the tone changes and a warning is sounded against the person who harbours bitter envy (ζῆλον πικρὸν) and selfish ambition (ἐριθείαν) in his heart (ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ). Such a person should not boast or brag about it (μὴ κατακαυχᾶσθε) for this is a lie against the truth (ψεύδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας). The person who boasts about having wisdom and at the same time harbours bitter envy and selfish ambition lies against the truth. This contrasts strongly with the behaviour of the meek person of 3:13. Continuing in a negative tone, the author, referring back to the previous verse, asserts that this is not the wisdom that comes from above (οὐκ ἔστιν αὕτη ἡ σοφία ἄνωθεν κατερχομένη), that is, from God, but is rather an earthly (ἐπίγειος), unspiritual (ψυχικὴ), demonic (δαμονιώδης) wisdom.<sup>55</sup> The presence of jealousy and selfish ambition means the presence of disorder and every manner of foul wickedness. The consequence (γὰρ) of jealousy or envy (ζῆλος) and selfish ambition (ἐριθεία) is instability or disorder - ἀκαταστασία - a term that echoes the phrase δίψυχος, ἀκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ of 1:8 - the double-minded person unstable in all his ways. It also recalls the disorderly nature of the tongue in the previous section (3:6). In contrast to the negative aspects of earthly wisdom the author posits in 3:17 the characteristics of the wisdom that comes from above (ἡ δὲ ἄνωθεν σοφία). It is very different from the wisdom he has just described. This wisdom is pure (ἀγνή), peaceable (εἰρηνικὴ), gentle (ἐπιεικής), obedient (εὐπειθής), full of mercy and good fruits (μεστὴ ἐλέους καὶ καρπῶν ἀγαθῶν), impartial or undivided (ἀδιάκριτος) and sincere or without hypocrisy (ἀνυπόκριτος). The unit closes with the declaration in 3:18, closely linked to 3:17, that the fruit or harvest that is righteousness is sown in peace (ἐν εἰρήνῃ) by those who make peace (τοῖς ποιοῦσιν εἰρήνην). This general statement brings the unit 3:13-18 to a close.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Martin, *James*, p. 129.

<sup>55</sup> Other 'demonic' references in James are in Jas. 3:6 (*Gehenna*) and 4:7 (flee the devil).

As we can see, 3:13-18 introduces new themes and topics to be discussed by the author. Scholars have wondered if any links could be forged between this unit and 3:1-12. Quite a few scholars see 3:13 as beginning a new unit with no links to the previous unit. Dibelius sees no link between 3:13-18 and 3:1-12 except for what he sees as an ‘uncertain’ link between πικρὸν (‘bitter’) in 3:11 and 3:14.<sup>56</sup> Although noticing a number of links between 3:1-12 and 3:13-18 Johnson prefers to take 3:13 as the beginning of a new unit, unconnected with 3:1-12, since he sees it has having much more in common with what follows in 4:1-10.<sup>57</sup> Sleeper notes a possible link between those who are ‘wise’ in 3:13 and ‘teachers’ in 3:1, but takes 3:13 to begin a new unit which has little relation with the previous unit 3:1-12 and which concludes in 4:12.<sup>58</sup>

Others, however, have argued for a close relationship between 3:1-12 and 3:13-18. Spitta, for example, highlighted the link between σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων of 3:13 and διδάσκαλοι of 3:1.<sup>59</sup> Ropes, persuaded by the teacher/sage relationship in 3:1 and 3:13, took 3:1-12 and 3:13-18 to form a unit which he entitled ‘On the teacher’s calling’.<sup>60</sup> Cantinat comments that without any grammatical transition the author juxtaposes to the theme of the control of the tongue (3:1-12) that of wisdom (3:13-18), introduced in 1:5-8.<sup>61</sup> Adamson sees 3:2-12 and 3:13-28 as closely linked, with the author warning ‘sincere teachers’ of the dangers of the tongue in 3:2-12, while endeavouring to awaken insincere teachers to a proper sense of their vocation in 3:13-18.<sup>62</sup> Davids takes 3:1-18 to form a unit with 3:1-12 and 3:13-18 both focussing on the teacher.<sup>63</sup> Arguing from a rhetorical point of view Vouga takes the unit 3:1-18 to form the final part of the section 1:19b-3:18.<sup>64</sup> Cargal also takes 3:1-18 to form a unit, noting various links between 3:1 and 3:14 and 16 and between 3:2 and 3:13 and 17.<sup>65</sup> Wall takes the unit 3:1-18 to develop the admonition ‘be slow to speak’ of 1:19 and argues that tests of the tongue of teachers in 3:1-12 ‘guide the congregation to

<sup>56</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 207.

<sup>57</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 268-69. See also Hartin, *James*, p. 181, who follows Johnson.

<sup>58</sup> Sleeper, *James*, p. 97

<sup>59</sup> Cf. F. Spitta, *Erklärung des Jakobus-Briefes*, p. 104; Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, pp. 168-169; Ropes, *James*, pp. 226-27.

<sup>60</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 226.

<sup>61</sup> Cantinat, *Jacques*, p. 185.

<sup>62</sup> Adamson, *James*, p. 149.

<sup>63</sup> Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, pp. 168-69; Davids, *James*, p. 149.

<sup>64</sup> Vouga, *Jacques*, p. 20; he takes 3:1-13 to form a unit (pp. 93-103).

<sup>65</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 140.

chaos (3:15-16) or peace (3:18)' in the rest of the unit.<sup>66</sup> Witherington follows Wall in seeing 3:1-18 developing the admonition to be slow to speak from 1:19.<sup>67</sup> He also sees a link between teacher and sage in both sections.<sup>68</sup>

It would seem more likely that the author intends us to view 3:13-18 as part of 3:1-12. Various links between 3:13-18 and 3:1-12 have already been noted above and need not be repeated here. In lieu of those links one can also point to the use of the adjectives *πικρὸν* in 3:14 and 3:11, the contrasting uses of *μεστὴ* in 3:17 (*μεστὴ ἐλέους*) and 3:8 (*μεστὴ ἰοῦ θανατηφόρου*); the echoing of *μεγάλα ἀρχεῖ* of 3:5 in *κατακαυχᾶσθε* of 3:14, both referring to boasting in a context that is negative. The term *ἀκαταστασία* of 3:16 with its sense of disorder or instability recalls the term *ἀκατάστατον* of 3:8 which is used in relation to the tongue. The contrasts are also of note - the fruit of righteousness mentioned in 3:18 (*καρπὸς δὲ δικαιοσύνης*) contrasts with the world of unrighteousness in 3:6 (*ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας*) and the obedient wisdom referred to in 3:17 (*εὐπειθής*) contrasts with the untameable tongue of 3:8 (*τὴν δὲ γλῶσσαν οὐδεὶς δαμάσαι δύναται ἀνθρώ*).

### 2.3 - Jas. 4:1-10

The introduction of a new theme in 4:1 (*πόλεμοι* and *μάχαι*) and the direct question *Πόθεν[...] ἐν ὑμῖν* (cf. 3:13a) indicates the beginning of a new unit, as is noted by the vast majority of commentaries and translations of the letter.<sup>69</sup> Laws, for example, regards this as the beginning of a new section of the letter,<sup>70</sup> and while McCartney sees the subject matter of 4:1-12 as flowing 'naturally from the material of James 3', he takes it to stand on its own as a unit in the letter.<sup>71</sup> The question of whether all or part of 4:1-10/12 should be taken with 3:1-18 or not will be left for the moment as we examine first 4:1-10 and then 4:11-12.

The direct, incisive question of 4:1a, literally, 'whence the wars and whence the battles among you?', sounds harsh and especially so since it comes directly after the statement on the making of peace in the previous verse.<sup>72</sup> In 4:1b the author answers the question of 4:1a with another rhetorical question - do they not come from

<sup>66</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 160.

<sup>67</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 439.

<sup>68</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 482.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, Hort, *James*, p. 87.

<sup>70</sup> Laws, *James*, p. 160.

<sup>71</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 205; for him it forms the third discourse in the letter.

<sup>72</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 275, remarks that the question follows directly from the statement in 3:18.



‘pleasures (ἡδονῶν) waging war among your members?’ In 4:1a he had used the phrase ἐν ὑμῖν, here he uses the phrase ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑμῶν. This suggests that the reference in 4:1b is to internal conflicts, conflicts that are not unknown to those mentioned earlier in the letter (1:12-15; cf. 1:6-8) and those whom the author will address as the δίψυχοι of 4:8.<sup>73</sup> In 4:2c the addressees are told: ‘You do not have because you do not ask’ (ὐκ ἔχετε διὰ τὸ μὴ αἰτεῖσθαι ὑμᾶς). In making this statement the author recalls 1:5 and the injunction to pray for the wisdom that is lacking. Prayer is clearly important. And he goes on to clarify in 4:3a what is wrong with their prayer - namely asking God for the wrong reasons or in the wrong spirit, namely, to spend it on their pleasures. For this reason their prayers will not be answered. The phrase ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν of 4:3c recalls ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑμῶν of 4:1b, forming an inclusion and rounding off the unit 4:1-3, as has been observed,<sup>74</sup> a unit that focuses on the evil effects on the community of passions or desires.

The cry ‘adulteresses’ (μοιχαλίδες) in 4:4a marks the beginning of a new unit.<sup>75</sup> The address, with its pejorative connotations, strongly contrasts with the address ἀδελφοί μου which has been used in 3:1 and 3:10. As is well-recognised, 4:4-6 forms a unit which is closely linked to 4:1-3.<sup>76</sup> They contain words of rebuke for those whose conduct has just been deprecated in 4:1-3. The author follows up his initial cry of 4:4a with a question introduced by οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι, which Davids sees as a typical reference to *paraenesis*.<sup>77</sup> They know, the author suggests, that friendship with the world (φιλία τοῦ κόσμου) is enmity of God (ἔχθρα τοῦ θεοῦ). And he goes on to point out in 4:4b that the two are mutually exclusive. The person who becomes a friend of the world is an enemy of God. The argument continues in 4:5-6 with another question introduced by ἢ δοκεῖτε ὅτι (4:5a) which parallels the question οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι of 4:4a and which links the verse to 4:4. The author is affirming in another way here what he has said in 4:4. He asks rhetorically if his addressees think that scripture says in vain what he then goes on to quote. The apparent quotation from scripture, Πρὸς φθόνον ἐπιποθεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα ὃ κατώκισεν ἐν ἡμῖν, which may be an

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 167; Hort, *James*, p. 89, comments: ‘The outer strife is only a product of an inner strife’. cf. Chainé, *Jacques*, p. 96; Cantinat, *Jacques*, p. 195.

<sup>74</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 160.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Davids, *James*, p. 160; Martin, *James*, p. 148; Klein, *Jakobusbriefes*, p. 111.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Klein, *Jakobusbriefes*, p. 112, who notes: ‘setzt neu an, bleibt aber beim Thema’; also Moo, *James*, p. 186; Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 169.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Davids, *James*, p. 161.

allusion to a biblical text or a quotation from some unknown source, has been interpreted in various ways.<sup>78</sup> The sense that fits the context here suggests that one should understand God as the subject of the verb κατοικίζω, and τὸ πνεῦμα as the subject of the verb ἐπιποθεῖ with ἐπιποθει and Πρὸς φθόνον to be understood in a negative way. This gives the sense ‘the spirit which he [God] caused to dwell in us yearns jealously/enviously’ (Πρὸς φθόνον ἐπιποθεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα ὃ κατώκισεν ἐν ἡμῖν). There may be an allusion to Gen. 2:7 (cf. Gen. 6:31 LXX; Wis. 12:1) here. Taken in this way 4:5 links up better with 4:4 and recalls 4:1-3 in which the author speaks of the decidedly negative aspects of human desires and their consequences. The author goes on to reassure his audience (note δὲ adversative) that he (God) gives greater grace; for this reason, he adds, citing from Prov. 3:34 LXX (‘Ο θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν), God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. God’s grace overcomes the envious proclivities of the human spirit. He opposes the proud or haughty ones, but gives grace to lowly, humble ones.

A series of aorist imperatives follow in 4:7-10, providing practical exhortation, drawing out the consequences (οὖν) of what has been said, not just in the quotation from Prov. 3:34 but also of the previous *paraenesis*.<sup>79</sup> The verb ἀντίστητε in 4:7b recalls ἀντιτάσσεται of the quotation in 4:6. How one submits to God is set out in the subsequent exhortations. Resisting the devil is the first step towards submitting oneself to God. Such resistance will cause the devil to flee (ἀντίστητε δὲ τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ φεύξεται ἀφ’ ὑμῶν). By way of contrast, the author advises his audience in 4:8 to ‘draw near to God’ (ἐγγίσατε τῷ θεῷ), assuring them of God’s reciprocal action (καὶ ἐγγιεῖ ὑμῖν). Addressing them in 4:8b as sinners (ἁμαρτωλοί) and double-minded persons (δίψυχοι), he calls on them to cleanse their hands and purify their hearts, that is, to repent and reform their conduct.<sup>80</sup> The author completes the series of exhortations with an exhortation in 4:10a to be humble before the Lord (ταπεινώθητε ἐνώπιον κυρίου) who will exalt them (καὶ ὑψώσει ὑμᾶς). The verb

<sup>78</sup> Some scholars taking the quote as meaning ‘God yearns jealously over the spirit which he has made to dwell in us’ (NRSV); see Hort, *James*, pp. 93-94; Dibelius, *James*, p. 224; Ropes, *James*, pp. 261, 264-65; Davids, *James*, p. 164; Martin, *James*, p. 145. See Laws, *James*, pp. 177-78; Adamson, *James*, pp. 171-73; Johnson, *James*, pp. 280-82.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Davids, *James*, p. 165; Martin, *James*, p. 152.

<sup>80</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 27.

ταπεινώθητε in 4:10 recalls ταπεινοῖς of 4:6, providing a further link between 4:7-10 and 4:1-6.

## 2.4 - Jas. 3:1-18 and 4:1-10

Before looking at 4:11-12 let us look back first to see if any links can be forged between 4:1-10 and 3:13-18.<sup>81</sup> For Johnson 3:13-4:10 forms a unit which he entitles a 'Call to Conversion'; he sees the 'sermon' of 3:13-4:10 as having a coherent structure that falls into two parts - 3:13-4:6 which acts as an indictment and 4:7-10 which is the response.<sup>82</sup> He sees the language of response in 4:7-10 as mirroring the language of indictment in 3:13-4:6.<sup>83</sup> He suggests that the 'purifying of the heart' (ἀγνίσατε καρδίας) in 4:8 corresponds to the selfish ambition and jealousy in the heart in 3:14 (ζῆλον πικρὸν ἔχετε καὶ ἐριθείαν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν) and the purity (ἀγνή) of the wisdom from above in 3:17, that the dejection (κατήφειαν) of 4:9 matches the arrogance (ὑπερηφάνοις) of 4:6, while the double-minded persons of 4:8 (δίψυχοι) corresponds to the undivided (ἀδιάκριτος) of 3:17, and the call to humble themselves (ταπεινώθητε) before God of 4:10 picks up the reference to the lowly (ταπεινοῖς) in 4:6.<sup>84</sup> Hartin argues that 3:13-4:10 is a unit, and sees it organised along the lines of a speech, its purpose being to communicate the *topos* of envy.<sup>85</sup> Moo sees 3:13-18 and 4:1-3 as closely linked, so much so that he does not see the author introducing a new topic in 4:1 but as shifting focus 'within discussion of the same topic' as in the previous unit 3:13-18.<sup>86</sup> He points out that James's commendation of peacemakers in 3:18 flows naturally into the problems the community faces, problems that necessitate the need for peacemakers.<sup>87</sup> Moo posits a correlation between 'earthly wisdom' in 3:16 leading to 'quarrelling' in 4:1-3. He finds the common thread of peace throughout both sections, one section admonishing (3:13-18), the other lamenting (4:1-3). According to Moo, envy and selfishness stem from the false

<sup>81</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 149. The contrast between 'wars' (πόλεμοι/πολεμεῖτε) in 4:1-2 and 'peace' (εἰρηνική, εἰρήνη and εἰρήνην) in 3:17-18. One may note the cause of the fights and wars in 4:1 as stemming from the disorders in 3:16 which themselves stem from the characteristics of earthly wisdom in 3:14-15. The wisdom from above in 3:17 is set against bitter jealousy and selfish ambition, that which is earthly in 3:14-15.

<sup>82</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 268.

<sup>83</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 268.

<sup>84</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 268-69.

<sup>85</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 207: 3:13 (*propositio*), 3:14 (*ratio*), 3:15-18 (*confirmatio*), 4:1-6 (*exornatio*) and 4:7-10 (*complexio*).

<sup>86</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 179.

<sup>87</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 179.

wisdom of 3:13-18, envy in 4:2 and selfishness in 4:3.<sup>88</sup> Davids sees the contrast between the wars of 4:1-2 and the peace in 3:17-18 as significant links between the two units which suggest that they are connected.

There are significant links between 3:13-18 and 4:1-10 as seen from the views above. Other links that may be noted include the references to jealousy in 3:14 (ζήλον) and 3:16 (ζήλος) which are recalled by the verb ζηλοῦτε in 4:2;<sup>89</sup> the phrase ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑμῶν of 4:1 which recalls ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν of 3:6; the references to the world in 4:4 (φιλία τοῦ κόσμου) and 3:6 (κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας); the verbs καθίσταται of 4:4 and καθίσταται of 3:6; δυνατὸς of 3:2 and οὐ δύνασθε of 4:2. Finally, a contrast exists between the man who is perfect and who is able to control his whole body in 3:2 (τέλειος ἀνὴρ δυνατὸς χαλιναγωγῆσαι καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα) and the δίψυχοι, the sinners with unclean hands and hearts in 4:8 (καθαρίσατε χεῖρας, ἁμαρτωλοί, καὶ ἀγνίσατε καρδίας, δίψυχοι). In contrast to the control which the τέλειος ἀνὴρ has in 3:1-2, the δίψυχοι are unable (οὐ δύνασθε) to receive correctly from God and have no control in 4:2.

## 2.5 - Jas. 4:11-12

We come now to 4:11-12 which has been treated in various ways by scholars and which deserves to be treated separately here before deciding where it best fits into the literary structure we have so far provided. Should it be taken with the preceding verses or should it be treated as an independent unit or should it be taken with follows?

Ropes who took 4:1-12 to form a unit, viewed 4:11-12 as ‘a sort of appendix’, which recalls the issues of 4:1-10 before the author goes on to deal with the notion of greed in 4:13-17. In his view the writer ‘still has fully in mind the great opposition of the world and God’.<sup>90</sup> He saw it, therefore, as a transitional unit.

Dibelius took 4:11-12 with 4:7-10 and its string of imperatives, although he noted a change in subject matter at 4:11 and a change of tone with the audience earlier addressed as ‘sinners’ and ‘double-minded’ but now addressed as ‘brothers and

---

<sup>88</sup> Moo, *James*, pp. 167-68.

<sup>89</sup> The theme of ‘jealousy/greed’ between 3:13-18 and chapter four has been noted by scholars such as Johnson, *James*, pp. 268-69.

<sup>90</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 273.

sisters'.<sup>91</sup> As one expects from Dibelius he viewed 4:13-17 as an independent section with no connection to the previous section.<sup>92</sup> He did, however, find a similar mood and topic between 4:1-6 and 4:13ff, describing it as a 'general warning of people with a worldly mind with a polemic against a specific instance of this worldly disposition'.<sup>93</sup>

Dauids saw 4:11-12 as serving the redactional function of tidying up themes from previous sections.<sup>94</sup> He took 4:13 to begin a new unit which is not connected to 4:1-12, although he notes that the 'flow of thought moves smoothly enough' between both sections.<sup>95</sup> Ó Fearghail takes 4:11-12 as part of the section 3:1-4:12. He sees "Ἀγε νῦν of 4:13 as marking the beginning of a new section, signalling, in fact, 'the beginning of the end of the letter'; he notes that the repetition in 5:20 of ἀμαρτία of 4:17 provides an inclusion for this section.<sup>96</sup> Moo takes 4:11-12 as part of the preceding section, suggesting that it might be seen as a brief 'reprise' of the larger discussion of sins of speech that opened the section (3:1-12). He sees an *inclusio* on speech as framing the unit 3:1-4:12.<sup>97</sup> He takes 4:13-5:11 to form the following unit.<sup>98</sup>

A number of scholars take 4:11-12 as an independent unit which does not belong to what precedes or what follows. Hartin, for example, takes these two verses to form independent unit with the units 3:13-4:10 and 4:13-5:6 on either side.<sup>99</sup> He does, however, see a relationship between 4:11-12 which addresses the theme of speech and 3:1-12 which does likewise, with 4:11-12 taking up the topic from 3:1-12.<sup>100</sup> Taylor sees 4:11-12 as forming an independent unit, but in spite of this it is also, in his view, 'a summary/transition unit'.<sup>101</sup> He finds an *inclusio* at 2:12-13 and 4:11-12,<sup>102</sup> but it is not clear what implication this has for the structure of the letter. He notes that thematically a thread can be seen running between 4:11-12 and the preceding and following sections.<sup>103</sup> Cargal sees these verses as belonging to two

---

<sup>91</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 228.

<sup>92</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 230. See also H. S. Songer, 'The Literary Character of the Book of James', *Review and Expositor* 66 (1969), 130.

<sup>93</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 230.

<sup>94</sup> Davids, *James*, pp. 168-69.

<sup>95</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 171.

<sup>96</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 83.

<sup>97</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 197.

<sup>98</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 197.

<sup>99</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 220.

<sup>100</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 221.

<sup>101</sup> Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, p. 89.

<sup>102</sup> Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>103</sup> Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, p. 89.

sections - 3:1-4:12 and 4:11-5:20, and thus as a transitional unit.<sup>104</sup> For Cargal 4:11-12 seems to play a 'dual' role in his analysis.<sup>105</sup>

Some scholars take 4:11-12 to open a section which extends to 4:17. Martin takes 4:11-12 with what follows, seeing 4:11-17 as a unit, which is part of a larger unit (4:1-5:20). He sees 4:11-12 with its references to slandering and judging as tied to 4:13-17 by a common theme - the arrogance of the tongue - which 'shows itself when plans and proposals for future business transactions, involving travel, sojourn, and prosperity, are entered into'.<sup>106</sup> It is also present in the reference to boasting of 4:16.<sup>107</sup> Martin sees 4:13-17 as an example of the pride that can result from placing oneself over others in 4:11-12.<sup>108</sup>

Johnson takes 4:11 as the beginning of a new section which extends to 5:6 but admits that defining the limits and logic of the section is difficult.<sup>109</sup> He recognizes that 4:10 rounds off the call for conversion that he took to begin in 3:13, and that 4:11 'takes the form of a negative command' (using  $M\eta$ ), which is found at the beginning of other sections in the letter (cf. 2:1; 3:1; 5:12).<sup>110</sup> The primary reason that Johnson gives for taking 4:11-5:6 to form a single unit is that an 'identifiable thematic thread' runs through it, namely, the author's attack on the behaviour of the 'brothers' (4:11), 'those who say' (5:1) or 'the rich' (5:1). The kinds of behaviour he condemns are manifestations of arrogance - slandering a neighbour, pretentious boasting and living luxuriously on the earth while condemning and murdering the innocent - activities that he sees as demonstrating the arrogance of 4:6 that God opposes.<sup>111</sup>

Wall sees 4:11-12 as part of the unit 4:11-5:6 which also contains 4:13-17 and 5:1-6. The triad of sections returns to the pivotal point of 4:6 which relates to the resisting of the arrogant man by God.<sup>112</sup> Wall notes three groups of people in this triad - the believer who slanders his neighbour (4:11-12), the merchant who pursues wealth rather than God (4:13-17), and the rich farmer who exploits the poor (5:1-6). While Wall admits that the inclusion of 4:11-12 within this section is problematic, he feels

---

<sup>104</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, pp. 139-40, 141 n. 10.

<sup>105</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 141.

<sup>106</sup> Martin, *James*, pp. 159-60.

<sup>107</sup> Martin, *James*, p. 161.

<sup>108</sup> Martin, *James*, p. 165.

<sup>109</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 291.

<sup>110</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 292.

<sup>111</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 291.

<sup>112</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 211.

that the option of seeing it as self-standing ‘offends the literary sensibility that James is a carefully crafted and unified composition’.<sup>113</sup> Wall sees 4:6-10 as framed by an *inclusio* - God gives graciously to the lowly in 4:6 and the request to be lowly in 4:10 - and he is of the view that this prevents 4:11-12 from being taken with 4:1-10. He sees 4:11-12 as a ‘preface’ which is an integral part of what follows in 4:13-5:6.<sup>114</sup>

Edgar takes 4:11 to initiate the unit 4:11-5:11 with the more gentle address ἀδελφοί indicating a shift to a new section; for him it forms a subsection of 4:1-5:20.<sup>115</sup> He entitles 4:11-5:11 ‘eschatological warning and encouragement’, and breaks the unit into two parts - 4:11-5:6 (consisting of three eschatological grounded warnings in 4:11-12; 4:13-17 and 5:1-6) and a second part, 5:7-11, which contains a further three eschatological orientated exhortations, each introduced by the address ‘brothers’.<sup>116</sup> Edgar notes that 4:11-5:11 begins with a warning in the context of divine judgement, which ‘hangs over the entire section’ and comes to a climax in 5:1-11 - ‘Eschatologically grounded warning and admonition are thus at the heart of this whole passage, though in 5:7-11 the eschatological threat is lightened, and the tone is more one of encouragement for the addressees’.<sup>117</sup> This unit, according to Edgar, serves to give ‘a final underlining to the exhortation to the addressees to persevere in their commitment to God’ (4:11-12; 5:7-11).<sup>118</sup> Opinion, then, is very much divided on where 4:11-12 fits into the letter of James. Let us look more closely at these two verses.

As we can see from above there is a large and differing opinion as to where 4:11-12 fits and what its purpose is to the literary structure of the letter. The opening imperative Μὴ καταλαλεῖτε and the address ἀδελφοί in 4:11 mark 4:11a out as beginning a new unit (cf. 1:16; 2:1; 3:1; 5:1, 7).<sup>119</sup> So too does the change of topics and language represented by the terms καταλαλεῖτε, κρίνων and νόμον, which are not found in 4:1-10. The verb καταλαλέω can mean ‘to slander’ or ‘to speak evil of’ (cf. Num. 12:8; 21:5, 7; Job 19:3; Prov. 20:13; Hos. 7:13; Wis. 1:11). Setting oneself up as a judge or making personal judgements on one’s brother in Christ clearly has a negative sense here, being paralleled to slander. The author begins by exhorting the

---

<sup>113</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 212.

<sup>114</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 212.

<sup>115</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 187.

<sup>116</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 197.

<sup>117</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 188.

<sup>118</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 208.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Davids, *James*, p. 168. He sees 4:10 as rounding off the previous section.

brothers not to slander or speak evil of one another. As Chaine and Dibelius have pointed out, the tone has changed somewhat with ἀδελφοί taking the place of ‘adulteresses’ (4:4: μοιχαλίδες), ‘sinners’ (4:8: ἁμαρτωλοί) and double-minded persons (4:8: δίψυχοι), though not greatly.<sup>120</sup> The author justifies the prohibition of 4:11a by stating that the one who slanders or judges his brother, slanders and judges the law. The law here is not the Mosaic law in general but the law of love in particular, already referred to in 2:8, that of Lev 19:18. In 2:8 the author comments that if one judges, one is no longer a doer of the law (cf. 1:22, 1:25). There is only one (εἷς) lawgiver and judge, he adds, the one who can save and destroy. That lawgiver is God. ‘One’ (εἷς) is emphasised by its position at the beginning of the sentence. By putting oneself up as a judge with respect to the law one usurps God’s role. The author concludes this brief unit on a sharp and somewhat sarcastic note - with a rhetorical question introduced by οὐ δὲ τίς εἶ which is meant to shame those presuming to judge others.

## 2.6 - Jas. 4:11-12 as part of 3:1-4:10

There are indications in the text that 4:11-12 should be taken with 4:1-10 as part of the section 3:1-4:12. References to speech in 3:1-12 - λόγῳ (3:2), γλῶσσα (3:5, 6, 8) and στόμα (3:10) - are echoed in the triple occurrences of the verbs καταλαλέω and κρίνω in 4:11. Moo speculates that 4:11-12 might be seen as a brief ‘reprise’ of the larger discussion of the sins of speech in 3:1-12 thus providing an *inclusio* on speech that frames the section 3:1-4:12.<sup>121</sup>

More significant are the references to the theme of judgement in 3:1 (κρίμα) and 4:11-12 (κρίνω). The term κρίμα (judgement) appears just once in the letter in 3:1 while the verb κρίνω appears four times and the noun κριτής on two occasions in 4:11-12. It is the references to judgement in 3:1 and 4:12 that form an inclusion for the section 3:1-4:12. It is also of note that ἀδελφοί of 3:1 is repeated in 4:11, after a lengthy absence from 3:13-4:10. The sharp rhetorical question that concludes 4:11-12 provides a fitting climactic note on which to end the section 3:1-4:12, which began in 3:1 dealing with sins of the tongue and concludes in 4:11-12 with a specific example of such sins. Thematically the opening unit of 4:1-12, 4:1-3 focuses on the evil effects

<sup>120</sup> See the comment of Chaine, *Jacques*, p. 108: ‘le ton qui était sévère...s’adoucit’; cf. Dibelius, *James*, p. 228.

<sup>121</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 197.



on the community of passions or desires, passions and desires which were earlier seen in 3:13-18 as emanating from earthly wisdom, a wisdom which itself is heavily linked with the characteristics of those who are corrupted by the poisonous tongue found in 3:1-12. What we have here then is a possible development by the author to show that a small member (the tongue) can corrupt the whole, just as a small section of the community (the δῖψυχοι) can corrupt the whole of the community. The message here in 3:1-4:12 then seems clear, and which is explicitly spelt out in 4:11-12, small members, be they of the body or the community can lead to destruction and judgement and sin. By recognising such faults and purifying oneself and leaving off being led by the tongue and engaging in slander and judgement, only then can one be saved by God.

## 2.7 - Transitional Role of 4:11-12

While 4:11-12 concludes the section 3:1-4:12 there are indications that it also acts as a transition to the following section.<sup>122</sup> It is not dissimilar to the role of the transitional verses 1:26-27 which prepare for what follows in Jas. 2. Links between 4:11-12 and what follows have been noted by Martin who sees 4:11-12 as linked to 4:13-17 through the theme of the arrogance of the tongue.<sup>123</sup> Cargal takes 4:11-12 as part of the section 4:11-5:9 which he sees as forming a unit,<sup>124</sup> while Wall sees these verses as a 'preface' to the examples of the corrupting power of wealth found in 4:13-5:6.<sup>125</sup>

There are indications that the verses 4:11-12 do indeed prepare for what is to come. The theme of judgement so prominent in 4:11-12 (6 times) is picked up in 5:1-6 in the term κατεδικάσατε of 5:6, which has the sense of 'condemning' or 'pronouncing judgement', and in 5:9 with its references to judging (κριθῆτε), the judge (κριτῆς) and judgement of 5:12 (κρίσιν). The phrase ποιητῆς νόμου of 4:11 is echoed in the phrase καλὸν ποιεῖν of 4:17. The exhortation Μὴ καταλαλεῖτε ἀλλήλων, ἀδελφοί of 4:11 prepares the exhortation μὴ στενάζετε, ἀδελφοί, κατ' ἀλλήλων of 5:9 as it does the injunction against oaths of 5:12. The reference to

---

<sup>122</sup> See above.

<sup>123</sup> Martin, *James*, pp. 159-60; cf. Adamson, *James*, pp. 175-81; Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 187.

<sup>124</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 171.

<sup>125</sup> See also Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 218. Wall saw 4:11-12 as a 'preface, integral to the two more blatant examples of the corrupting power of wealth found in 4:13-5:6[...]. They supply negative examples of the very lawlessness of which 4:11-12 speaks.

salvation in 4:12 (σῶσαι) is echoed in 5:15 (σώσει) and 5:20 (σώσει). The repetition of the verb σῶζω of 4:12 in 5:20 may be seen as an epiphoric-type repetition, that is, as indicating the correspondence between the conclusions of 3:1-4:12 and 4:13-5:20.<sup>126</sup> In addition, the themes of salvation and destruction of 4:12 (σῶσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι) are echoed in the final exhortation of 5:20 (ώσει ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτου). The unit 4:11-12, then, has all the hallmarks of a transitional unit.

### 3. Jas. 4:13-5:20

#### 3.1 - Jas. 4:13-17

The imperative Ἄγε (reinforced by νῦν), which occurs here for the first time in the letter, introduces a new section and a new topic, as is evident from the vocabulary of 4:13 which is also new in the context of the letter. The call to attention Ἄγε νῦν is directed to merchants who ply their trade and make profit. They spend ‘today’ or ‘tomorrow’ going through certain cities trading and making gain. The emphasis in the sentence is on κερδήσομεν, the final word in the sentence, the making of profit. However, the criticism is not directed at the merchants’ trading or making profit but at their arrogant planning for the future without a thought for God (cf. Lk. 12:16-21). While those criticised are travelling merchants, they also seem to form part of the group to whom the letter is addressed.<sup>127</sup> The author describes the merchants further in 4:14a - they are of such a kind that they do not know what will happen on the morrow (τὸ τῆς αὔριου; lit. ‘the course of the morrow’). This is followed by what some commentators take to be a question (‘Of what kind is your life?’),<sup>128</sup> while others take it as a statement dependent on οὐκ ἐπίστασθε.<sup>129</sup> While the question is perhaps more in keeping with the style of the letter, the conjunction γάρ in 4:14b favours dependence on οὐκ ἐπίστασθε. ‘You do not know’, he tells them, ‘what your life will be like’, and he continues: ‘for you are a whiff of smoke that appears for a little while and then disappears’. Life, he reminds them, is transitory; it has a fleeting existence. One may recall a similar comment made in

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, pp. 283-84.

<sup>127</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 171, takes the term λέγοντες to indicate that the travelling merchants are part of the community rather than outsiders; contra Laws, *James*, p. 90, who sees them as outsiders (noting the lack of the term ἀδελφοί).

<sup>128</sup> Cf. KJV, RSV, NRSV; Moo, *James*, p. 203.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 190.

relation to to the wealthy in 1:10-11 - the rich man fading like a flower of the grass in the burning heat. A contrast is offered in 4:15. Picking up from 4:13, the author sets out the proper attitude that the merchants should adopt (ἀντὶ τοῦ λέγειν ὑμᾶς). Instead of concentrating on their trading and profiteering, they should always be mindful of and open to the will of God, as they go about their activities.<sup>130</sup> In 4:16 the author again picks up the thought of 4:13 (νῦν δέ); reinforcing the point he made in 4:13-14. As it is or as the situation really stands, they boast (καυχᾶσθε) in their arrogance (ἐν ταῖς ἀλαζονείαις). Their arrogance is the reason for their boasting. They are being criticised for their self-confident presumption, their arrogance. All such presumptuous boasting (πάσα καύχησις τοιαύτη), that is, boasting that comes from arrogant self-belief, is evil (πονηρά). It is the spiritual attitude of the merchants that is criticised here by the author of the letter.

In 4:17 the author brings the argument of 4:13-16 to a conclusion. It is not clear how this conclusion concerning sins of omission follows from what has gone before in 4:13-16 but the presence of οὖν suggests that it is intended as a concluding remark. The verb ποιέω also links it to what has gone before (cf. 4:13, 4:15). The statement ‘anyone who knows the right thing to do and does not do it commits a sin’ may be a qualification introduced in light of 4:15c (‘we shall do this or that’). Whatever its origin, it brings 4:13-17 to a close.

### 3.2 - Jas. 5:1-6

The ἄγε νῦν of 4:13 is repeated in 5:1a. This repetition is an anaphoric-type repetition which marks the beginning of a new unit as well as maintaining the sharp tone of 4:13, though it is more harsh in 5:1-6. There is also a shift in topic. The rich (πλούσιοι) come into the author’s focus once again and the author paints a picture of unrelieved bleakness for them. The writer of the letter launches into a tirade against the rich that is reminiscent of the prophetic denunciations of the OT (cf. Isa. 10:10; 13:6; 14:31; Jer. 2:23; Amos 8:3). The author makes use of two verbs, one in the imperative (κλαύσατε) and the other with an imperative force (ὀλολύζοντες), as he calls upon the rich to ‘weep and wail’ for the miseries that are coming upon them on the day of judgement. Clearly the situation being described is a negative one.

<sup>130</sup> The actual phrase ‘if the Lord wills’ is found in 1 Cor. 4:19 (ἐὰν ὁ κύριος θελήσῃ) and has parallels in Acts 18:21 and 1 Cor. 16:7 but it is most likely of Hellenistic provenance, being common in Greek and also in a Latin version in Latin writers.

Continuing in harsh tones, the author highlights in 5:2-3a the short-lived, worthless nature of the riches of the wealthy with a series of verbs in the perfect, and images that reinforce one another - wealth of various kinds corrupted or wasted, garments moth eaten, gold and silver 'rusted' or corroded (intended figuratively here) - all underlining the present worthless, ephemeral nature of the riches of the wealthy. The term ἰδὼς picks up the verb κατίωται used in 5:3a and advances the author's argument. Not only has their wealth become worthless, their 'rust' will provide testimony against them; the phrase εἰς μαρτύριον ὑμῖν being intended in a negative sense. The evidence will weigh against them at the moment of judgement.

The author passes from the image of the rust with its corrosive, devouring power to that of fire that consumes and devours (φάγεται). He concludes with what appears to be an ironic<sup>131</sup> or semi-ironic comment.<sup>132</sup> They have stored up treasures in the last days (ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις), a phrase found in Isa. 2:2 and Acts 2:17 and which refers to the present eschatological age (cf. 1 Cor. 10:11). The treasures they have stored up in these last days are in reality not real treasures but impending miseries, wealth that cries out against them, as becomes clear in the verses that follow. In 5:4 the author hurls a specific accusation against the rich - the withholding of the payment or wages of the workmen or labourers who mowed their lands. The effect of the accusation is heightened by the reference to the cries of the reapers reaching the ears of the Lord of hosts. The author continues in Jas. 5:5 to berate the rich for their extravagant living, condemning them, through a succession of three aorists, for their extravagant living, rampant self-indulgence and the fattening of their hearts on a day of slaughter. The final accusation against the rich is one of gross injustice - condemning or given judgement against the righteous one. The second part of the accusation, murdering the righteous one who does not resist them, should be understood in a metaphorical sense reminiscent of Sir. 34:22, which states that to 'take away a neighbour's living is to murder him; to deprive an employee of his wages is to shed blood'. It has been suggested that there is a reference to Jesus or James in 5:6,<sup>133</sup> but this is difficult to sustain. The reference seems more generic than

---

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Moo, *James*, p. 162.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Davids, *James*, p. 177.

<sup>133</sup> See comments of Martin, *James*, pp. 181-82.

specific.<sup>134</sup> With this prophetic type denunciation the author brings the unit to a close. It is a tightly knit unit containing a sustained attack on the rich.

### 3.3 - Links between Jas. 4:13-17 and 5:1-6

Because of the general similarities in topic between both sections (wealth) and the parallel usage of "Ἄγε νῦν, quite a number of authors take 4:13-5:6 to form a unit,<sup>135</sup> or to be part of a larger unit.<sup>136</sup> Maynard-Reid reads 4:13-17 and 5:1-5 as James 'attacking the rich from the perspective of two of their functions in the economic sphere' and he argues that both passages should be treated as a unit.<sup>137</sup> Hartin takes 4:13-5:6 as a unit based on the recurrence of the phrase "Ἄγε νῦν in 4:13 and 5:1 and on similarities in theme and topic.<sup>138</sup> The recurrence of "Ἄγε νῦν of 4:13 in 5:1 suggests to Witherington that the subunits 4:13-17 and 5:1-6 are 'two paragraphs, one general and one particular, dealing with the same subject'.<sup>139</sup>

From a thematic point of view both 4:13-17 and 5:1-6 are related - the arrogance that is condemned in 4:16 (ἀλαζονείαις) is evident also in the conduct of the rich in 5:2-3 who store up treasure in the last days (ἐθησαυρίσατε ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις). That same uncaring activity of the rich in storing up treasure and ignoring their responsibilities (5:4) recalls the irresponsibility of those who seek profit without a care for the Lord (cf. 4:13-15).

### 3.4 - Jas. 5:7-11

The tone changes in 5:7 with the imperative of the verb μακροθυμέω, meaning 'be patient' or 'be forbearing'. While the presence of οὖν indicates that what the author is about to say follows on from 5:1-6, the recurrence of ἀδελφοί suggests that this is the beginning of a new unit. The author is addressing the brothers directly, and the tone of his address is different from what has gone before. Here he calls on the brothers (ἀδελφοί) to be patient until the παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου, that is, in this

---

<sup>134</sup> See Mayor, *James*, p. 470. Others who take the reference to be more general than specific include Johnson, *James*, p. 305; Moo, *James*, pp. 218-19; Blomberg and Kamell, *James*, pp. 224-25.

<sup>135</sup> See chapter I above - Hoppe, Francis, Ketter, Reicke, Francis, Davids, Reese, Klein, Taylor, Wuellner, Sleeper, Thurén.

<sup>136</sup> See chapter 1 above - Moo (4:13-5:11); Perkins (4:13-5:12); Cornely (4:13-5:18); Ó Fearghail (4:13-5:20).

<sup>137</sup> Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth*, p. 69.

<sup>138</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 232.

<sup>139</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 505.

case, the coming of Christ. The theme of the παρουσία of Christ is found elsewhere in the NT (cf. 1 Thess. 2:19; 4:15; 5:23; 1 Cor. 15:23; 2 Pet. 1:16). This is its first mention in the letter of James. The emphasis in the letter of James (5:7, 8) is on being patient until the παρουσία. The author heightens the call for patience by introducing the example of the farmer waiting for his crops to grow. Having given the example of the farmer, the author turns back to the brethren whom he calls upon to have a similar attitude to that of the farmer. The repetition of the verb μακροθυμέω in 5:8 highlights the insistence of the call to be patient. The author goes on to exhort the brethren to strengthen their hearts, literally to 'establish' their hearts (cf. 3:14; 4:8), to strengthen their resolve. The addressees are called upon not to give way to doubt (cf. 1:6) but to be firm in faith because the coming of the Lord is at hand. The two references to παρουσία in 5:7 and 8 underline its importance here. The brethren must take it seriously and strengthen their resolve accordingly.

The imperative στενάζετε in 5:9 introduces a new development signalled also by the repetition of ἀδελφοί. The author calls on the brothers not to complain strongly about one another and thereby cause disharmony among the brethren. Patience is what is required. This disruptive behaviour could lead to one being judged. The author follows this up with a reference to the judge standing before the doors (κριτῆς πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν), a reference to the approaching judgement, the παρουσία of the Lord and its imminence. Its nearness or imminence is a reason for not complaining strongly against one another. To support his exhortation the author gives an example of suffering or hardship (κακοπαθίας) and patience (μακροθυμίας) or rather patience in suffering - the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. He is thinking perhaps of Jeremiah who suffered because of his preaching (cf. Jer. 15:15; 20:2-3; 37:15; 44:16). Picking up the theme of 1:12, the author declares in 5:11a blessed those who endure or persevere (ἰδοὺ μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομείναντας). What one endures is not specified as in 1:12, but the note is similarly eschatological.

A new element is introduced in 5:11b with the figure of Job. From the outcome of the story of Job - he is blessed even more than before - they can see (εἶδετε) that the Lord is compassionate and merciful. Job was blessed because of his patient endurance - and there is a lesson here for the addressees, if they also show patient endurance (cf. 1:2-3). The verses 5:7-11 form a unit around the theme of endurance/patience - 5:7: Μακροθυμήσατε [...] ἐκδέχεται[...] μακροθυμῶν; 5:8:

μακροθυμήσατε; 5:10: μακροθυμίας; 5:11: ὑπομείναντας· [...] ὑπομονήν, while κύριος is also a notable presence (5:7, 5:8, 5:11) as is the judge in 5:9 (κριτής).

### 3.5 - Jas. 5:12

It has long been debated how 5:12 fits into the structure of the letter. Various suggestions have been put forward for the place of the prohibition of oaths of 5:12 in the overall arrangement of the letter. Cornely treated it as an independent verse within the unit 4:13-5:18.<sup>140</sup> Dibelius saw it as an independent unit within 5:7-20, having 'no relationship with what precedes or follows'.<sup>141</sup> Chaine, Mussner and Cantinat all saw it as an isolated unit, as do Francis, Adamson, Davids, Ruckstuhl, Bauckham, and McCartney in more recent treatments of the verse.<sup>142</sup> Taylor sees it as a transitional verse between 5:7-11 and 5:13-20 in the unit 5:7-20.<sup>143</sup>

Some authors take 5:12 with 5:7-11 as part of the unit 5:7-12. Von Soden printed it as part of 5:7-12 in his edition of the text.<sup>144</sup> Michl takes it to conclude the section 5:7-12, seeing it as an exhortation to patience and a warning from swearing.<sup>145</sup> For W. R. Baker it is 'the last in a series of admonitions regarding control of the speech'.<sup>146</sup> Penner takes the 'eschatological instruction' in 5:12 to be linked to 5:7-11 and argues that 5:13 begins the epistolary close.<sup>147</sup> Wall also sees the theme of judgement as linking 5:12 and 5:7-11 and sees 5:7-12 as the first concluding statement.<sup>148</sup> Blomberg and Kamel take 5:1-12 to form a unit.<sup>149</sup>

A number of authors take 5:12 to begin a new section of the letter that extends to 5:20. Mayor, for example, takes it as the ninth and final section of the letter

<sup>140</sup> Cornely, *Introductionis*, p. 589.

<sup>141</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 248.

<sup>142</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 121; Chaine, *Jacques*, pp. 125-26; Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, pp. 211-12; Cantinat, *Jacques*, pp. 241-44; Adamson, *James*, pp. 189-202; Davids, *James*, p. 188; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, p. 30; Bauckham, *James*, p. 92.

<sup>143</sup> Taylor, *Text Linguistic*, p. 120.

<sup>144</sup> Von Soden, *Die Schriften des neuen Testaments*, Vol. 4, p. 623; text available online at <http://www.csntm.org/printedbook>.

<sup>145</sup> Michl, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, pp. 58-60.

<sup>146</sup> W. R. Baker, *Personal Speech Ethics in the Epistle of James*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Series 2, 68 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995), p. 278.

<sup>147</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 150, views the theme of judgement as linking 5:12 to 5:7-11 while the imperatives of 5:7; 8 and 9 establish a structural link to the imperative of 5:12. He also points to the particle δε in 5:12 as evidence for the link with 5:11. Penner also points towards the unity of 5:13-20 where the recurrence of the phrase τις ἐν ὑμῖν in 5:13, 14 and 19 provides a structural link for this unit (p. 151).

<sup>148</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, pp. 259-60.

<sup>149</sup> Blomberg and Kamel, *James*, pp. 214-19.

(5:12-20), Cellérier, as the third division of the letter,<sup>150</sup> Schrage, as the closing section.<sup>151</sup> Johnson also sees it as concluding the letter,<sup>152</sup> as does Sleeper.<sup>153</sup>

Francis sees 5:12-20 as forming the conclusion of the letter. He found in these verses formulae characteristic of letter endings. He focused in particular on the phrase *Πρὸ πάντων δέ*, the prohibition of oaths and the health wish which he saw as characteristic of letter endings. Ropes had already found the position of the phrase near the end of the letter of James significant.<sup>154</sup> A number of other authors have followed Francis in his analysis of this section. For Moo, the phrase ‘above all’ in 5:12 marks the beginning of the epistolary conclusion’. Cargal sees 5:12 as beginning the closing of the letter which he sees signalled by the phrase *Πρὸ πάντων*.<sup>155</sup> Burchard takes it as the beginning of the penultimate unit 5:12-18.<sup>156</sup>

Given the opinions of the scholars above how do we proceed from here? Using verbal and thematic links have been helpful in answering questions relating to other difficult verses in the letter. If we analyse the text using these methods, rather than solely relying on ones related to literary form, as seen above, it may help with the issue. There are clear indications in 5:12 that it should be taken with the preceding verses. The phrase *Πρὸ πάντων δε* (‘but above all else’) reads most naturally as related to what has gone before (note *δέ*). The address *ἀδελφοί μου* in 5:12 links up with the triple occurrence of the address *ἀδελφοί* in 5:7, 9a and 10a. References to the earth and to judgement provide links between 5:12 and 5:7-11, with *ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε* of 5:12 echoing *ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε* of 5:9 and *τὴν γῆν* of 5:12 echoing *τῆς γῆς* of 5:7. The phrase *Πρὸ πάντων δε* which introduces the prohibition against oaths in 5:12 should be seen as bringing to a close a series of exhortations on patience (5:7-8, 10-11) and speech (5:9) in 5:7-11, which are set in an eschatological context (5:7, 8, 9). The use of *Πρὸ πάντων δε* here is not unlike that of 1 Pet. 4:8 where it is found in the course of a series of exhortations and has the function of highlighting the particular exhortation which it introduces, namely, the exhortation to love one

---

<sup>150</sup> Cellérier, *Jaques*, p. 181.

<sup>151</sup> Schrage, *Jakobusbrief*, p. 54 (‘Schlußmahnungen’).

<sup>152</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 325.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. Sleeper, *James*, pp. 136-137; Moo, *James*, pp. 231-32.

<sup>154</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 300.

<sup>155</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 189.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 204.



another, the third in a series of seven exhortations.<sup>157</sup> The exhortations in 1 Peter are also set in an eschatological context ('Living in Awareness of the Endtime').<sup>158</sup> It could be argued that the phrase *Πρὸ πάντων δε* which is often linked to a health wish in ancient letters may be seen as related to Jas. 5:16. There are examples of the phrase found with a health wish at the conclusion of first century letters (P. Oxy II.292: *πρὸ δὲ πάντων ὑγιάνειν σε εὐχομαι ἀβασκάντως τὰ ἄριστα πράττων. ἔρρωσο*) and P. Oxy II.294 (*πρὸ μὲν πάντων σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμέλου εἶν' ὑγιαίνης. ἐπισκωποῦ Δημητροῦν καὶ Δωρίωνα τὸν πατ' ἐρα. ἔρρωσο*). However, the situation in James is very different from that of the ancient letters cited here, as has been pointed out by Ó Fearghail. The context in James is not that of a health wish but of catechesis relating to a sick person.<sup>159</sup> The injunction not to swear (*ὀμνύετε*) is a new topic in the letter but is related to the theme of the tongue, especially to the exhortations of 3:3-8 (cf. 1:26; 4:11; 5:9a), and as has been suggested above, it is closely linked to the exhortations that precede it in 5:7-11.<sup>160</sup> The formulation of the prohibition in James echoes the more elaborate formulation of Matt. 5:34-37. Both highlight the need for truthfulness - 'Let your 'yes' be yes and your 'no' be no' (cf. Matt. 5:37). One's word should be absolutely trustworthy, so that one would not fall

<sup>157</sup> 1 Pet. 4:7-11: 'The end of all things (*Πάντων δὲ τὸ τέλος*) is at hand[...]keep sane and sober for your prayers[...]Above all (*πρὸ πάντων*) hold unfailing your love for one another[...]Practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another[...]As each has received a gift, employ it for one another[...]whoever speaks, as one who utters oracles of God; whoever renders service, as one who renders it by the strength which God supplies'; Senior, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, p. 119, suggests that *πρὸ πάντων* of 4:8 echoes *Πάντων δὲ τὸ τέλος* of 4:7. See F. Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 35 (2012), 81.

<sup>158</sup> Cf. Senior, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, pp. 11, 119-27; Ropes, *James*, p. 300.

<sup>159</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 60-61.

<sup>160</sup> The swearing of oaths is frequently mentioned in the OT (cf. Gen. 21:31; 26:28-31; Exod. 22:11-12; 33:1; Num. 5:19). God is said to swear oaths (cf. Gen. 22:16; Isa. 45:23; 62:8; Jer. 44:26; Amos 4:2; 8:7). Philo, embarrassed by such anthropomorphisms, explained the swearing of oaths away as merely a concession to human frailty (*Leg. Alleg.* III, 203ff.; *De Sacr.* §§92-96). False oaths were condemned (Exod. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; Zech. 8:17; Wis. 14:29). According to Sir. 23:11, the one who swears falsely sins doubly. The prophets (Jer. 5:2; 7:9; Zech. 5:3-4; Mal. 3:5), and Sirach (23:7-9) attest to the declining force of the oath and to reservations about its use. In the Greek and Roman worlds oaths which took the most varied forms were also a prominent feature of private and public life, but here too there were many concerns about them, particularly about the frivolous abuse of the oath (cf. Diog. Laert. *Lives*, VIII, 22; Epictetus, *Enchr.*, XXXIII, 5). According to Josephus the Essenes had reservations about the oath. For them one's word had more force than an oath. But they did not avoid all oaths. Members of the community took an oath on entry (CD XV,5ff. cf. Jos., *War* II, 135-142; *Ant.* XV, 371; Philo, *Quod Omnis Probus* §84). The one oath later permitted (unmasking a thief) could only be taken in the presence of judges (CD IX, 9-12; cf. XV, 1ff.). See 11QTemple 53-54; CD VII:8; XV-XVI; 1 QS V:8; VI:27).

under judgement (να μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε). Both James and Matthew probably represent different forms of a saying of Jesus.<sup>161</sup>

The presence of oaths at the conclusion of letters led Francis and others to see the prohibition on oaths in Jas. 5:12 as indicative of a letter ending, and thus, as an indication that 5:12 must signal the beginning of a new unit. Such a position is rather premature, and indeed, unwarranted. The examples furnished by Exler, however, are from official letters many of which are 'sworn declarations' accompanying official statements, with the oath confirming the authenticity of the bond or surety or whatever official document was in question.<sup>162</sup> The purpose and context of the oath in these and in other examples cited by Exler are not comparable to the context of oaths in the letter of James. There, one has instruction or catechesis on the taking of oaths.<sup>163</sup> This evidence, as well as the links highlighted above would suggest that 5:12 forms not the beginning of a new unit, but rather, the conclusion of the previous verses 5:7-11.

### 3.6 - Links between Jas. 5:1-6 and 5:7-12

Links between 5:7-12 and 5:1-6 have often been noted by scholars, in particular, the crucial link formed by the οὖν of 5:7a to what precedes it. Ropes, for example, notes that the οὖν in 5:7 presents the exhortation 'as a direct corollary from the declaration in 5:1-6 that judgement awaits the rich'.<sup>164</sup> For Johnson the connective οὖν in 5:7 continues the attack on the arrogant from 4:11-5:6.<sup>165</sup> Penner finds the logical flow of thought of 4:6-5:6 concluding in 5:7-12.<sup>166</sup> Hartin sees 5:7-11 as continuing the eschatological dimension introduced in 5:1-6,<sup>167</sup> while Edgar points out a number of parallels between 5:1-5 and 5:7-11.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Martin; *James*, pp. 203-04, and Moo, *James*, p. 233, suggest that the author is referring only to voluntary or unnecessary oaths, the type of oaths condemned by Philo in *Decal* §92 (cf. Sir. 23:7f).

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Exler, *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter*, pp. 127-32.

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 82-83, particularly 82 n. 46 ; see also 'Literary Structure', 60-61.

<sup>164</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 293.

<sup>165</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 311.

<sup>166</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 150. Moo, *James*, p. 221, takes 5:1-11 to form a unit. Blomberg and Kamell, *James*, p. 214, take 5:1-12 as a unit, seeing 5:7-12 as a response to the behaviour in 5:1-6 and 4:13-17.

<sup>167</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 247.

<sup>168</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 204, points to the farmer in 5:4-5 and the reference to harvest in 5:7; the 'fattening of the hearts' in 5:5, and the 'strengthening of the hearts' in 5:8; the judgement of the Lord of Hosts in 5:4 and the coming of the Lord in 5:7-8.

The presence of the particle οὖν suggests that a strong link is forged between 5:7 and the eschatological threats of 5:1-6. A similar use of οὖν is to be found in the closing section of letters in the *Antiquities* of Josephus, in XII.45-50 [49] and XIII.166-70 [170],<sup>169</sup> for example, and elsewhere.<sup>170</sup> In a letter of 1 Macc. 11, King Demetrius, having listed his grants to the Jews (11:32-36), urges them to make a copy of his decree (11:37: νῦν οὖν ἐπιμέλεσθε τοῦ ποιῆσαι τούτων ἀντίγραφον).<sup>171</sup> Apart from the presence of οὖν in 5:7a there are also other links between the two paragraphs 5:1-6 and 5:7-12. The reference to the last days in 5:3 (ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις) is echoed in the references to the παρουσία in 5:7 and 8 and the judge standing before the door (ὁ κριτὴς πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν ἔστηκεν) in 5:9b. Other links include the workers (ἐργατῶν) who mowed the fields (χώρας) of 5:4 and the patient farmer (γεωργὸς) of 5:7b who awaits the coming of the rains; the reference to the rich nourishing their hearts (ἐθρέψατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν) for a day of slaughter in 5:5b is contrasted with the advice to the brethren to be patient and strengthen their hearts (στηρίξατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν) because the παρουσία is near in 5:8; the rich living on the earth in luxury (ἐτροφήσατε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) of 5:5a contrasts with the farmer who patiently awaits the precious fruit of the earth (τὸν τίμιον καρπὸν τῆς γῆς) of 5:7.

### 3.7 - Jas. 5:13-20

A new section begins in 5:13 with a topic that is very different from that of 5:12 and with a different tone. Nevertheless, a link with the previous unit is established by the opening word of the verse Κακοπαθεῖ which recalls the noun κακοπάθεια of 5:10. The reference to the earth producing fruit (ἡ γῆ ἐβλάστησεν

<sup>169</sup> In XII.45-50, Ptolemy informs Eleazar that he is to procure a translation of the law into Greek for his library, following which (XII.49: οὖν) he makes a request for scholars to do the work; in XIII.166-70, Jonathan traces the relationship between the Jews and the Spartans, wishes them well (166-69), and (XIII.170: οὖν) invites them to respond. See Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James' 77.

<sup>170</sup> See Jos., *Ant.* XIV.213-6; Julius Gaius, praetor and consul of Rome, writing to the magistrates, senate, and people of the Parians, and responding to a Jewish complaint, recalls his own positive attitude towards the Jews; and 'consequently' (οὖν), he writes, if they (the Parians) had made a decree against them, to abolish it [XIV.216]; see also *Ant.* XIV.244-246 [246]; XIV.306-312 [312]; XIV.314-8 [317]). See Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 77.

<sup>171</sup> 'Now, therefore, take care to make a copy of these things'. See also Bent Noack, 'Jakobus wider die Reichen', *Studia Theologica* 18 (1964), 10-25, 30; Penner, *James and Eschatology*, 150-1.

τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς) of 5:18 picks up the reference to the farmer awaiting the precious fruit of the earth (ὁ γεωργὸς ἐκδέχεται τὸν τίμιον καρπὸν τῆς γῆς) in 5:7.

The opening verses 5:13a may be interpreted as a question (Κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν) followed by the imperative 'let him pray' (προσευχέσθω).<sup>172</sup> Quite a few commentators and translations read 5:13a in this way.<sup>173</sup> Von Soden printed it as a declaration followed by an imperative, as Mussner, for example, takes it.<sup>174</sup> Treating it as a question means that τις is taken as an interrogative. Since questions are used frequently in the letter (twenty-two in all), some to open new sections, it is likely that 5:13a should be seen as a question.<sup>175</sup>

The author speaks of hardships and misfortunes in 5:13f. The author may be thinking of painful trials or hardships such as those referred to in 2:6-7 or 5:1-6 or he may be thinking of the general hardships that one may have to endure for one's faith such as the trials or testing referred to in 1:2-3 and 1:12, and which lead to internal divisions (1:12-15) and schisms (4:1-3). The author has spoken of patience in suffering in 5:10 ([...]τῆς κακοπαθίας καὶ τῆς μακροθυμίας), a topic that recalls 1:2-3, so perhaps here, too, 1:2-3 is echoed. Whatever the nature of the suffering, the member of the community who is suffering is urged to pray (προσευχέσθω), a theme which is found throughout 5:13-18. Prayer here has the power to save if it is done in righteousness. The author assures the people he is addressing that the prayer of faith (εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως), which the elders pray and which accompanies the anointing, will 'save' (σώσει) the person who is sick and suffering. The prayer of faith has already been mentioned in the introduction to the letter in 1:6. It is the prayer that does not doubt or waver but trusts in the Lord. It is such a faith-filled prayer, the author states in 5:15a, that will save the sick person. He adds that the Lord will raise him up. Picking up the theme of sin from 5:15b the author in 5:16b urges his addressees to confess their sins to one another (ἐξομολογεῖσθε οὖν ἀλλήλοις τὰς

<sup>172</sup> See, for example, Martin, *James*, p. 205; Allison, Jr., *James*, p. 740.

<sup>173</sup> See Ropes, *James*, p. 303; Chaine, *Jacques*, p. 127; Cantinat, *Jacques*, p. 244; Martin, *James*, p. 205; Adamson, *James*, p. 196; Davids, *James*, p. 191; McCartney, *James*, p. 251; Blomberg and Kamell, *James*, p. 241; as a declaration Dibelius, *James*, p. 252; Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 217; Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 208; Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, p. 667.

<sup>174</sup> Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 217; cf. Dibelius, *James*, p. 252; Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 208; Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, p. 667.

<sup>175</sup> See Davids, *James*, p. 191, who cites 1 Cor. 7:18, 21 and 27 for a question followed by the imperative.

ἁμαρτίας) and to pray for one another (εὐχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων). This is a case of mutual confession and mutual prayer - mutual support in other words.

Having stated the principle of faithful prayer, the author goes on to give two examples drawn from the cycle of stories about Elijah found in 1 Kgs. 17-2 Kgs. 2 (cf. Sir. 48:1-11; 4 Ezra 7:19). The two examples underline the power of the prayer of Elijah. The example of God responding to the prayer of Elijah, a fragile human being like all humans, is important for the addressees. The theme of prayer provides a unity for 5:13-18, with verbs and nouns following one another in successive verses - προσεύχομαι (5:13, 14, 17, 18) and εὐχομαι (5:16) and the nouns εὐχή (5:15), δέησις (5:16) and προσευχή (5:17).<sup>176</sup> In addition, one can point to occurrences of the verb προσευχέσθω in 5:13 and προσηύξατο in 5:18 as framing the unit.<sup>177</sup>

### 3.8 - Jas. 5:19-20

The final exhortation in 5:19 is introduced by Ἀδελφοί μου. As elsewhere in the letter of James (cf. 1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1) this phrase marks the beginning of a unit. This is particularly the case in 2:1 where Ἀδελφοί μου begins the unit 2:1-13. In 5:19, as in 5:12, the address Ἀδελφοί μου accentuates the final exhortation in a series of exhortations. This final exhortation, which is explicitly addressed to the community, re-emphasises the solidarity and friendship of the writer with his addressees and underlines his sense of equality with them. His lowly and servile nature, as expressed in 1:1 (δοῦλος), emphasises this equality.

There are various links between 5:19-20 and 5:13-18. The term ἁμαρτία of 5:20 recalls the occurrences of ἁμαρτία in 5:15 (καὶ ἁμαρτίας ἧ πεποιηκώς) and 5:16 (ἐξομολογεῖσθε οὖν ἀλλήλοις τὰς ἁμαρτίας) while the term σώσει links 5:20 (σώσει ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτου) and 5:15 (ἡ εὐχή τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμνοντα). The sense of solidarity that is present in 5:16 in the exhortation to confess their sins to one another and to pray for one another (εὐχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων), is heightened in 5:19-20 in the exhortation to recover the brother who has strayed from the truth.<sup>178</sup>

<sup>176</sup> See 5:13-18 (cf. Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 83).

<sup>177</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 83.

<sup>178</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 85.

That 5:19-20 flows from what has gone before has been pointed out by several authors.<sup>179</sup> Ropes, for example, had already noted the link between the ‘general appeal’ of 5:19-20 and the preceding discussion, arguing that it formed ‘a fitting conclusion’ for the letter.<sup>180</sup> Davids described the final exhortation as flowing ‘out of the theme of confession and forgiveness of the previous section (5,13-18)’ and giving the author ‘purpose in publishing the epistle, i.e. turning or preserving people from error’.<sup>181</sup> Along with the links mentioned above between 5:19-20 and 5:13-18, Bottini suggests that the figure of Elijah as intercessor and mediator of ‘conversion’ provides another link between the two.<sup>182</sup>

The final exhortation in 5:19-20, introduced by the imperative γινωσκέτω, picks up the note of solidarity and mutual support that is present in 5:16. The author makes the pressing point that whoever turns back (ὁ ἐπιστρέψας) the brother who has strayed from the truth from the way of error, will save his soul from death and cover a multitude of sins. The repetition of the verb ἐπιστρέφω underlines the pressing nature of the author’s appeal for solidarity and fraternity. The background to this reference of turning back the sinner ‘from the error of his way’ is probably Ezek. 33:11.<sup>183</sup> What exactly does straying or wandering ‘from the truth’ (πλανηθῆ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας) signify? For Martin, ἀληθείας may involve failure to exhibit a practical faith, while Johnson suggests that it does not mean ‘theoretical correctness’ but rather the proper way of behaving.

What the author means by truth (ἀληθείας) or straying from the truth (πλανηθῆ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας) in 5:19 is difficult to say but in the light of what is said in 5:20 it clearly is a life and death situation (cf. σώσει ψυχὴν[...]θανάτου). It could include apostasy, and there are possible parallels in the NT supporting this view (cf. 1 Tim. 6:21 and 6:10) but the sense in the letter of James seems much broader. The term ἀληθείας is found in 1:18, 3:14 and in 5:19. In 1:18 it occurs in the phrase the ‘word of truth’ (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) where the term could refer to the word of creation, if taken cosmologically, or gospel, if taken soteriologically.<sup>184</sup> Dibelius takes the text there to

<sup>179</sup> Cf. G. B. Bottini, ‘Correzione Fraterna e Salvezza in Giacomo 5,19-20’, *Liber Annus Studi Francescani* 35 (1985), 134.

<sup>180</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 313. See also Mussner, *Jakobus*, p. 233.

<sup>181</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 198.

<sup>182</sup> Cf. Bottini, ‘Giacomo 5,19-20’, 135.

<sup>183</sup> Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, p. 232.

<sup>184</sup> Cf. Dibelius, *James*, pp. 103-04.

refer to Christians and the term to refer to the gospel.<sup>185</sup> Moo also takes it to refer to the gospel.<sup>186</sup> In 3:14 the author speaks of lying against the truth (ψεύδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας). In the previous verse he had spoken of one showing from one's good conduct (δειξάτω ἐκ τῆς καλῆς ἀναστροφῆς) one's works (τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ) in the meekness of wisdom (ἐν πραύτητι σοφίας). By contrast if they have bitter envy and jealousy in their hearts, he writes, they lie against the truth (ἀληθείας). It has a practical sense here. In relation to the sense of ἀληθείας in 5:19-20 Dibelius suggests that what is involved is someone who has in some way apostatised from the 'truth', meaning 'from the devout, righteous way of life'.<sup>187</sup> Others such as Moo take the truth to refer not to 'Christian doctrine in the narrow sense' but 'more broadly to all that is involved in the gospel'.<sup>188</sup> The meaning of straying from the 'truth' is clarified in 5:20 which speaks of a brother's recovery from 'the error of his way'. The term ὁδός refers to practical conduct and suggests that the term ἀληθείας in 5:20 should also be understood in a practical sense.<sup>189</sup> The context of ἀλήθεια in 5:13-20 and in the letter as a whole suggests that the sense of ἀλήθεια here is to be found in the context of the letter itself, in the exhortations that run throughout the letter, both positive and negative, in its teaching about faith and prayer, in its exhortations about how one should treat the poor and the vulnerable, the sick and the erring.<sup>190</sup> It should also be noted that the final exhortation of 5:19-20 holds out a promise, a promise for those who take care of their brothers - the promise of saving souls from death and 'covering' a multitude of sins. It is on this pastoral note of solidarity and fraternity with the erring brother that the author prefers to bring the section 4:13-5:20 to a close and the letter with it. The final general exhortation may be said to fulfil the function of an epilogue, drawing together the many lines of thought of the letter.<sup>191</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 104.

<sup>186</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 79.

<sup>187</sup> Dibelius, *James*, pp. 257-58.

<sup>188</sup> Cf. Moo, *James*, p. 249; see also Hartin, *James*, p. 283.

<sup>189</sup> See Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 90.

<sup>190</sup> See Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 90, where those who stray from the 'truth' are described as 'those whose faith is not steadfast in the face of trial (1:2-4) whose prayer is not with faith (1:6), who attribute their faults to God (1:13-18), or who fail to put into action the law/word of God (1:19-27), notably the law of charity (2:1-13), who do not put their faith into action (2:14-26), or do not bridle the tongue (3:1-12), those whose wisdom is not from above (3:13-18), those whose friendship is with the world instead of with God (4:1-10); they are those who judge a brother (4:11-12), those who are not mindful of God (4:13-17), those who are unjust towards the poor (5:1-6); they are those who grumble against one another (5:9), those who have not patience (5:7-11), those whose word is not their bond (5:12)'.

<sup>191</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 92-93.

### 3.9 - Jas. 4:13-5:20

The links between 4:13-17 and 5:1-6 and between 5:1-6 and 5:7-12 have been noted above. Links between 5:7-12 and 5:13-20 are provided by the recurrence of ἀδελφοί (5:7, 9, 12, 19) and the phrase καρπὸν τῆς γῆς of 5:7 which is recalled in 5:18 (ἡ γῆ[...]τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς). The occurrences of the term ἁμαρτία in 5:15, 16 and 20 recalls its occurrence in 4:17 and in addition provides a possible inclusion for the section 4:13-5:20 (4:17: ἁμαρτία; 5:20: ἁμαρτιῶν). Moreover, the one who goes on his way regardless of God in 4:13 (πορευσόμεθα) is perhaps recalled in the one who is brought back from the error of his way in 5:20 (πλανηθῆ[...]ἐπιστρέψη [...] ἐπιστρέψας ἁμαρτωλὸν ἐκ πλάνης). The parallels between the conclusion in 4:12 and 5:20 have already been noted (σώζω in 4:12 and 5:20).

From the point of view of the body of the letter, 1:12-5:20, the theme of salvation provides an inclusion. The reference to saving one's soul from death of 5:20 (σώσει ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτου) recalls the reference to gaining the crown of life of 1:12 (λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς). The author of the letter of James is clearly anxious to convey to his audience that the crown of life can and must be won and every member of the community has a role in ensuring all the brethren are in a position to claim it. Also of note is the reference to the 'word of truth' (1:18), a word which can 'save' in 1:21, and which stands in contrast to worldly desires and sins which bring death (1:13-15), and the author's call in 5:19-20 to return from the path of deception, to the way of 'truth', in order that the brethren be saved from death. Life and death, salvation and destruction; these are clearly important concepts to the author. These two states stand in opposition to one another, one being the result of being perfect (salvation), and the other being the result of being double-minded (death). This is spelt out in the introduction (1:1-11). Significantly the opposition between exaltation/salvation and destruction/death may be seen to be found at the conclusion of each of the sections we have outlined above, namely the conclusion of the introduction of 1:1-11, the conclusion of the first major unit of 1:12-2:26, specifically the opening and closing lines of the concluding unit 2:14-26; the conclusion of the second major unit 3:1-4:12 and the conclusion of the third major unit, 4:13-5:20:



### 1:9-11

<sup>9</sup> Καυχάσθω δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς ἐν τῷ ὕψει αὐτοῦ, <sup>10</sup> ὁ δὲ πλούσιος ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου παρελεύσεται.

<sup>11</sup> ἀνέτειλεν γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος σὺν τῷ καύσωνι καὶ ἐξήρανε τὸν χόρτον καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ ἐξέπεσεν καὶ ἡ εὐπρέπεια τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀπόλωτο· οὕτως καὶ ὁ πλούσιος ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ **μαραινθήσεται**.

### 2:14, 26

<sup>14</sup> Τί τὸ ὄφελος, ἀδελφοί μου, ἐὰν πίστιν λέγη τις ἔχειν ἔργα δὲ μὴ ἔχη; μὴ δύναται ἡ πίστις **σῶσαι** αὐτόν;

<sup>26</sup> ὡσπερ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα χωρὶς πνεύματος **νεκρόν** ἐστίν, οὕτως καὶ ἡ πίστις χωρὶς ἔργων **νεκρά** ἐστίν.

### 4:12

<sup>12</sup> εἷς ἐστίν [ὁ] νομοθέτης καὶ κριτὴς ὁ δυνάμενος **σῶσαι** καὶ **ἀπολέσαι**· σὺ δὲ τίς εἶ ὁ κρίνων τὸν πλησίον;

### 5:20.

<sup>20</sup> γινωσκέτω ὅτι ὁ ἐπιστρέψας ἀμαρτωλὸν ἐκ πλάνης ὁδοῦ αὐτοῦ **σώσει** ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ **θανάτου** καὶ καλύψει πλῆθος ἀμαρτιῶν.

## Conclusion

After determining that 1:1, 2-11 forms the introduction to the letter of James, we set out in this chapter to delimit units within 1:12-5:20. Using various indicators of delimitation (conjunctions, word links, and so forth) we broke James down into several small units and then looked at how these units may be seen to form larger units, taking note especially of repetitions in the text such as inclusions, anaphoric-type repetitions and epiphoric-type repetitions, changes of theme and vocabulary, and other significant indicators. Using these methods we came up with the following structure for the letter of James: 1:1,2-11; 1:12-2:26; 3:1-4:12; 4:13-5:20.

This chapter has looked at the literary structure of the body of the letter of James, 1:12-5:20, which opens with a beatitude and a challenge in 1:12 and closes with a promise and a challenge in 5:19-20. It may be divided into three main units. It was argued that 1:12-2:26 should be seen as the first major unit in the body of the letter based upon verbal and thematic relationships between its constituent parts, 1:12-27, 2:1-13 and 2:14-26. It was argued that the second major unit of James goes from 3:1 to 4:12 and that it too is composed of three main sections, 3:1-12, 3:13-18 and 4:11-12. These sections, which are composed of smaller units, are linked together by

verbal and thematic relationships. The final unit in this section 4:11-12 has been seen as a difficult unit in terms of its function and position but the references to the theme of judgement in 3:1 (κρίμα) and 4:11-12 (κρίνει, κρίνω), was taken to form an inclusion for the section 3:1-4:12. The repetition of the term ἀδελφοί of 3:1 in 4:11 was seen to confirm this, along with the references to sins of the tongue in 3:1-12 and 4:11-12, and it was suggested that the sharp rhetorical question that concludes 4:11-12 provides a fitting climactic note on which to end the section 3:1-4:12. The final major unit of the letter of James, 4:13-5:20, was seen to be composed of four parts 4:13-17; 5:1-6; 5:7-12 and 5:13-20. The unity of the whole section is based on a series of verbal and thematic links pointed out above.

In the next two chapters we will look at the literary form and thematic unity of James, elements which will build upon the work carried out here on the structure of the letter. The first of these we will look at is literary form.

## Chapter VI

### The Literary Form of James

#### Introduction

A variety of literary terms have been used to categorise the contents of James over the last century and a half. The terms letter, epistle, diatribe, sermon, homily, *paraenesis*, *protreptic* discourse, wisdom writing and ethical scrapbook have all been used to describe the literary form or genre of the letter of James.<sup>1</sup> The reason for this variety of opinion is probably to be found in the fact that elements of various literary forms may be identified in the letter. In his commentary on the letter of James, Johnson makes the point that the letter 'partially conforms to several kinds of ancient literary genres', and when one examines it closely, one discovers 'how much of James escapes confinement to any single category'.<sup>2</sup> Defining the literary form of James, then, is not without its difficulties. In this chapter we will look first at the various literary forms put forward for the letter of James, some of which are no longer sustainable forms for James anymore. We will look at the reasons why this is and offer up our own view on the literary form of James. Close attention will be paid to the opening and closing sections of the letter of James. These sections have often been seen as keys in unlocking the literary form of James. Finally, the exhortative character of the letter has been well studied. We will investigate closely this character of the letter, investigating the manner in which these exhortations are presented in James and offering up an explanation as to what bearing they might have on the literary form of the letter.

---

<sup>1</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 16-23.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 17.

## 1. The *Status Quaestionis* of James' Literary Form

Some of the forms suggested for James have been touched upon in the preceding chapters. Let us look now in more detail at various suggestions for the forms of James.

### 1.1 - Diatribe

While Mayor noted some elements of the Hellenistic diatribe in the letter of James (cf. 2:18f),<sup>3</sup> Ropes appears to have been the first to classify the letter as a diatribe, noting that it recalled 'the spirit of the Hellenistic diatribes'. This was its 'fittest literary classification', since it helped to explain the letter's 'miscellaneous contents' and made 'more intelligible the structure of the epistle'.<sup>4</sup> In James, as in the diatribe, he argued, 'there is a general controlling motive in the discussion, but no form and logically disposed structure giving a strict unity to the whole'.<sup>5</sup> He found the most common characteristic features of the diatribe in Jas. 2:18-19 and 5:13-14 in the brief question and answer dialogue.<sup>6</sup> Other formulae characteristic of the diatribe found in James includes phrases such as 'Do not be deceived' (1:16); 'know this' (1:19) and 'what use is it?' (2:14, 16). They also include the use of a negative to introduce a conclusion (3:10), διὸ λέγει with a quotation (4:6), the use of the term ἰδοὺ (3:4, 5; 5:4, 7, 9, 11), the use of rhetorical questions, the numerous imperatives, and the use of Ἄγε νῦν in 4:13-5:6.<sup>7</sup> In his view, 'any one of these traits of language, style, and mode of thought could be paralleled from other types of literature' but what he found 'significant and conclusive' was 'the combination in these few pages of James of so many of the most striking features of a specific literary type familiar in the contemporary Hellenistic world', even if there were differences between the letter of James and the Hellenistic diatribe.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> See Mayor, *James*, p. 216.

<sup>4</sup> Ropes, *James*, pp. 3-4; those familiar with the diatribe form 'would see fitness in a series of topics which to us seem incongruous, to recognise the naturalness of transitions which strike us as awkward and abrupt, and to detect a latent unity which for us is obscured by the writer's habit of making no introductory announcement of his successive themes' (p. 4).

<sup>5</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 13. He also notes the use of natural imagery and other metaphors common to Greek literature (1:25; 2:15; 3:5-6) and the use of heroic figures such as Abraham and Rahab.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Ropes, *James*, p. 15: 'The most striking difference Ropes found was the greater seriousness and restraint of tone. Nothing in James could entitle it to be described as σπουδαιογέλοιον. The characteristic diatribe had more of the laugh, and it was usually a bitterer laugh than would have been possible to the high-minded but friendly preacher who here speaks to us. Again, James, as a Christian preacher, addresses his readers as 'brethren', 'beloved Brethren', whereas the Greek

While some diatribal elements can be found in James, notably in the sections found by Ropes, it would be wise not to characterise the entirety of James as a diatribe. The diatribe is a literary technique which can be used in a variety of other literary forms.<sup>9</sup> To state that the author of James followed closely the diatribes of classical authors is an overstatement and lends itself only to limiting and damaging conclusions regarding its overall structure and unity, as Ropes was quick to wrongly identify. Although Dibelius saw some parts of the letter of James as having characteristics of a treatise in the style of the diatribe, especially Jas. 2:1-3:12, he disagreed with its classification as a diatribe by Ropes.<sup>10</sup> W. W. Wessel argued that identifying it as a diatribe failed 'to do justice to the basic Semitic orientation of the Epistle'.<sup>11</sup> In a somewhat similar vein Adamson argued that the letter owed nothing to the diatribe, which to him, was an entirely Hellenistic product whereas the letter of James was 'fundamentally and perpetually Semitic and biblical'.<sup>12</sup> While Johnson found many elements that James shares with noteworthy examples of the diatribe,<sup>13</sup> he found defining diatribe as a genre in itself problematic.<sup>14</sup> Not everything in James, he argues, fits even the 'loose definition of diatribe' advanced by Ropes, and 'the distinctively 'diatribal' features are found primarily with the 'essays' of 2:1-5:11, rather than evenly throughout the composition'.<sup>15</sup>

---

preacher thought of individuals, addressed them in the singular, and was not bound to them either by love or by the bond of a common brotherhood'.

<sup>9</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 12; noting that the Greek diatribe is a 'stylistic device' used by the author in his arguments; it is not a literary genre, but rather 'a written style that encompasses a way of exhorting the hearers/readers'. Hartin cites A. J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Sourcebook*, Library of Early Christianity (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1986), pp. 129, 130-134 ('a diatribe is essentially a popular philosophical treatment of an ethical topic and has the practical aim of moving people to action rather than reflection').

<sup>10</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 2 n. 6.

<sup>11</sup> W. W. Wessel, 'An Inquiry into the Origin, Literary Character, Historical and Religious Significance of the Epistle of James', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1953), p. 74.

<sup>12</sup> Adamson, *Man and His Message*, p. 104. In his view 'the stylistic similarities between James and the diatribes are obvious enough, but like those between the synagogue sermons, they are mainly superficial. It is even more obvious that the Epistle as a whole is not a diatribe'. Davids, *James*, p. 23, was also critical of its classification as a diatribe, arguing that it owed its form to the Jewish synagogue homily; see also Hiebert, *James*, p. 41.

<sup>13</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>14</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 17: 'In its fullest realization', he writes, 'the diatribe appears not simply as a loose collection of rhetorical devices, but as a form of argumentation in which a clear thesis is argued with the (fictive or real) social setting of a school'.

<sup>15</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 17-18. James, he argues, does not 'state a clear thesis that is then argued by means of antithesis and demonstration', as happens in Paul's letter to the Romans - 'the NT's most impressive example of the diatribe'.

## 1.2 - Sermon/Homily/Synagogue homily

The homiletic aspects of the letter, its many imperatives, and the often noted loosely connected nature of its contents have led to suggestions that the letter of James may represent some form of sermon or collection of sermons or a homily. One of the possibilities mentioned by Luther was that it may have been composed from sermons delivered by James.<sup>16</sup> The number of imperatives in the letter (54 in 108 verses) led A. Jülicher to describe it a kind of 'penitential sermon' ('eine Art Busspredigt'),<sup>17</sup> while A. Harnack called it a 'homiletic mosaic' by an unknown teacher.<sup>18</sup> J. S. Stevenson suggested that the letter of James should be looked upon as 'a collection of little sermonettes, or sermon notes', given in the synagogue.<sup>19</sup> For W. W. Wessel the theory that 'identifies the Epistle with a sermon (especially a synagogue sermon), or perhaps excerpts from a number of sermons, accounts best for all the facts', although he favours the theory of 'excerpts from numbers of synagogue sermons'.<sup>20</sup> According to Wessel, James would have been familiar with the form of the synagogue sermon since, by the first century AD, the homily was 'a regular part of the synagogue service in both Palestine and the Diaspora'.<sup>21</sup> Although much of the evidence adduced by Wessel for the form of the 'synagogue homily' is later than 70 AD, Davids argues that comparison with traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Josephus, the gospels, and other early material make it likely that the basic features of the homily remained constant.<sup>22</sup> For him it is as logical to speak of 'a series of homilies in James as to speak of diatribes'.<sup>23</sup> Moo suggests that the author of the letter, 'separated from his readers by distance, cannot exhort them in person or at length. So he must

---

<sup>16</sup> Cited from Bachmann, *Luther's Works*, 35, pp. 396-397.

<sup>17</sup> Jülicher, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, p. 170.

<sup>18</sup> See Adamson, *Man and His Message*, p. 110 n. 47.

<sup>19</sup> Cited in Wessel, 'An Inquiry into the Origin, Literary Character, Historical and Religious Significance of the Epistle of James', p. 79.

<sup>20</sup> W. W. Wessel, 'James, Epistle of' in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. by G. W. Bromley, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1982), 962; he also remarks that 'If the Epistle is in reality a collection of sermonic materials used by James in the synagogue, then the variability of subject matter can be explained by assuming that the material is collected from a number of sermons, on different subjects' (p. 262).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Wessel, 'James, Epistle of', 962. Wessel found in the 'Haggadah' as preserved in the homiletic and expository midrashim striking parallels to the literary forms found in the James, including dialogue, method of address ('Brethren'), and variability of subject matter; cf. Wessel, 'An Inquiry into the Origin, Literary Character, Historical and Religious Significance of the Epistle of James', pp. 78-91, and the authors listed on p. 79 n. 2; H. Thyen, *Der Stil der jüdisch-hellenistischen Homilie*, *Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, Vol. 47 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), pp. 14-17; C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament*, *Black's New Testament Commentaries* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1981), pp. 30 n. 2, 166 n. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 23, n. 80.

<sup>23</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 23.

put his preaching in written form, using a letter to cover briefly the main points that he wants them to understand'.<sup>24</sup>

Given the large numbers of exhortations in James it was not uncommon for scholars to see traces of the sermon/homily in James. However it is a problematic categorisation because of the vagueness of the genre 'homily' or 'sermon'.<sup>25</sup>

### 1.3 - *Paraenesis*

The characterising of the contents of James as *paraenesis* or *paraenetic* has a long, and often times, complicated history. F. H. Kern, used the term 'sittlich-paränetisch' in relation to James in his revised commentary on James of 1838, not in relation to the letter as a whole but to its main sections.<sup>26</sup> Wachob and Popkes studied the development of the view of *paraenesis* as a literary genre in the work of Hartlich, Wendland and Vetschera.<sup>27</sup>

Dibelius, who is now almost synonymous with the term, introduced the literary genre of *paraenesis* into the discussion on the literary form of James. He viewed the letter as a *paraenetic* text, defining it as one 'which strings together

---

<sup>24</sup> Moo, *James*, pp. 8-9. W. Barclay, *The Letters of James and Peter*, The New Daily Study Bible, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), p. 38, remarked on 'how closely the letter of James resembles a sermon', adding that its letter form could be a later development. The resemblance to a sermon explains the scarcity of the references to Jesus and his life 'for, in one single sermon, James could not go through the whole range of orthodoxy and is, in fact, pressing moral duty upon men and women, and not talking about theology'. See also Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 386, for a further characterization of James as a sermon.

<sup>25</sup> See Aune, *Westminster Dictionary*, p. 240. In his study of 2 Clement, Donfried, *The Setting of Second Clement in Early Christianity*, p. 26, was wary of using either the 'sermon' or the 'homily' as a designation of literary genre since he held that virtually nothing is known of the contours of the 'sermon' in the first century AD, while he found the designation 'homily' so 'vague and so ambiguous' that it should be withdrawn until its literary generic legitimacy had been demonstrated. M. E. Isaacs, *Reading Hebrews and James: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smith and Hewly Publishing, 2002), p. 15, is also sceptical of the sermon as a genre since the 'evidence we have of the sermon as a genre mostly dates from the second-century AD onward, and even that would seem to indicate that then, as now, it did not necessarily follow a uniform pattern'.

<sup>26</sup> See F. H. Kern, *Der Character und Ursprung des Briefes Jacobi* (Tübingen: Fues, 1838), p. 37 ('sittlich-paränetisch in seinen Haupttheilen'). Johnson, *James*, p. 18, refers to the 1835 edition.

<sup>27</sup> See Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, pp. 36-52, citing P. Hartlich, 'De exhortationum a Graecis Romanisque scripturarum historia et indole', *Leipziger Studien* 11 (1889), 207-336; P. Wendland, *Anaximenes vom Lampsakos: Studien zur ältesten Geschichte der Rhetorik*. Festschrift für die XLVIII (Berlin: Wiedmann, 1905); R. Vetschera, *Zur griechischen Paränese* (Smichow: R. Vetschera, 1912). Hartlich defined *protreptic* speech as mainly sayings which if closely connected and arranged would form an encouraging address or exhortation. In contrast *paraenesis* was not pure exhortation, but advice by precept. Wendland and Vetschera defined *paraenesis* as a literary genre. On the works of Vetschera and Wendland, see also W. Popkes in *Paränese und Neues Testament*, *Stuttgarter Bibelstudien* 168 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1996), pp. 30-31, and in 'Paraenesis in the New Testament: An Exercise in Conceptuality', in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, ed. by J. Starr and T. Engberg-Pedersen (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 14-15.

admonitions of general ethical content'.<sup>28</sup> He and others based their description of this literary form or genre on Ps Isocrates, *Ad Demonicum*, especially §§3-5, and Seneca, *Ep.* 95. To identify the literary genre of *paraenesis* Dibelius used the *paraenetic* sections of Paul's letters, as well as Tob. 4:5-19; 12:6-10, and the Two-Way sections of the *Didache* and *Barnabas*, listing the following as the most distinctive features of the genre: eclecticism, lack of continuity, a catchword connection between the sayings which was purely structural, repetition of similar motifs in different places in the text and the lack of a single set of circumstances or single audience into which the sayings would fit.<sup>29</sup>

Dibelius' view of the letter of James as *paraenesis* found some support in the years that followed. W. Schrage, in his commentary on the letter, described the literary form of James as *paraenesis* ('Paränese'), its form as a letter being 'simply superficial and fictitious' ('bloße Einkleidung und Fiktion').<sup>30</sup>

Dibelius' work was not without its critics however. L. Perdue criticised Dibelius' definition of *paraenesis* as flawed and too narrow,<sup>31</sup> while Aune rejected *paraenesis* as a viable genre, taking the term *paraenesis* as referring to 'content, that is, to traditional maxims or precepts of wisdom, especially moral wisdom'. In his view, *paraenesis* could also refer to 'the process of addressing words of encouragement or discouragement about behaviour to a person or persons'.<sup>32</sup> Aune lists the basic elements of *paraenesis* as 'precepts, examples, discussions of

<sup>28</sup> See the comments of Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, p. 42; Popkes, 'Paraenesis in the New Testament', p. 14. Dibelius saw the *paraenetic* tradition in early Christianity as arising out of a need to cover all areas of life not covered by the ethical directives of Jesus, adding that the church availed themselves of the praxis of Diasporan Judaism, which provided the early Christian church with what it was lacking - 'ethical directives for new converts' (p. 4).

<sup>29</sup> See Dibelius, *James*, pp. 3-11. See discussion in Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, p. 41, and his citation of those who supported the position of Dibelius.

<sup>30</sup> Balz and Schrage, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, pp. 6-10, esp. p. 6. See also J. B. Polhill, 'The Life-Situation of the Book of James', *Review and Expositor* 66 (1969), 372; Songer, 'The Literary Character of the Book of James', 382-383; J. Blondel, 'Theology and Paraenesis in James', *Theology Digest* 28 (1980), 253.

<sup>31</sup> L. Perdue, 'Paraenesis and the Epistle of James', *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 72 (1981), 241 n.2, 247-256. See also L. Perdue, 'The Social Character of Paraenesis and Paraenetic Literature', *Semeia* 50 (1990), 8-9.

<sup>32</sup> D. Aune, *The New Testament in its Literary Environment* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1987), p. 91. For J. G. Gammie, 'Paraenetic Literature', 48, *paraenetic* literature is a type of writing that embodies the moral encouragement of a group to continue in the life they have begun or to further direct them on another course of action which the writer sets forth. He describes this *paraenetic* literature (p. 57) as expressing itself through two sub-genres - 'instructions and paraeneses (moral exhortations)' - one of the two main subdivisions of a larger composite and secondary genre - 'Paraenetic Literature' (p. 41).



traditional moral topics (*topoi*), encouraging reminders of what the readers already know and have accomplished, and reasons for recommended behaviour'.<sup>33</sup>

Johnson concedes that in some respects James fitted 'within the broad category of *paraenesis*', and although there are elements of *paraenetic* characteristics in James, they 'do not display the same formal arrangement' that is found in *Ad Demonicum*, a popular example among scholars of *paraenesis*.<sup>34</sup> Johnson makes the point that since some of the characteristics of *paraenesis* are found in the diatribes, both *paraenetic* and diatribal characteristics in James reinforce the perception of it as 'exhortatory literature'; neither, however, does so comprehensively encompass James 'as to allow judgements as to what James *must* or *must not* be on the basis of those classifications'.<sup>35</sup>

Edgar rejects the classification of the letter of James as *paraenesis*. For one thing it does not meet the criteria which according to Dibelius are characteristic of *paraenetic* literature, and for another, *paraenesis* is 'too vague to function effectively as a definite genre'.<sup>36</sup> Wachob was also critical of those who continue to see *paraenesis* as a genre. He follows what he describes as the 'established and predominant view among the ancients' that *paraenesis* is 'more correctly understood not as a literary genre but as a mode of persuasion or argument, a method of education'.<sup>37</sup> In his recent article on *paraenesis* in the NT, Popkes criticises the view of *paraenesis* put forward by Dibelius and others which he describes as 'a series of disconnected exhortations, composed and used eclectically like a treasure-box (*Ad Dem.* 44)'; for them the main unifying element was the uniform group of addressees.<sup>38</sup> He argues that *paraenesis* does not denote a literary genre,<sup>39</sup> as does T.

---

<sup>33</sup> Aune, *The New Testament in its Literary Environment*, p. 96.

<sup>34</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 19. Elements of *paraenesis* which he sees in James are 'the assumption that the readers should already know the exhortations here being delivered (1:3; 19; 2:5-7; 4:4; 5:20), the use throughout, but most notably in chapter one, of exhortations/maxims concerned with attitude and behaviour, the combined themes of memory and the mirror in 1:22-25, and the presentation of models for imitation (2:21-25; 5:10-11; 5:17-18)' (p. 20).

<sup>35</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 20.

<sup>36</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 17; it could, at best, he writes 'serve to describe the function of certain texts, that is, as 'general exhortations of an ethical or practical nature'.' (p. 17).

<sup>37</sup> Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, p. 52; cf. p. 46, n. 28. For a similar view of *paraenesis* see G. A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, pp. 145-146.

<sup>38</sup> Popkes, 'Paraenesis in the New Testament', p. 14. The text from Isocrates, *Ad Dem.* runs as follows: 'Do not be surprised that many things which I have said do not apply to you at your present age. For I also have not overlooked this fact, but I have deliberately chosen to employ this one treatise, not only to convey to you advice for your life now, but also to leave with you precepts for the years to come; for you will then readily perceive the application of my precepts, but you will not easily find a man who will give you friendly counsel. In order, therefore, that you may not seek the rest from another source, but that you may draw from this as from a treasure-house, I thought that I

Engberg-Pedersen for whom *paraenesis* is ‘not a type of text, even less a literary genre’, but ‘a practice’, the activity of giving injunctions to act in a certain way.<sup>40</sup>

#### 1.4 - A *Protreptic* Discourse

In his commentary on the letter of James, Ropes mentioned as a possible source for the literary character of the letter, the ‘Protrepticus’ or ‘paraenetic tract’, which he described as ‘a form of hortatory writing’ and which he distinguished from the ‘more ethical and less political’ *paraenesis*.<sup>41</sup> E. Baasland described the letter of James as ‘a protreptic wisdom speech written in the form of a letter for the purpose of a lecture or lesson’.<sup>42</sup> The speech originated ‘in diatribe instruction, possibly in an academy, and was published in order to be read aloud in the assembly of the community’.<sup>43</sup>

Johnson also sees James as a *protreptic* discourse.<sup>44</sup> He argues that insofar as James advocates a form of behaviour that is consistent with the norms of a community defined in terms of being ‘heirs of the kingdom’, or in terms of ‘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), its moral teaching is defined in terms of a certain specific ‘profession of life’. And insofar as its admonitions and warnings ‘are fitted to this profession’, and ‘delivered with a passion appropriate to a call to conversion’, the letter of James can legitimately be called, in his view, ‘a protreptic discourse in the form of a letter’.<sup>45</sup>

---

ought not to omit any of the counsels which I have to give you’. (Translation from G. Norlin, *Isocrates with an English Translation in three volumes* [Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 1980]).

<sup>39</sup> Popkes, ‘Paraenesis in the New Testament’, p. 15.

<sup>40</sup> T. Engberg-Pedersen, ‘The Concept of Paraenesis’, in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, ed. by J. Starr and T. Engberg-Pedersen (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), p. 53. He distinguishes between ‘injunction’ and ‘command’, the injunction being weaker than the order or command and leaving something up to the people enjoined (pp. 52-53).

<sup>41</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 18, mentioning also that the earliest examples of *paraenesis* were provided by Isocrates.

<sup>42</sup> Baasland, ‘Literarische Form, Thematik’, 3652, 3654 (‘Der Jak is eine für Vorlesungszwecke in Briefform geschriebene, protreptische, weisheitsliche Rede’).

<sup>43</sup> Baasland, ‘Literarische Form, Thematik’, 3654.

<sup>44</sup> Johnson, *James*, pp. 21, 24; he cites with approval the comment of Baasland, ‘Literarische Form, Thematik’, 3654, who describes James as a wisdom protreptic discourse written in the form of a letter. McCartney, *James*, p. 43, also classifies the letter as ‘*protreptic* discourse in the form of a letter’.

<sup>45</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 21. He cites Epictetus, *Discourse* III.23.57, who speaks of *protrepsis* in terms of moral focus. He mentions *protreptic* discourses that have the same elements as *paraenesis* - memory, model, imitation and maxims, but notes that in *protrepsis* they encourage ‘commitment to a certain specified lifestyle or profession and are communicated with a certain urgency and conviction’ (p. 20).

Hartin also takes the letter to be a *protreptic* discourse in the form of a letter.<sup>46</sup> The vision of *protreptic* discourse remains, in his view, highly focused in James with its call to maintain friendships with God as opposed to friendship with the world. Part of the function of *protreptic* discourse, he argues, is ‘social formation’, and James aims to achieve this function, he asserts, by reminding his readers of what it means to be part of the ‘twelve tribes in the dispersion’. In doing so, the author points out the many values that separate these people from the wider society.<sup>47</sup> Aune, who also sees James as a *protreptic* discourse in the form of a letter,<sup>48</sup> differentiates between *protreptic* and *paraenesis*, taking *protreptic* to call the audience to a new and different way of life, while *paraenesis* gives advice and guidance in continuing along an existing way of life. He does note, however, the inconsistency in these descriptions stemming from antiquity.<sup>49</sup>

From the views above it is difficult to try and reconcile what the term *paraenesis* or *protrepsis* truly denotes. Clearly there is a difference in opinion on what the function of *paraenesis* is and what its characteristics are judging from recent research on the matter. This can be seen specifically in the differing opinions on what separates *paraenesis* and *protrepsis*, a difference which evidently stems from the ancient world. At times the differentiation between the two, in terms of characterising the contents of James, is overcomplicated.<sup>50</sup>

## 1.5 - Wisdom Writing

Scholars have long noted the presence of wisdom elements in the letter of James. Mayor, for example, lists the many links between the letter of James and

---

<sup>46</sup> Hartin, *James*, pp. 12, 14, argues that precepts function in the letter of James to introduce the main arguments, as in 3:1 and 4:11-12. For him the role of argumentation is central to James and he believes that the sustained arguments in 2:1-7, 14-26 and 3:1-12 should be seen on a par with those found in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* - ‘the perfect argument’. (See also Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, pp. 45-51). For the original study of Gammie which Hartin draws upon for his *protreptic* designation see Gammie, ‘Paraenetic Literature: Toward the Morphology of a Secondary Genre’, 54-55. Hartin, *James*, p. 11, takes *paraenetic* literature (*protrepsis* and *paraenesis*) to belong to the overarching genre of wisdom literature.

<sup>47</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 13-14. ‘socialization which may be defined as the comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or a sector of it’ (P. L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966], p. 120; cited in Hartin, *James*, p. 13).

<sup>48</sup> Aune, *Westminster Dictionary*, p. 240.

<sup>49</sup> Aune, *The New Testament in its Literary Environment*, p. 92.

<sup>50</sup> Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, pp. 45-51, particularly, 49-51.

wisdom literature.<sup>51</sup> Noting the many wisdom elements in the letter, E. Baasland described it as a NT wisdom writing ('Neutestamentliche Weisheitsschrift').<sup>52</sup> More recently Bauckham and Hartin have noted strong affinities between the letter of James and the wisdom tradition.<sup>53</sup> Hartin sees James as belonging to the primary literary genre of Wisdom literature with a secondary subgenre being identified in James as *protrepsis* which he sees as belonging to wisdom.<sup>54</sup> Bauckham identifies James as 'wisdom paraenesis' and he sees the letter of James as a 'collection of James' wisdom'.<sup>55</sup> In his view, James made the wisdom of Jesus, a wisdom teacher, his own, to 'develop the resources of the Jewish wisdom tradition in a way that is guided and controlled by the teaching of Jesus'.<sup>56</sup>

Some scholars such as H. von Lips caution against situating James within the realm of traditional wisdom writing and theology. Noting the combination of diverse traditions within James, von Lips highlights the difficulty involved in ascertaining which one is the controlling tradition. He notes that since it is difficult to speak of a single NT sapiential expression, one must be cautious about simply labelling James as a 'wisdom document'.<sup>57</sup> Edgar points out that although wisdom is an important concept in James 'it is not the only theme, and also not the all-controlling question of the epistle'.<sup>58</sup> Penner agrees with Hartin on the principal that James is a 'hybrid text'

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Mayor, *James*, pp. cxiii, cxvi-cxxi. See also U. Luck, 'Weisheit und Leiden: Zum Problem Paulus und Jakobus', *TLZ* 92 (1967), p. 256.

<sup>52</sup> See E. Baasland, 'Der Jakobusbrief als Neutestamentliche Weisheitsschrift', *ST* 36 (1982), 123; in n. 2320 (p. 1236), he points out many earlier writers who highlighted the wisdom elements in the letter, going back to C. F. G. Henrici, *Der literarische Charakter der neutestamentlichen Schriften* (Leipzig: Durr, 1908), p. 75. See also Martin, *James*, pp. lxxxvii-xciii.

<sup>53</sup> See Bauckham, *James*, pp. 35-57; Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, pp. 42-45; Hartin, *James*, pp. 75-80. This note is meant to illustrate their references to the wisdom tradition.

<sup>54</sup> Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, pp. 46, 48-49.

<sup>55</sup> Bauckham, *James*, p. 29.

<sup>56</sup> Bauckham, *James*, p. 30. For Bauckham recognising that James is wisdom *paraenesis* 'does not require us to play down the eschatological element in James, nor, conversely, should we insist that eschatology is the dominant feature of James to which wisdom elements are subordinated' (p. 35).

<sup>57</sup> von Lips, 'Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament', p. 437.

<sup>58</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, p. 24; cf. Baasland, 'Der Jakobusbrief als neutestamentliche Weisheitsschrift', 119-139 (p. 136 n. 21). Also questioning the label given to James of a wisdom document is M. Jackson-McCabe, 'A Letter to the Twelve Tribes in the Diaspora: Wisdom and 'Apocalyptic' Eschatology in the Letter of James', in *Society of Biblical Literature 1996 Seminar Papers*, Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 35 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), 504-517; D. J. Versput, 'Wisdom, 4Q185, and the Epistle of James', *JBL* 117 (1998), 691-707; D. Lockett, 'The Spectrum of Wisdom and Eschatology in the Epistle of James and 4Q Instruction', *Tyndale Bulletin* 56.1 (2005), 133.

but maintains that many of the features and concepts traditionally understood as sapiential cannot, in fact, be ascribed to a particular intellectual tradition.<sup>59</sup>

### 1.6 - Epistle/Literary Letter

Since the letter of James begins with an epistolary prescript, it is not surprising to find that its earliest description is as a letter (ἐπιστολή).<sup>60</sup> A. Jülicher, however, considered that it had preserved only the appearance of a letter form.<sup>61</sup> A. Deissmann argued that it was not a 'real' letter, unlike the letters of Paul which he saw as real letters written by Paul for the persons to whom they were addressed.<sup>62</sup> A letter addressed to 'the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad' would be 'simply undeliverable'; he describes the letter as a 'little work of literature, a pamphlet addressed to the whole of Christendom, a veritable epistle'.<sup>63</sup>

Ropes saw the address in 1:1 as implying that what follows is 'a literary tract intended for any Christian into whose hands it may fall, not a proper letter sent to a definite individual or even to a definite group of persons'.<sup>64</sup> He traced the history of the literary epistle back to Isocrates, Aristotle and Epicurus, and noted that many such letters were collected and widely circulated, becoming works of literature.<sup>65</sup> W. G. Doty found the 'Catholic' letters at 'the furthest remove from the casual private letters

---

<sup>59</sup> Penner, 'James in Current Research', 279. He notes that 'forms such as maxims or proverbs are often found in instructional texts simply because those types of writings reveal a pattern of summarizing principles for the governance of life. But these forms cannot be said to be sapiential in nature, since they cannot be tied to only one conceptual, or life context' (p. 279). Cf. Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 121.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Eus., *H.E.* III.25 ('The first of the Epistles styled Catholic is said to be by James the brother of the Lord'); also styled as such by Jerome and Augustine, and by its ancient titles.

<sup>61</sup> Jülicher, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, p. 140 ('von der Briefform ist nun ein matter Schein bewahrt').

<sup>62</sup> A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (London: Harper and Brothers, 1908), pp. 225, 235.

<sup>63</sup> Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 235. 'The authors did not despatch a single copy of their 'letter', as St. Paul did of 'Philippians', for example: they published a number of copies of a pamphlet'. Johnson, *James*, p. 22, sees Deissmann's distinction as 'both literary and sociological', adding that what he found in the papyri were 'real letters' which were spontaneous and informal missives occasioned by specific situations in life and responding to those situations. Literary letters, in contrast, were products of the educated and cultured classes that were in the form of a letter but were in fact literary or moral exercises such as the *epistulae morales* of Seneca.

<sup>64</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 6. 'A letter is written to be *sent* to the person or persons addressed. A tract is, in more or less formal fashion, *published*. The same piece of writing might, indeed, be in itself fit for either use; in that case the author's purpose could be learned only from the form of the epistolary address. But in the present instance neither contents nor address indicates that the letter was ever intended to be sent to any specific church or churches'

<sup>65</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 7. Ropes mentions the literary epistle of Aristeas and the epistle of Baruch to the nine and a half tribes both of which were pseudonymous (p. 9).

of Hellenism', with James having only 'the opening of the letter form', and being used, in this case, 'to introduce moral maxims and exhortations'.<sup>66</sup>

Francis classified James as a 'secondary letter', not a real letter, in contrast to the letter of Paul, because it lacked 'situational immediacy'.<sup>67</sup> Davids describes it as a 'literary epistle', 'a tract intended for publication, not an actual letter', differing from an actual letter in its lack of personal details, and reflecting in its *Sitz im Leben* its place of publication rather than that of its recipients.<sup>68</sup> Moo sees James as a literary letter since it 'lacks the personal reminiscences, references to specific problems and situations, and closing remarks that characterise 'real' letters'.<sup>69</sup> D. E. Aune argues that the letter 'has a literary character that distances it from an instrument of personal communication'.<sup>70</sup>

### 1.7 - A Real Letter

While James lacks many of the formal elements of Paul's letter (thanksgiving, personal details, formal farewell, specific situation) and any presence of the author, Johnson argues that some aspects of it do support classifying it as some form of letter - 'the exhortatory rhetoric, with its use of direct address and its vivid dialogical style' and the greeting which is 'compatible with considering James a circular letter intended for a broader readership than that of a local community'.<sup>71</sup> Thurén also classified James as an actual letter, noting that the greeting in 1:1 'better than in any other New Testament letter conforms to ancient epistolary customs'.<sup>72</sup>

Penner disagrees with the distinction made between literary and real letters and argues against Francis's assertion that a secondary letter lacks situational immediacy. Penner states that the letters used by Francis such as those in Josephus and in 1 Maccabees do have immediate contexts and argues that they are literary

---

<sup>66</sup> Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity*, p. 70; letter form, for James, he writes, is 'not an important structural characteristic' (p. 70).

<sup>67</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 111-112; cf. Laws, *James*, p. 6; Baasland, 'Literarische Form, Thematik', 3649-3655; Moo, *James*, pp. 6-7; Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor*, pp. 17-18; see also Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, p. 339.

<sup>68</sup> Davids, *James*, pp. 24-25. See comment of Ropes, *James*, p. 6, on the author's treatment of his themes as governed by conditions of life with which he was familiar.

<sup>69</sup> Moo, *James*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>70</sup> Aune, *Westminster Dictionary*, p. 239; the 'very general character of the adscription, 'to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion'' suggests this to Aune (p. 239).

<sup>71</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 24. He argues that the letter was a diverse and varied genre and capable of a variety of manifestations. Any decision as to its genre must take account of this wide range of specific letter forms and functions (p. 23). Brosend, *James and Jude*, p. 8, argues that there are no convincing arguments for why James can not be seen as a real letter.

<sup>72</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 269.

letters because they are imbedded literary creations, not because they lack situational immediacy.<sup>73</sup> Penner notes that James, in light of Jas. 2, does appear to address ‘obvious community problems’.<sup>74</sup>

For Bauckham James does have the form and content to be considered an actual letter, having a classic opening, and although it does not have a standard epistolary conclusion, this, he argues, ‘was not essential’. The ‘letter-opening is quite sufficient to make James formally a letter’.<sup>75</sup> Apart from a prescript, an ancient letter ‘did not need to have any other generic features specific to the letter in order to make it a letter’.<sup>76</sup>

In his study of the epistolary nature of James, McCartney looks at the older distinction between real and literary letters and asks ‘How ‘specific’ does an audience have to be for a letter to qualify as ‘real’?’<sup>77</sup> McCartney argues that the ‘Greek ‘letter’ was a very elastic genre and was used for a variety of purposes in a variety of forms’, with the ‘specificity’ of the audience varying ‘from a single intended recipient to only the vaguest of general audiences’.<sup>78</sup> Citing the treatment of the poor in Jas. 2 and the conflicts in Jas. 4, he argues that ‘James does appear to have at least some specificity of audience and is responding at least to some potential if not actual situations’.<sup>79</sup> S. McKnight argues in favour of considering James to be a real letter - a possible ‘letter of exhortation/advice’; he does not see it as ‘an abstract ‘epistle’ designed for posterity or intellectual reputation’, but rather as ‘a gritty in-your-face pastoral letter zippered up at times with some heated rhetoric’.<sup>80</sup>

### 1.8 - Circular/Encyclical Letter

The letter of James has been described as a circular letter or ‘Rundbrief’ by a number of authors. J. P. Lange, for example, in 1867, described the letter of James as

---

<sup>73</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 124 n. 1.

<sup>74</sup> Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 124 n. 1. See also Watson, ‘James 2 in Light of Greco-Roman Schemes of Argumentation’, 120; McCartney, *James*, pp. 32-33, 40.

<sup>75</sup> Bauckham, *James*, p. 12.

<sup>76</sup> R. A. Bauckham, ‘James and Jesus’ in *The Brother of Jesus. James the Just and His Mission*, ed. by B. Chilton and J. Neusner (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), pp. 109-110.

<sup>77</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 40.

<sup>78</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 40.

<sup>79</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 40.

<sup>80</sup> S. McKnight, *Letter of James*, p. 61.

a 'circular letter' to the Jewish Christians in the diaspora,<sup>81</sup> while some years later T. Zahn described the warnings given by James as suited to a circular epistle addressed to various classes and conditions of men.<sup>82</sup> Mayor also described it as a circular letter and compared it to the circular letter of Acts 15:23-29.<sup>83</sup> More recently Popkes described it as a 'Rundbrief' or 'circular letter', a form that he found also in 2 Maccabees (1:1-9; 1:10-2:18) and Acts (15:23-29).<sup>84</sup>

Adamson sees James as a 'quasi encyclical' written perhaps at the installation of James as 'bishop' of Jerusalem and 'in response to Jewish Christian pilgrims visiting Jerusalem at festival time or at some other appropriate occasion'.<sup>85</sup> The letter was 'meant for regular, or at least frequent, reading in the churches; and, a point of fundamental importance, its scope concerns the Christian religion in general and not, as may be the case with Papal Encyclicals, some more limited aspects or problems of faith and conduct'.<sup>86</sup> Painter sees James as a 'quasi-encyclical' letter to Jews or Christian Jews in the diaspora, and he likens the letter of James to another quasi-encyclical, the letter sent to the gentiles from James and the elders in Acts 15:23-29.<sup>87</sup>

Bauckham sees the letter as 'an official letter or encyclical, in which James as head of the Jerusalem church addresses all of his compatriots and fellow believers in the Jewish Diaspora'. He suggests that it is a real letter that could have been sent to recipients living in the diaspora, and he notes that the description 'paraenetic encyclical' might be an 'appropriate term with which to describe the letter'.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> J. P. Lange and J. J. Van Oosterzee, 'Epistle General, of James', in, *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal and Homiletical with Special reference to Ministers and Students*, ed. by J. P. Lange, Vol. 9 (New York: Scribner & Co., 1867), 26.

<sup>82</sup> Zahn, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, p. 60. Cited in Mayor, *James*, p. cxlii.

<sup>83</sup> Mayor, *James*, p. clxxix. Johnson, *James*, p. 24, considers James a 'circular letter intended for a broader readership than that of a local community'.

<sup>84</sup> W. Popkes, *Adressaten, Situation und Form des Jakobusbriefes*, *Stuttgarter Bibelstudien* 125/126 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1986), pp. 183-184, citing also Jer. 29:4-23 and *Syr.Bar.* 78.1-86.2. Schmidt, 'Diaspora', II, 100, cites 1 Macc. 15:16-24 which he describes as a circular letter of the Roman Senate on behalf of the Jews.

<sup>85</sup> Adamson, *Man and His Message*, p. 117.

<sup>86</sup> Adamson, *Man and His Message*, p. 117.

<sup>87</sup> Painter, *Just James*, p. 245.

<sup>88</sup> Bauckham, *James*, pp. 13, 25. Others who see James as an encyclical include S. McKnight, *The Letter of James*, p. 13.



## 1.9 - A Diaspora Letter

The letter of James has also been described as a 'diaspora letter'.<sup>89</sup> Such letters were usually described as 'circular letters' or 'Rundbriefe',<sup>90</sup> but the term diaspora letter has been applied to them in recent years. The tradition of such letters stems from the letter of Jeremiah to the exiles in Babylon of Jer. 29 and continues on into the first century AD, as the letter of Baruch to the nine and a half tribes indicates.

R. Michaels, in his commentary on 1 Peter (which he described as 'an apocalyptic diaspora letter to Israel') applies the description 'diaspora letter' to the letter of James, citing parallels from Jer. 29, 2 Bar. 78-79, and the letters from 1 and 2 Maccabees. He mentions the letter of James 'to the brothers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia who are Gentiles' in Acts 15:23-29 as another possible parallel.<sup>91</sup>

I. Taatz, in her study of the 'diaspora letter', highlights one of the functions of these letters, namely, to strengthen the bonds of the exiles with their homeland.<sup>92</sup> M. Tsuji classifies the letter of James as a diaspora letter ('Diasporabrief');<sup>93</sup> likewise, W. Popkes in his commentary on the letter,<sup>94</sup> P. H. Davids<sup>95</sup> and J. S. Kloppenburg;<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> See M. F. Whitters, *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study in Form and Message*, Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 42 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), p. 86 n. 64.

<sup>90</sup> See L. Goppelt, *Der Erste Petrusbrief* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978), p. 45.

<sup>91</sup> J. R. Michaels, *1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 49 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1988), p. xlvi, using the usual examples: Jer. 29:4-23 (Jeremiah to the exiles in Babylon) and 2 Bar. (*Syr.Bar.*) 78-87 (Letter of Baruch to the nine and a half tribes), Par. Jer. 6:19-25 (Baruch to Jeremiah in Babylon; the reply from Jeremiah in Par. Bar. 7:24-34), the festival letters of 2 Macc. 1:1-9 and 1:10-2:18, and also the third of three letters of Gamaliel I, found in the Babylonian Talmud (*bSanh.* 11b), and addressed to the brethren in Babylon and Medina. See the use of the term 'Diasporabrief' in F. Schneider and W. Stenger, *Studium zum neutestamentlichen Briefformular*, New Testament Tools and Studies 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1984), p. 34, in relation to the letter of *bSanh* 11b; see also I. Taatz, *Frühjüdische Briefe: die Paulinischen Briefen im Rahmen der offiziellen religiösen Briefe des Frühjudentums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), p. 75, in relation to the letter of Baruch to the nine and a half tribes. J. Prasad, *Foundations of the Christian Way of Life According to 1 Peter 1, 13-25: An Exegetico-Theological Study* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), p. 59, views the designation 'apocalyptic diaspora letter', used by commentators such as Michaels, as 'unconvincing', stating that 'such a description may be useful to remind us of some of the contents of 1 Peter', but adds that it 'does not describe a distinct genre'. See also the earlier study of P. H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), p. 14.

<sup>92</sup> Taatz, *Frühjüdische Briefe*, p. 104 ('Die in dieser Arbeit gesammelten frühjüdischen Briefe haben damit die grundlegende Funktion, die Einheit des jüdischen Volkes in der Gemeinschaft von Mutterland und Diaspora zu stärken'). In addition to the letters listed above Taatz also refers to rabbinic texts and to Elephantine and Bar Kochba letters (pp. 82-101).

<sup>93</sup> Tsuji, *Glaube zwischen Vollkommenheit und Verweltlichung*, p. 25 ('die Einheit des jüdischen Volkes (hierbei die christlichen Mitgläubigen in der Gemeinschaft von Mutterland und Diaspora zu stärken').

<sup>94</sup> W. Popkes, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001), 61. See also W. Popkes, 'The Mission of James in His Time' in *The Brother of Jesus. James the Just and His Mission*, ed. by B. Chilton and J. Neusner (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), p. 89.

K. H. Niebuhr classified it as 'an apostolic diaspora letter' ('apostolischer Diasporabrief').<sup>97</sup>

For D. J. Verseput the letter of James may be described as a 'covenantal letter to the Diaspora', a subgenre of Jewish epistolary literature which grew out of the prevailing notion that Israel's dispersion would one day be overcome by divine deliverance. In these letters, an authoritative centre, typically Jerusalem, consoled the suffering Jewish communities living in the Diaspora and admonished them regarding their covenantal responsibilities.<sup>98</sup> Hartin argues that by addressing the letter to the twelve tribes in the diaspora, the author of James places his writing 'within the framework of a Diaspora letter'.<sup>99</sup> He categorises the letter of James as 'protreptic discourse in the form of a letter to Diaspora communities of followers of Jesus who had originated from the world of Israel'.<sup>100</sup>

M. F. Whitters included the letter of James in the category of the diaspora letter exemplified by Bar. 6, 2 Macc. 1:1-9, 1:10-2:18 and Par. Jer. 6.17-23, letters which were addressed to believers in large geographic areas, and which dealt with 'the unique identity of the people of God in an alien milieu'. Normally written in Greek, by some established authority, with Palestine as the most likely place of origin and Jews and Jewish Christians the most likely addressees, the diaspora letter, Whitters argues, stemmed from the need to reinforce Jewish identity in a hostile, foreign environment.<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> P. H. Davids, 'Palestinian Traditions in the Letter of James', in *James the Just and Christian Origins*, ed. by B. Chilton and C. A. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 1999), p. 55: 'a Diaspora letter preserving the sayings of James 'for the church at large shortly before his martyrdom'. He argues that the 'letter-to-the-Diaspora form' was modelled on actual letters of the period, 'particularly those from leading Jewish authorities in Palestine to Diaspora communities' and notes that all these diaspora letters 'demonstrate a thematic similarity to James' (p. 41). See also McCartney, *James*, p. 39.

<sup>96</sup> J. S. Kloppenborg, 'Diaspora Discourse: The Construction of Ethos in James', *NTS* 53 (2007), 268, drawing upon the studies of Tsuji and Niebuhr and citing Jer. 29, 2 Bar. 78-87, 4 Bar. 6:19-25; 2 Macc. 1:1-9, 10-2:18; *bSanh.* 11b (*t. Sanh.* 2:6; *y. Sanh.* 1:2.), and the Elephantine letters 21 and 30. The function of these diaspora letters was to console the addressees in the face of difficult circumstances and to exhort faithfulness.

<sup>97</sup> On the basis of its epistolary prescript; cf. K. W. Niebuhr, 'Der Jakobusbrief im Licht fruhjudischer Diasporabriefe', *NTS* 44 (1998), 424.

<sup>98</sup> D. J. Verseput, 'Genre and Story: The Community Setting of the Epistle of James', *CBQ* 62 (2000), 100-101, 110. The texts he listed are the usual texts, Jer. 29:1-3, the Epistle of Jeremiah, 2 Macc. 1:1-9, 10-2:18; Apocalypse of Baruch 78-86.

<sup>99</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 15

<sup>100</sup> Hartin, *James*, p. 15. In his view this category of letters 'would certainly account for the lack of personal details and references to concrete situations of the hearers/readers'.

<sup>101</sup> Whitters, *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study in Form and Message*, Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 42 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), pp. 86-88. In his view James has the 'ring of a translation document', and he postulates a Hebrew or Aramaic original for both Baruch and James (p.90), but see Mayor, *James*, p. 280.

In her study of 1 Peter, K. H. Jobes rejects the diaspora letter as a distinct, literary genre. Other than being addressed to a scattered people over whom the author assumed spiritual authority, the ‘diaspora letter’, she writes, has no distinct markers of a common genre, and the content of letters sent to the diaspora could be quite varied’.<sup>102</sup> R. Hoppe also contests the classification of James as a diaspora letter, pointing out that the letter is addressed to ‘a concrete group of readers and hearers, confronted with internal problems (poverty and wealth, faith and practice, internal dissension)’.<sup>103</sup> P. A. Holloway points out that in contrast to the letter of James the letters usually cited as diaspora letters (Jer. 29:1-23; Letter of Jeremiah; 2 Macc. 1:1-9, 10-2:18; Elephantine Papyri 30-32 etc.) were typically addressed to a ‘specific community regarding a specific problem’.<sup>104</sup>

## 2. The Literary Form of James

### 2.1 - Epistolary Prescript

As has been noted in chap. III above, the letter of James opens with a typical Hellenistic prescript - Ἰάκωβος θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ χαίρειν. It follows the basic structure A- to B- χαίρειν, adding a description of the sender and generally identifying the addressees. As noted above, this simple greeting is quite rare in the NT (Acts 15:23-29 and 23:26-30), but it does occur quite frequently in many letters found in the OT.<sup>105</sup> The author or sender identified himself as Ἰάκωβος or ‘James’, and describes himself further as ‘a servant/slave of God and the Lord Jesus Christ’. He does not give additional details in relation to his identity, as does Jude who describes himself as the brother of James (Ἰούδας Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος, ἀδελφὸς δὲ Ἰακώβου), or Paul who sets forth his authority at the outset, describing himself in Rom 1:1, for example, not just as a servant of Jesus Christ but also as called to be an apostle, set apart or chosen for the gospel of God (Rom 1:1: Παῦλος δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κλητὸς

<sup>102</sup> K. H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), p. 55.

<sup>103</sup> R. Hoppe, ‘James, Epistle of’, in *Religion Past & Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, ed. by H. D. Betz, D. S. Browning and B. Janowski, Vol. 6 (Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishing, 2009), p. 647. Given ‘the author’s epistolary attempts to deal with problems within the community, he argues that the classification of James as a ‘Diaspora letter’ (Tsuji, Niebuhr) ‘is questionable’.

<sup>104</sup> P. A. Holloway, ‘The Letter of James’, in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament*, ed. by D. Aune (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010), p. 576.

<sup>105</sup> See Chap. 3.

ἀπόστολος ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ). Writing to communities he himself had founded, Paul reminds them of his status as an apostle (cf. 1 Cor 1:1: Παῦλος κλητὸς ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ; Gal 1:1: Παῦλος ἀπόστολος οὐκ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν). Peter also describes himself as an apostle in 1 Pet. 1:1 (Πέτρος ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). The impression given by the author of the letter of James is that he does not feel the need to establish his authority in the prescript. But describing himself as a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ does place him in a long line of servants of God stretching back to the OT.<sup>106</sup> The identity of our 'James' is not stated, but he is conscious of his authority and his position in that he feels free to send a letter couched in strong tones to 'the twelve tribes in the diaspora'.

As we have noted in chap. IV, the term διασπορά literally means 'scattering' or 'dispersion' and is used in the LXX of the Jews living outside Israel - the scattered population,<sup>107</sup> or of places outside Israel where Jews were scattered.

According to Josephus, Jews were present throughout the civilized world.<sup>108</sup> The list of Jews from various nations present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost according to Acts 2:9-11 ('Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians')<sup>109</sup> gives an idea of how far afield the Jews were scattered.<sup>110</sup> Deportation in the wake of wars (e.g. Assyrian, Babylonian), emigration (for whatever reason) and oppressive regimes gave rise to diaspora Judaism which increased rapidly in time, partly due to proselytism, and reached its peak, it seems, in the first century AD.<sup>111</sup> By then most lived under the control of Rome but Jews of

<sup>106</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 41, sees the 'servanthood of James' like the 'servanthood of Isaiah's Jacob, who is there as an agent of salvation and transmitter of covenantal promises'.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Schmidt, 'diaspora', II, 98-104.

<sup>108</sup> See Jos., *Ant.* XIV, 115, mentioned above; also *Ant.* XI, 133; cf. XV, 14; cf. Jos., *War* II, 398; Philo, in *Legatio ad Gaium* §§281-283.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible, Vol. 31 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1998), p. 240.

<sup>110</sup> See Schmidt, 'diaspora', II, 100; Schmidt, referring to the map in A. Deissmann, *Paulus: eine Kultur- und religionsgeschichtliche Skizze* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1925), mentions that in 'early Christian days there are records of the diaspora in 150 places outside Palestine'.

<sup>111</sup> M. Stern, 'The Jewish Diaspora' in *The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions*, ed. by S. Safrai and M. Stern, Vol. 1 (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1974), p. 117.

Babylon and Parthia were not subject to Rome. In the first century AD Jews were to be found among peoples stretching from Persia to Spain. Unlike the first letter of Peter which is addressed to the exiles of the diaspora in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia - all places in Asia Minor where Jews flourished - no specific places in the diaspora are mentioned in Jas. 1:1.<sup>112</sup>

What exactly the 'twelve tribes' stands for is much debated. As has been pointed out in chap. IV, the phrase, the 'twelve tribes' (δώδεκα φυλαίς), refers to the twelve tribes that traditionally made up 'all Israel' (cf. Exod. 24:4, 28:21; 39:14; etc.).<sup>113</sup> They are mentioned in the gospels (Matt. 19:28; Lk. 22:30), and in Acts 26:6-7 Paul claims to be on trial 'for hope in the promise', a promise made by God to 'our fathers', and a promise 'to which our twelve tribes hope to attain'. Paul speaks here as a Jew to Jewish hearers about the hope of Judaism, a hope which all Israel hoped to attain. In a letter that is written to Christians the sense of the phrase 'the twelve tribes' has altered. Some suggest that it refers to the 'true Israel', as in 1 Peter, but this is not necessarily the case. The phrase 'twelve tribes' may suggest that it refers here to Jewish Christians - those Jews who professed Jesus as the Messiah - messianic Jews, and when taken in this sense, the term διασπορᾶ could have the sense that it has in the LXX.<sup>114</sup> Others prefer to see it more along the lines of 1 Peter, seeing the home of Christians as not the earthly Jerusalem but the Jerusalem which is in heaven. If the phrase does refer to Jewish Christians, one may ask how far Jewish Christianity spread by the 60s, for example, or by the time of the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem? Acts suggests that followers of Jesus were to be found in many places outside Israel before the Jewish war - in Phoenecia, Cyprus, Syria, Antioch on the Orontes (Acts 11:19), Cyrene in North Africa (cf. Acts 11:20), Asia Minor (Acts 13:49; 15:41; 16:6), Philippi (Acts 16:13-15), Thessalonica (Acts 17:11) and Rome (cf. Acts 28:23, 24).<sup>115</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, pp. 42-43, takes it to refer to 'the sociopolitical experiences of the faith community rather than to its geographical setting. In this sense, 'Diaspora' addresses readers in a social world characterised by feelings of alienation and powerlessness (cf. 1 Pet. 1:1-2)'.

<sup>113</sup> The address to the twelve tribes in James 1:1 reminds one of the address in 2 Baruch 78 to the nine and a half tribes that were across the river Euphrates.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Schmidt, 'diaspora', 102, who points out that if it is addressed to Gentile Christians, the word will have 'a figurative Christian sense'.

<sup>115</sup> Particularly after the martyrdom of Stephen. Cf. F. Ó Fearghail, 'The Jews in the Hellenistic cities of Acts', in *Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman Cities*, ed. by J. R. Bartlett (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), pp. 39-54. Hort, *James*, p. 18, had envisioned a situation of how the letter of James was spread - 'The distribution might have been by means of returning visitors to feasts'; see also Adamson, *Man and His Message*, p. 117.

## 2.2 - Closing Section of James

The closing section of James, in contrast to the opening section, is much more difficult to define in terms of epistolary form. Hellenistic letters usually concluded with a health wish and a farewell greeting (e.g. ἔρρωσθε).<sup>116</sup> The simple farewell ἔρρωσθε is to be found in 2 Macc. 11:21, 11:33, and later in 3 Macc. 7:9. In the NT it is found in Acts 15:26-29 which also has an initial epistolary greeting χαίρειν. There are examples of Hellenistic letters that open with epistolary prescripts but close without a greeting. Deissmann cites an example from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC of a letter of Mnesiergus to his housemates with an initial greeting but no final farewell.<sup>117</sup> A number of letters in 1 Maccabees (10:18-20, 25b-45; 11:32-37; 12:6-18, 22-23; 13:26-28; 15:2-9), 2 Maccabees (1:1-9; 1:10-2:18; 11:16, 11:27) and 3 Maccabees (7:1) open with epistolary prescripts but conclude without a greeting. It is also true of one of the letters in Acts - Acts 23:26-29. There are quite a few examples in the writings of Josephus where the letter begins in a Hellenistic fashion with an epistolary greeting but concludes without a farewell (cf. *Ant.* XI, 12-17, 273-283; XII, 45-50, 138-144, 225-227; XIII, 45; 48-57, 70-71, 127-128; etc).<sup>118</sup> There is no initial greeting in 1 Esdras 2:17-24, nor a farewell greeting; the same is true of 1 Esdras 2:25-29 and Jer. 29:4-23.<sup>119</sup> Ancient letters then were quite flexible in their closing forms.

In contrast to the letter of James the closing sections of the Pauline letters are quite elaborate, stretching over several verses and incorporating features such as a peace wish (cf. 1 Cor. 16:19-20a; 2 Cor. 13:13; Phil. 4:21-22), a request for prayer (cf. 1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1; Col. 4:3; Eph. 6:18-20) and secondary greetings (which appear in all the authentic Pauline letters apart from Galatians).<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>116</sup> See the letters cited by Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 164: letter from Demphon to Ptolemaeus (245 BC), with an initial greeting and a farewell (pp. 164-165); letter from Mystarion to Papisus (50 AD), with a initial greeting and farewell (pp. 170-171); See also Klauck, *Ancient Letters*, pp. 9-10, 15, who notes several other closing greetings found in the Greek letter, as, for example, in the case of the two letters of Apion (BGU II 423 20; BGU II 632 28) which sign off with 'I pray that you may be well'.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 150-151 (letter of Mnesiergus to his housmates, 4th century BC, with initial greeting but no farewell); p. 152 (letter of Zoilus, with initial greeting but no farewell).

<sup>118</sup> See Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 91-92.

<sup>119</sup> *Syr. Bar* 78-87 does however have an initial greeting ('Mercy and peace') and a farewell ('farewell').

<sup>120</sup> A blessing is often found in the conclusion of Pauline letters (cf. 1 Thess. 5:28; Rom. 6:20; 1 Cor. 16:23; Gal. 6:18). Other NT letters can be seen to have closing phrases which echo somewhat the Pauline form. The closing line of 1 Pet. 5:14 reads 'Greet each other with the kiss of love. Peace to all that are in Christ', while the second and third letters of John conclude with secondary greetings (2

Nevertheless, there are themes in the concluding verses of the letter of James that have parallels in the concluding sections of other NT letters. Prominent in the final section of the letter of James (4:13-5:20) is the writer's harsh criticism of the wealthy in 5:1-6. The words 'Does not God oppose you' or 'God opposes you' sound like a threat.<sup>121</sup> Warnings or threats are found in the closing verses of other NT letters, as in Rom. 16:17 where Paul warns the Romans against those who cause dissensions and who oppose the teaching they have received and in Gal. 6:7-8 in which he warns the Galatians that what a man sows, he will reap.

Prayer which is very much present in the conclusion of James (cf. 5:13-18) is a common theme in the close of NT letters and occurs in various forms. For Francis, prayer was 'an established element of the epistolary close in the NT epistles'; in his view 'Paul tends to recommend prayer as such, or ask for prayer 'for us,' or reaffirm that he is praying for the readers'.<sup>122</sup> Francis refers to a number of NT texts in support of his thesis - 2 Cor. 9:14, 13:7; Eph. 6:18-19; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2-3; 1 Thess. 5:17; Phlm. 22; Heb. 13:18 and 1 John 5:14-17. A survey of NT letters bears this out.<sup>123</sup> It is worth looking at two examples. In the concluding exhortations of 1 Thessalonians Paul urges the Thessalonians to pray unceasingly (5:17: ἀδιαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε) and to pray for him (5:25: Ἀδελφοί, προσεύχεσθε [καὶ] περὶ ἡμῶν). In the final verses of Hebrews (13:18-19), just before the farewell (13:30-25), the author urges the addressees to pray for him and to pray all the more urgently so that he may come to them sooner (Προσεύχεσθε περὶ ἡμῶν·[...]περισσότερας δὲ παρακαλῶ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι, ἵνα τάχιον ἀποκατασταθῶ ὑμῖν).<sup>124</sup> One may also look to the closing verses of the body of 2 Corinthians, where the writer assures the Christians of Corinth that he is praying for them. In the closing verses of the letter to the Colossians (4:10-18), the writer assures the addressees that Epaphras will always remember them in his prayers (4:12). One may also look to Eph. 6:18-20, as a further parallel, in which an exhortation to pray is found.<sup>125</sup>

---

John 1:13; 3 John 1:15). For a thorough investigation into these closing conventions in Pauline letters see J. A. D. Weima, *Neglected Endings: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), pp. 77-155.

<sup>121</sup> See discussion of phrase in Johnson, *James*, p. 305.

<sup>122</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 125.

<sup>123</sup> See Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 83-85.

<sup>124</sup> See Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 84.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 84.

From the point of view of the letter ending, themes of solidarity and fraternity, which are particularly strong in 5:13-20, are present in other letter conclusions in the NT. In Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians he urges the brethren in 5:14-15 to 'admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all' (παρακαλοῦμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, νουθετεῖτε τοὺς ἀτάκτους, παραμυθεῖσθε τοὺς ὀλιγοψύχους, ἀντέχεσθε τῶν ἀσθενῶν, μακροθυμεῖτε πρὸς πάντας. ὁρᾶτε μὴ τις κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ τινι ἀποδῶ, ἀλλὰ πάντοτε τὸ ἀγαθὸν διώκετε [καὶ] εἰς ἀλλήλους καὶ εἰς πάντας). One could also point to the concluding exhortations of 2 Corinthians 13:11 for this sense of care for one's fellow brothers: 'Finally, brethren, farewell. Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you' (Λοιπὸν, ἀδελφοί, χαίρετε, καταρτίζεσθε, παρακαλεῖσθε, τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖτε, εἰρημεύετε, καὶ ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἀγάπης καὶ εἰρήνης ἔσται μεθ' ὑμῶν). In Gal. 6:10 Paul urges the Galatians to 'do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith' (ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως.).

Another element in Jas. 5:19-20 that is significant from the point of view of the conclusion of a letter is the vocative ἀδελφοί μου. This final vocative of the letter parallels Paul's use of ἀδελφοί in 1 Cor. 16:15 to introduce his final greetings to the Corinthians (cf. 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:11). There are similar examples in the first and second letters to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:18), in the epistolary conclusion to Hebrews (13:22) and in Romans (16:17) and Galatians (6:18).<sup>126</sup>

The exhortation of 5:19-20 concerning the brother who may wander from the truth brings the letter to a close. There are possible parallels in the concluding verses of other NT letters to this exhortation to recover one who has strayed (cf. Jude 23; Gal. 6:1-2, 8-10) and to the reference to the truth (1 Pet. 5:12; 3 John 1:8-10). It is with an exhortation, then, that the letter of James is brought to a close, an exhortation that reminds one of the final exhortation in 1 John 5:21: Τεκνία, φυλάξατε ἑαυτὰ ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδώλων ('Little children, keep yourself from idols'). The letter does not conclude with an epistolary farewell but it nonetheless has the literary form of a letter

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Ó Fearghail, 'On the Conclusion of James', 86.



and closes with an effective conclusion. It is interesting to note at this point in relation to the close of letters, that Pseudo-Libanius, when he speaks of letter types, gives advice about the opening address of the letter but does not mention the closing, perhaps indicating that the closing conventions in letters could be dispensed with.<sup>127</sup>

### 3. What Type of letter is James?

Can one be more specific in describing James as a letter? Is it, for example, a diaspora letter, a letter of advice or admonition, a *paraenetic* letter or perhaps a mixed letter? Let us look at these categories to evaluate the reasoning for such designations and ascertain whether such descriptions best describe the contents of James.

#### 3.1 - A Diaspora Letter

It is difficult to see how 'diaspora letter' could be a description of literary form for James. The letter of Jer. 29 was written by the prophet to encourage those whom Yahweh had sent into exile in Babylon to accept their situation and make the most of it, to ignore the false prophets and to reassure them that Yahweh would visit them after seventy years and bring them back to Jerusalem. In the letters of 2 Maccabees the brothers in Jerusalem encourage the brethren in Egypt and communicate news to them. These letters are quite different in content and purpose from the letter of James where, for example, there is no question of a restoration as, for example, in Jer. 29. The first letter of Peter which Michaels described as an apocalyptic diaspora letter calls on those addressed to remember their Christian faith and identity (cf. 1 Pet. 4:3) but it is quite different from the other 'diaspora letters'. While various parallels have been pointed out between James and diaspora letters, as for example by Whitters<sup>128</sup> and more recently by Allison,<sup>129</sup> these are hardly

---

<sup>127</sup> According to Pseudo-Libanius, the opening address of a letter should begin simply with ὁ δέῃνα τῷ δέῃνα χεῖρειν ("So-and-so to So-and-so greeting"); see text and translation in Malherbe, *Theorists*, 74-5; see also Sean A. Adams, 'Paul's Letter Opening and Greek Epistolography: A Matter of Relationship', in Stanley Porter, Sean A. Adams, *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 35; on letter closings in Paul see Jeffrey A. D. Weima, 'Sincerely Paul: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings', in Porter, Adams, *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*, idem, *Neglected Endings: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994).

<sup>128</sup> Whitters, *The Epistle of Second Baruch*, pp. 88-92, lists parallels between James and 2 Baruch: the author is highly respected or is based in Jerusalem, addressed to a broad audience, elevated speech, *paraenesis*, the apocalyptic urgency of doing one's religious duty, Jewish themes and *topoi*, the issue of canonicity.

<sup>129</sup> Allison, Jr., *James*, p. 74: Allison lists the address itself, authorship by a recognised authority, composition in Greek, *didactic* or *paraenetic* elements, some prophetic features, consolation or

conclusive. It is difficult to sustain the position that the 'diaspora letter' is a distinct literary genre. The letters listed above do not have a great deal in common with one another, except the fact that they were addressed to people who live in the diaspora, and in reality they show little similarity with James. Moreover, as G. Krodel remarked, 'a 'Diaspora letter' is not a literary genre', a 'letter's type', he writes, 'is dependent on its content, not its destination'.<sup>130</sup>

### 3.2 - Letter of Exhortation?

Clearly scholars of James are all noticing something regarding the text of James - that James is exhortative. Exhortation is present throughout the letter, interspersed with words of encouragement, admonition, advice, argumentation, diatribal elements, harsh words of warning and words of dissuasion. While exhortation plays a major role in most of the NT letters, it is certainly to the fore in James.<sup>131</sup> Given the amount of exhortation in the letter of James it is not surprising, as we have seen above, that *paraenesis* is one of the more popular descriptions given to the letter of James, particularly from the time of Dibelius onwards.<sup>132</sup> While the use of the term *paraenesis* as a description of literary form or genre has been strongly criticised, the term itself is still relevant in the discussion of the particular type of letter that James may represent, particularly since the letter contains elements that are associated with *paraenesis* such as words of exhortation, encouragement, admonishment and advice. Bauckham, for example, described James as a 'paraenetic encyclical',<sup>133</sup> while Watson takes James to be a 'paraenetic letter with the rhetorical purpose to persuade and dissuade its audience to adopt a course of action and emulate the behaviour of others held up as example'.<sup>134</sup>

---

encouragement in difficult circumstances, appeal to the law and to God's generous nature, hope or promise of divinely wrought salvation, and the judgement of the unrighteous.

<sup>130</sup> G. Krodel, *The General Letters: Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, Jude, 1-2-3 John* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), p. 45. See also Prasad, *Foundations of the Christian Way of Life According to 1 Peter 1, 13-25*, p. 60, who is also critical of the diaspora letter genre, noting that some of the features which scholars use to define a 'diaspora letter' can equally be found in other non-diaspora letters such as Paul.

<sup>131</sup> S. K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, Library of Early Christianity (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1986), p. 96, points out that exhortation plays a role in all the letters of Paul and the Pauline school except for Philemon, and also in Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 1 and 2 John.

<sup>132</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 96.

<sup>133</sup> Bauckham, *James*, p. 13. He cites instances of *paraenetic* examples in Sirach (16:5-11), 1 Maccabees (2:51-61) and in 4 Maccabees (2:17-19; 16:20-22; 18:11ff).

<sup>134</sup> Watson, 'An Assessment of the Rhetoric and Rhetorical Analysis of the Letter of James', 112.

Two handbooks are known which list various types of exhortative letters. The older of the two, *Epistolary Types*, is attributed to Ps. Demetrius, and is dated in a time frame ranging from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. It lists twenty-one types of exhortative letters: commendatory, blaming, reproachful, consoling, censorious, admonishing, threatening, vituperative, praising, advisory, supplicatory, inquiring, responding, allegorical, accounting, accusing, apologetic, congratulatory, ironic and thankful.<sup>135</sup> It does not have the term *paraenetic*, but this term is found among the forty-one types of exhortative letters attributed to Ps. Libanius *Epistolary Styles*, a writer who is dated from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.<sup>136</sup> It is not known to what extent writers followed such handbooks but they do provide an insight into how people thought in relation to the literary form and genre of letters, particularly that of Ps. Demetrius. Let us look at three of the types of letters mentioned in the two handbooks above - the letter of advice, the letter of admonition and the *paraenetic* letter.

### 3.2.1 - Letter of Advice

One type of letter that is referred to by Ps. Demetrius is the letter of advice, described by him as the *sumbouleutikós* or advisory type of letter (*Epistolary Types* §11).<sup>137</sup> Stowers, however, maintains that it is very often 'difficult to distinguish' letters of advice from letters of exhortation, since the advisory type of letter involves exhorting someone to something or dissuading someone from something by offering one's own judgement.<sup>138</sup> Advice in the stricter deliberative sense, according to Stowers, is 'specific and occasional'; giving reasons or the assumption of reasonableness is essential to the letter of advice.<sup>139</sup> One of the fundamental features of the letter of advice, he argues, is that the writer 'tries to persuade or dissuade the recipient with regard to some particular course of action in the future'.<sup>140</sup> Stowers finds examples of the letter of advice in 1 Cor. 1-4, where Paul mixes exhortation and

<sup>135</sup> See Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, p. 31.

<sup>136</sup> These types are the *paraenetic*, blaming, requesting, commending, ironic, thankful, friendly, praying, threatening, denying, commanding, repenting, reproaching, sympathetic, conciliatory, congratulatory, contemptuous, counter-accusing, replying, provoking, consoling, insulting, reporting, angry, diplomatic, praising, didactic, reproving, maligning, censorious, inquiring, encouraging, consulting, declaratory, mocking, submissive, enigmatic, suggestive, grieving, erotic and mixed; see Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, pp. 67-73.

<sup>137</sup> Cited in Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 107.

<sup>138</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 107.

<sup>139</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>140</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 108.

specific advice; he also finds it in Gal. 1:13-2:12 where exhortation and advice are 'skilfully mixed', with Paul seeking 'to dissuade the Galatians from a future action (advice)', and exhorting them 'to continue in the life they have already begun (*paraenesis*)'.<sup>141</sup> According to Penner, James clearly belongs to the category of letters of 'exhortation and advice'.<sup>142</sup> Advice is certainly evident in the letter of James but it is only one aspect of the letter.

### 3.2.2 - Letter of Admonition

The letter of admonition is described by Ps. Demetrius in *Epistolary Types* §7 as 'the instilling of sense in the person who is being admonished, and teaching him what should and should not be done'.<sup>143</sup> Admonition, which Demetrius associated with teaching, is, according to Stowers, the 'most gentle type of blame'.<sup>144</sup> In the letter of admonition, Stowers maintains, the writer seeks 'to expose and constructively criticise certain aspects of the recipient's behaviour so that the latter can understand and amend the behaviour'.<sup>145</sup> There are examples in the NT of members of the Christian community being urged to practice admonition. In Col. 3:16 the author urges the addresses to let the word of Christ dwell in them richly, teaching and admonishing (νουθετοῦντες) one another in all wisdom, and again in 1 Thess. 5:12-14 (νουθετέω), Paul urges the Thessalonians to respect those who are over them and who admonish them (5:12) while at the same time urging them to admonish idlers (5:14). Col 1:28 describes the Pauline mission to the Gentiles as 'teaching and admonition that leads to maturity in Christ'.<sup>146</sup> 1 Corinthians, according to Stowers, has examples of admonition mixed with *paraenesis* and advice (1:10-4:20; cf. 4:14; 5-6; 11:2-24; 14:6-39). In 2 Thess. 3:6-12 the author admonishes members of the community, while in 3:15 he urges members of the community 'to admonish one

---

<sup>141</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 109.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 123; S. McKnight, *The Letter of James*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2010), p. 60 n. 5 ('[...]James would be a letter of exhortation/advice'). The phrase λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως is used in the epistolary conclusion of Hebrews (13:22) in reference to the rest of the work but the letter of James seems quite different from Hebrews which has more the character of a discourse to which the epistolary conclusion has been added.

<sup>143</sup> Text cited in Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, p. 35.

<sup>144</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, pp. 125-126.

<sup>145</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, pp. 127-128.

<sup>146</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, pp. 128, also points out the admonitory character of Rom. 15:14-15; admonition, Stowers suggests, is 'correction for those whose moral health is fundamentally good. It is encouragement which reminds them to live up to what they are'.

another'.<sup>147</sup> Stowers points out that James employs 'diatribal address for certain admonitions' (e.g. 4:15-5:6).<sup>148</sup> There are elements of admonition in James, as, for example, in Jas. 2:1-13, where the author admonishes the brethren for discriminating against the poor in the assembly, and in 5:1-6 where his words of admonition are introduced by the woe of 5:1.<sup>149</sup>

### 3.2.3 - A *Paraenetic* Letter

According to Ps. Libanius the 'paraenetic style' is that in which we exhort someone by urging him to pursue something or to avoid something'; for him *paraenesis* is divided into two parts, 'encouragement and dissuasion'.<sup>150</sup> The basic elements in *paraenesis*, according to Stowers, are 'precepts, examples, discussions of traditional moral topics (*topoi*), encouraging reminders of what the readers already know and have accomplished, and reasons for recommended behaviour'; for him *paraenetic* letters are generally dominated by 'encouraging types of exhortation', while words of 'admonition or mild rebuke' may also be present.<sup>151</sup> The Greek noun *παραίνεσις* itself has connotations of the positive and benevolent and of giving urgent advice; it means to give positive advice, to suggest a positive action adequate to what is needed in particular circumstances.<sup>152</sup> Ps. Libanius defines *paraenesis* as 'the advice we give to someone, moving him towards what to seek or what to abstain from[...]what to adhere to and what to turn away from'.<sup>153</sup>

The fundamental elements of the *paraenetic* letter, in Stowers' view, are firstly, that the writer is 'the recipient's friend or moral superior', and secondly, that the writer 'recommends habits of behaviour and actions that conform to a certain model of character and attempts to turn the recipient away from contrasting negative models of character'.<sup>154</sup> Stowers points to 1 Thessalonians as an 'excellent example of a paraenetic letter', with 1 Corinthians as an example of 'a complex paraenetic and

<sup>147</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 128.

<sup>148</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 128.

<sup>149</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 128, states that James has features of indirect admonition in 4:13-5:6.

<sup>150</sup> Text and translation in Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, pp. 68-69 (*Epistolary Styles* §5). Ps. Libanius suggests that this *paraenetic* type differed from the advisory letter type: 'Some also call it the advisory style, but do so incorrectly, for paraenesis differs from advice' (*Epistolary Styles* §5).

<sup>151</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 96.

<sup>152</sup> See Popkes, 'Paraenesis in the New Testament', pp. 14, 17.

<sup>153</sup> Cited in Popkes, 'Paraenesis in the New Testament', p. 45.

<sup>154</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 96; cf. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*, pp. 121-127. See also D. M. Swancutt, 'Paraenesis in Light of Protrepsis', in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, ed. by J. Starr and T. Engberg-Pedersen (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), p. 113.

advising letter'.<sup>155</sup> In relation to the letter of James, he is of the view that it consists of 'a series of seemingly disjointed hortatory *topoi* without any apparent unifying model or models'.<sup>156</sup> Leaving his view of the letter of James aside, let us look more closely at the letter of James in light of the elements he sets out as typical of the *paraenetic* letter.

There is a great deal of encouraging exhortation throughout James. The letter begins with the encouraging exhortation of 1:2, continues with the promise of the crown of life in 1:12, and concludes with the encouraging exhortation of 5:19-20. Throughout the letter there is a great deal of exhortation that is intended to encourage and move the addressees (e.g. 1:19-27; 3:1-2; 4:7-8, 10; 5:8-12, 16-20). Exhortation is sometimes mixed with words of admonition (cf. 1:13-15, 21; 4:13-17; 5:1-6) and advice (1:16-17; 5:13-18). Examples are used to drive home the author's message. The examples of Abraham and Rahab are used in the discussion on faith in 2:14-26 (2:21-22, 25). In his exhortation of 3:1-12 he uses the examples of the bit in the mouth of the horses and the ship's small rudder (3:3-4), along with the examples of the spring and the fig tree (3:11-12). In the encouraging words of exhortation of 5:7-12 he uses the example of the farmer who waits patiently for the Autumn and Spring rains (5:7) and the examples of the prophets and Job (5:10-11).<sup>157</sup> In the words of advice of 5:13-18 the example of Elijah is used to remind the addressees of the power of the prayer of the righteous one.<sup>158</sup> The presence of so many wisdom elements in the letter is also noteworthy.

---

<sup>155</sup> Cf. Stowers; *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 96.

<sup>156</sup> Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 97. On *paraenesis* in the NT see W. Popkes, 'Paraenesis in the New Testament', p. 28; J. D. Quinn, 'Paraenesis and the Pastoral Epistles: Lexical Observations Bearing on the Nature of the Sub-Genre and Soundings on its Role in Socialization and Liturgies', *Semeia* 50 (1990), 192. The term *paraenesis* is not found in the NT but the verb *παραινω* is found in Acts 27:22 where Paul 'urges' the ship's crew not to worry during a storm, assuring them that there would be no loss of life on the ship they are travelling on.

<sup>157</sup> The word used for 'example' or 'model' (*ὑπόδειγμα*) in Jas. 5:10 is found in 2 Macc. 6:28, 31; 4 Macc. 17:23, Sir. 44:16, Jn. 13:15 and in 2 Pet. 2:6.

<sup>158</sup> For other examples see K. O. Sandnes, 'Revised Conventions in Early Christian Paraenesis - 'Working Good' in 1 Peter as an example' in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, ed. by J. Starr and T. Engberg-Pedersen (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), p. 374, defined 1 Peter as a *paraenetic* letter; cf. J. H. Elliott, '1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy' in *Perspectives on 1 Peter*, ed. by C. H. Talbert (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986), p. 11: 'the hortatory aim (5:12) and mood of 1 Peter, along with its inclusion of much hortatory and paraenetic material qualify it as a 'paraenetic/hortatory letter'; A. J. Malherbe applied the same description to 1 Thessalonians in *The Letters to the Thessalonians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible, Vol. 32 (New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 2000), pp. 81-86, comparing it with ancient letters, epistolary handbooks, and *paraenetic* texts (e.g., by Isocrates, Dio Chrysostom, Plutarch).

Encouraging reminders, as Stowers calls them, may also be found in letters.<sup>159</sup> The author's reference to the testing of faith leading to steadfastness may be seen as a reminder, if *γινώσκοντες* (1:3) is interpreted as referring to something the addressees already know.<sup>160</sup> The element of reminder is present in 1:12, in the reference to the crown of life promised by God, and in 3:1-2 in the exhortation or advice about becoming teachers - they know that the teacher will be judged with greater strictness. In addition to the examples mentioned above which function as reminders there are also references to scripture which may be seen in a similar vein. In 2:8-12, for example, the author reminds the addressees of the 'royal law', quoting Lev. 18:18 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'; in 2:23 he reminds them of Abraham who believed in God and 'it was reckoned to him as righteousness' (Gen. 15:6); in 4:6b he uses Prov. 3:34LXX to bolster the point that he makes in 4:6a about the ungrudging bestowal of God's grace.<sup>161</sup> Mayor listed the many possible allusions to scripture in the letter of James, including the close resemblances to the books of Sirach and Wisdom that were probably familiar to his readers.<sup>162</sup> There is also the many reminiscences of the teaching of Jesus in James to which G. Kittel commented: 'No other NT writing apart from the gospels are so dense in reminiscences of the words of the Lord'.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>159</sup> In his 'moral epistles' Seneca states that Lucilius needs 'reminding rather than exhortation' (*Ep.* 13:15; Text cited from R. M. Gummere, *Lucius Annaeus Seneca. Moral Epistles*, The Loeb Classical Library, Vol. I (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 1917-25). In another of his letters, Seneca notes the importance of remembrance through repetition stating that one should 'be continually brought to remember these facts[...]. In this way what is clear often becomes clearer' (*Ep.* 94:24; Text cited from Gummere, *Moral Epistles*, Vol. III). Reflecting upon the use of the imagery of the mirror in Jas. 1:22-25, Johnson notes that the mirror is often used in *paraenetic* literature for the notion of 'moral self-examination/reflections', and he cites Epictetus, *Discourses* II, 14, 17-23; Seneca, *Natural Questions* I, 17, 4; *On Anger* 36:1-3; Plutarch, *Advice to the Bride and Groom* 14 and 25 (Johnson, *James*, p. 208). Encouraging reminders are found in what are seen as *paraenetic* sections of the letters of Paul, as, for example, in 1 Thess. 4:2 ('each of you know how to[...]'), 5:2 ('For you yourselves know'). In 1 Thess. 4:9 Paul notes that the Thessalonians do not need to be reminded of their duty to love one another as they have previously been taught by God. Paul also cites tradition in Rom. 13:8, citing the words of Jesus (John 13:34). He cites some of the commandments in 13:9. He frequently appeals to the scriptures which he would have known very well (cf. Rom. 15:9/Ps. 18:49; 15:10/Deut. 32:43; 15:11/Ps. 117:1; 15:12/Isa. 11:10). In the letter of Jude the author lists several examples of tradition - 1:3, 5-7, 8-13, 14-16, 17-23; with the author's urging of his readers to remember framing 1:5-23.

<sup>160</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 177, comments that the appeal to shared knowledge is 'a common feature of *paraenesis*'.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. Johnson, *James*, p. 208.

<sup>162</sup> Mayor, *James*, pp. cx-cxviii.

<sup>163</sup> Cf. G. Kittel, 'Der geschichtliche Ort des Jakobusbriefes', *ZNW* 41 (1942), 71-105; M. H. Shepherd, 'The Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew', *JBL* 75 (1956), 40-51; Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, pp. 48-50; F. Hahn and P. Müller, 'Der Jakobusbrief', *Theologische Revue* 63 (1998), 54ff.

Another aspect of *paraenesis* that may be pointed out is its use of antithesis. Isocrates in his letter to Nicocles instructs him on what pursuits he should 'aspire to' and the pursuits from which he should 'abstain' (*Ad. Nicoclem* 2),<sup>164</sup> while Seneca distinguishes *paraenesis* as something which advises what one should 'do' and what one should 'avoid' (*Ep.* 95:13).<sup>165</sup> It is evident from the beginning of the letter in 1:2-11 where τέλειος and δίψυχος are contrasted. It will be suggested later that the contrast τέλειος/ δίψυχος offers a key to the unitary reading of the letter. The use of contrast is evident in the rest of the letter, as, for example, in 1:21-22, 25, 26 or 2:8, 13, 18, or in 3:2, 13-17.

To sum up, the letter of James contains words of exhortation all throughout the text (cf. 1:2-8, 13-15, 17a, 19-27; 2:1-7; 3:1-2a, 13-17; 4:1-6, 7-12; 5:7-12, 19-20), interspersed with words of encouragement, promise and advice (1:5-11, 12, 22-25, 26-27; 5:13-18), warning and admonition (cf. 1:13-15; 4:13-17; 5:1-6), citations of and allusions to the scriptures and echoes of the teaching of Jesus. It also has diatribal elements (cf. 2:14-26) and discussion or argumentation (cf. 2:8-13, 14-26; 3:2b-12). Although the words of admonition of 5:1-6 strike one as harsh, the term *paraenesis* seems broad enough to include under its umbrella.<sup>166</sup>

The letter of James, which the author possibly writes to Jewish Christians living outside Palestine, may be described as a *paraenetic* letter intended to exhort and encourage, advise and admonish.<sup>167</sup> The letter stands as an effective means of encouraging and instructing its readers in a variety of situations which are fundamentally important to living according to Christ. The literary structure outlined above with its epistolary greeting and introductory elements of 1:1, 2-11, and the three part structure of the body of the letter which concludes with the epilogue of 5:19-20 point towards the well organised nature of the letter.

<sup>164</sup> In *Ad Demonium* 5, Ps. Isocrates can be seen to 'counsel' (*parainesis*) Demonicus 'on the objects to which young men should aspire and from what actions they should abstain' (G. Norlin, *Isocrates with an English Translation in three volumes*). Seneca distinguishes advice from *paraenesis*, adding that advice is presented as - 'If you would have self-control, act thus and so!', while *paraenesis* is presented as - 'The man who acts thus and so, and refrains from certain other things, possesses self-control' (*Ep.* 95:66; Text cited from Gummere, *Moral Epistles*, Vol. III).

<sup>165</sup> Text cited from Gummere, *Moral Epistles*, Vol. III. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, pp. 96-97, mentions positive and negative exhortation, and that the exhortation is sometimes antithetical.

<sup>166</sup> J. Starr (cited in Popkes, 'Paraenesis in the New Testament', p. 33) contends that *paraenesis* was addressed to adherents of a given group at all stages of their moral or spiritual development.

<sup>167</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 24, in his analysis of the *paraenetic* nature of the letter of James, expressed the view that because James is intended for a more general and broad group of people, it would make sense that the situations in the letter are general and typical rather than specific and local.



The first part (1:12-2:26) of the body of the letter opens on a note of encouragement and promise but to achieve the crown of life, promised in 1:12, one must accept with humility the implanted word which can save souls, and be a doer of the word and not a hearer only, putting one's faith into practice in the manner of Abraham and Rahab, with no room for discrimination of the poor and a commitment to the vulnerable in society.

The second part of the letter (3:1-4:12) begins with exhortation and advice in relation to earthly unspiritual wisdom and wisdom that comes from above that leads to peace. The section concludes with words of admonition and criticism which seek to dissuade the addressees from friendship with the world and encourage them to draw near to God who will in turn draw near to them. The author exhorts them to control the tongue, to humble themselves before God, and not to speak evil of a brother or judge a brother - the opposite of the behaviour of the double-minded. He urges the addressees to control the tongue and be imbued with heavenly, not earthly wisdom, and show solidarity to their neighbour.

The final section of the letter (4:13-5:20) opens on a note of admonishment (4:13a) and continues in 5:1-6 in the same vein, with harsh and threatening words and accusations on the behaviour of the rich who mistreat the workers and labourers. The tone changes to a call for patience in 5:7-12 with words of encouraging exhortation, and examples of patience and steadfastness. This section has words of advice for the suffering and the cheerful and for sinners. It urges the addressees to show solidarity with their brethren not just in confessing their sins to one another and praying for one another but in bringing back the sinner from the error of his ways.

## **Conclusion**

Having surveyed opinion on the literary form or genre of the letter of James in chap III, chap. VI has sought to describe its literary form, settling on the epistolary form as the most obvious, based not only on the epistolary prescript in 1:1, but also from other epistolary elements noted throughout the opening and closing of the letter. The address in the prescript of James has always posed problems for scholars seeking to understand James' epistolary character, with many seeing the address, the 'twelve tribes in the diaspora', as being too vague and unrealistic for a real letter. Far less problems exist with the address in James than some scholars would suggest and as far

as we could see, the address posed no real problem in estimating the epistolary worth of James. Although the address in James is not as specific as some other letters in the NT, specifically those in the Pauline corpus, the address of James may point to an earlier time before defined churches were set up, or it could more likely point towards a more general audience, in owing to its general contents. The suggestion of visiting pilgrims to Jerusalem as a means of disseminating the letter around the outlying regions points to one possible way in which the letter was delivered. It was nowhere near as difficult as some scholars would want to believe; certainly not 'undeliverable' as Deissmann tried to state. The epistolary opening is clearly very important for determining the literary form of the letter, but its closing themes are also important for defining its literary form. The absence of a farewell greeting is not seen as a militating factor against treating James as a letter. A farewell is absent in many examples of letters. Why the author of James chose to omit one in his letter is not known. The question is not why he omitted one but rather could he omit a farewell. An analysis of other letters would seem to indicate a farewell could be an optional feature in a letter.

As well as looking at the epistolary form of James, we looked at another characteristic of James - its exhortative character. This characteristic has led many scholars to describe James as *paraenetic*. Although *paraenesis* as a genre is widely discounted these days, scholars do point towards several characteristics which usually make up what could be described as a *paraenetic* text. The characteristics of this literary term are diverse and often confusing, especially when one tries to distinguish it from the related term *protrepsis*. Nevertheless, we highlighted some key characteristics of the term as a means of showing that James could be described as a *paraenetic* text. Whether the author of James was familiar with that term is unknown. Some scholars describe what is known as a *paraenetic* letter type. This type is known from Ps. Libanius, whose list of letter types dates many centuries after the letter of James is usually dated (pre 62 AD). The *paraenetic* letter type does share some common characteristics with other letter types closer to the time the letter of James was written. Whether the author of James was equally equated with these letter types is also unknown. Examining James in the light of the work of Stowers on letters of advice, admonition and *paraenesis*, it is arguable that the letter of James may be described as a *paraenetic* letter, sent to exhort and encourage, to admonish and to advise. Given the characteristics of how material is organised and presented in the text

we propose this description - *paraenetic* letter - a tentative letter type until such a time that more research is conducted into the area of epistolary form and type.

## Chapter VII

### A Unifying Thread in the Letter of James

#### Introduction

Having looked at the literary structure and form of James our attention now turns to finding a central or unifying theme or themes which can strengthen the structure found in James. We will endeavour to seek something which can bind the various exhortations of James together. In Chap. IV we touched briefly upon the themes found in 1:2-11 and how they are found restated throughout the rest of the letter. We will look more closely in this chapter to see if they are organised to such an extent that they contribute to a unifying thematic structure for the letter of James. In chapters IV and V a literary structure has been proposed for the letter of James. This, in itself, points to the literary unity of the letter. The search for a sustainable literary form in the previous chapter was important for this chapter, as it was instrumental in helping us to see how certain literary forms confused or hindered a search for unity in the text. For instance, scholars such as Dibelius expressed the view that 'large portions of James reveal no continuity in thought whatsoever' but instead show a 'disorderly change of theme from saying to saying'; this he attributed to the *paraenetic* character of the letter. Although he found that what was stressed most in the letter was 'the *piety of the Poor*, and the accompanying opposition to the rich and to the world', he cautioned 'not to overestimate the author's part in the development or thought in the writing'.<sup>1</sup> This disparaging view of literary form and its effect on structure and unity has all but disappeared. In our previous chapter we criticised older conceptions of literary form in James, and proposed that James could be considered an actual letter with an actual goal - a letter written to the diaspora. Its goal can be inferred from its other characterising feature, its exhortative character which we dubbed as *paraenetic*. Texts which are *paraenetic* seek to guide, instruct and advise. The letter of James fits these characteristics. It will be suggested that James has a plan

---

<sup>1</sup> Dibelius, *James*, pp. 5-6, 48.

and a purpose as seen through its many exhortations, which can help point towards an answer about what the author's main reason for writing the letter must have been.

## 1. Unity in the letter of James

### 1.1 - Lack of Thematic Unity

Not all scholars see a thematic unity in the letter of James. In relation to the author of the letter of James and his letter's presentation, Martin Luther once wrote that 'he throws things together so chaotically that it seems to me he must have been some good, pious man, who took a few sayings from the disciples of the apostles and tossed them off on paper'.<sup>2</sup> Centuries later, Jülicher echoed Luther's dissatisfaction with the letter, finding it somewhat disorganised and thrown together.<sup>3</sup> Dibelius in his influential commentary on the letter expressed the view that 'large portions of James reveal no continuity in thought whatsoever' but a 'disorderly change of theme from saying to saying'; this he attributed to the *paraenetic* character of the letter.<sup>4</sup> Although he found that what was stressed most in the letter was 'the *piety of the Poor*, and the accompanying opposition to the rich and to the world', he cautioned 'not to overestimate the author's part in the development or thought in the writing'.<sup>5</sup> An 'ethical scrapbook' was how A. Hunter described it, and he remarked that it was so disconnected that it was at 'the despair of the analyst'.<sup>6</sup> W. E. Oesterley described it as 'a number of unconnected sayings which are for the most part independent of one another'.<sup>7</sup> Those who see no unity in the letter tend to describe it as a collection of largely unconnected warnings, admonitions and instructions loosely strung together

---

<sup>2</sup> E. Theodore Bachmann, *Luther's Works, Word and Sacrament I*, Vol. 35 (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1976), 397. Luther did note that the theme which the author of James was most concerned with was the law, which he noted the author as 'harping on' about (*Luther's Works*, pp. 396-397).

<sup>3</sup> A. Jülicher, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1906), p. 136: 'Fester Gedankenzusammenhang existiert in Jac nicht, der Brief besteht aus einzelnen, aneinandergeschoben Capiteln über bestimmte Fragen christlichen Leben und Empfindens'.

<sup>4</sup> Dibelius, *James*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>5</sup> Dibelius, *James*, pp. 5, 48.

<sup>6</sup> A. Hunter, *Introducing the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1972), p. 96. This sentiment was shared by W. Hendrickson, *Bible Survey: A Treasury of Bible Information* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1949), p. 329, who argued that every attempt to outline it was doomed to failure, while C. L. Mitton, *James* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1966), p. 235, saw 'no discernible plan in the epistle'.

<sup>7</sup> W. E. Oesterley, 'The General Epistle of James' in *The Expositor's Greek New Testament*, ed. by W. Robertson Nicoll, Vol. IV (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1910), 407; cf. W. Scroggie, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption: The Bible as a Whole*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970), 290, described it as having 'more than a dozen themes being treated almost disconnectedly'.

and without a coherent overarching framework, a view which still prevails right into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>8</sup>

## 1.2 - A 'Sort of Unity'

When scholars began to see traces of a literary structure in James, it inevitably led to suggestions that a unifying or central controlling theme could be found in the letter. Earlier scholars such as Pfeiffer argued for an overall plan for the body of the letter, taking the triple exhortation of 1:19, 'be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger', as developing throughout the rest of the letter (1:21-2:26, 3:1-8 and 4:1-5:6, and 5:7-20), which Cladder accepted, strongly arguing that the letter of James did have an overall structure and unity.<sup>9</sup>

Ropes found two pervading and strongly felt principles underlying the letter - 'the hatred of sham of every kind' and 'the conviction that God and the world are incompatible as objects of men's allegiance'. While 'neither of the principles serve as a suitable title of the letter' he was of the view that they bound 'its somewhat miscellaneous contents together in a sort of unity'.<sup>10</sup> The writer's goal, according to Ropes, is 'nowhere so definitely formulated in his mind as to forbid a swift and unexpected leap to inculcate some important object of Christian endeavour'; hence, he argues, 'we cannot assume completely to trace the real sequence of his thought'.<sup>11</sup> Despite these comments he does offer an overall arrangement of the letter. Thus, in his movement towards seeing some form of a literary structure in James, he could also suggest therefore some form of unity in tandem with his findings.

Others also saw some form of unity in the letter. Mayor took the letter to move from point to point 'without any strict logical sequence', he distinguished 'certain leading principles on which the whole depends'.<sup>12</sup> He noted that the leading principle is the 'necessity of whole-heartedness in religion', not serving God and the devil at the same time, and not serving God and the world at the same time.<sup>13</sup> There was no real structure evident in Mayor's study. His outline for James showed no difference really from the outlines provided by the earliest textual critics. Still though, he was able to identify a coherent and consistent thread of thought in the letter. For

<sup>8</sup> Llewelyn, 'The Prescript of James', 386.

<sup>9</sup> Pfeiffer, 'Jacobusbrief', 167-80; Cladder, 'Die Anlage', 50, 52.

<sup>10</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Ropes, *James*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>12</sup> Mayor, *James*, p. 149.

<sup>13</sup> Mayor, *James*, p. 149.

Robert and Feuillet 'the exhortations of the Epistle all postulate a single underlying truth, which confers on them a unity of a sort'.<sup>14</sup> They see this as man conducting his life in harmony with God, avoiding duplicity and worldly values.

### 1.3 - Christian Conduct

For many scholars, evidence of a literary structure led to the finding of a unifying thread within the letter. In his structure of James, Adamson noted that 'every principle and theme in the rest of the Epistle of James is repeated, expanded or derived from 1:2-18[...]and 1:19-27'.<sup>15</sup> For him it provided 'evidence of a strong and pervasive if subtle unity'.<sup>16</sup> That unity he found in the theme of Christian conduct - what Christians are to believe and what they should follow. Adamson notes that they must welcome trials and strengthen their faith (chaps. 1-3; 5:7-20), while at the same time resisting the world and wealth (chaps. 4-5:6). He saw that this theme was carried through the whole letter.<sup>17</sup> He found a calculated unity within the letter, which joins chapters 1-3 with chapters 4-5 through an opposition between two groups of people. He argued that chapters 1-3 addressed those who are actual or prospective Christians while chapters 4-5 denounced those who engage in wealth and who lead a hedonistic lifestyle. Adamson notes a return to the first group of people in 5:7-20.<sup>18</sup>

### 1.4 - Faith

In his analysis of the organisation of the letter, Vouga put forward a three-part division - 1:2-19a, 1:19b-3:18 and 4:1-5:20. He saw the theme of faith as unifying these units - 1:2-19a, dealing with the testing of faith, 1:19b-3:18, dealing with the adherence of faith, and 4:1-5:20 dealing with people's loyalty to their faith.<sup>19</sup> This overarching theme of faith by Vouga has been criticised by both Martin and Thurén however.<sup>20</sup> For Hiebert the letter develops a basic theme - 'Tests of a Living Faith'; the author, he argues, 'is not interested in works apart from faith, but is vitally concerned to show that a living faith must demonstrate its life by what it does',<sup>21</sup> and

---

<sup>14</sup> Robert and Feuillet, 'James', pp. 553-54.

<sup>15</sup> Adamson, *Man and His Message*, p. 92.

<sup>16</sup> Adamson, *Man and His Message*, p. 99.

<sup>17</sup> Adamson, *Man and His Message*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>18</sup> Adamson, *Man and His Message*, p. 58.

<sup>19</sup> Vouga, *Jacques*, pp. 19-20, 59-60.

<sup>20</sup> Martin, *James*, p. cii; Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 265.

<sup>21</sup> Hiebert, *James*, p. 37.

in 1:19-5:18 he 'sets forth a series of six basic tests whereby his readers are to test their own faith'.<sup>22</sup>

For Edgar the theme of loyalty or commitment to God runs right through the letter. In 1:2-18 he finds the twin themes of 'exhortation to unwavering loyalty to God' and 'the presentation of God as supreme authority figure and patron' - themes developed in 1:19-3:18.<sup>23</sup> Edgar sees the themes of 1:2-18 prefigured in 1:19-27 before being developed in 2:1-3:18. The remaining units of the letter, 4:1-5:20, are seen by Edgar to 'continue the author's efforts to urge the addressees to show wholehearted commitment to God'.<sup>24</sup>

The overall or controlling theme of the letter for McCartney is a 'genuine faith'. This theme is found with other themes,<sup>25</sup> and together they reflect the deep concern of the whole letter that genuine faith in God must be evident in life and that if one wishes to avoid false faith (e.g. hypocrisy), the 'faith said' must correspond to the 'faith led'.<sup>26</sup> McCartney identifies perfection as something which is prevalent throughout the letter and which is integral to the theme of genuine faith.<sup>27</sup>

### 1.5 - Testing and Trial

Francis found the theme of testing underlying the whole letter and unifying the themes of steadfastness and wisdom and the theme of rich and poor.<sup>28</sup> For Davids the theme of testing, which is the first major theme that one encounters in the letter, 'underlies much of the rest of the epistle'; for him the problem of testing forms the

---

<sup>22</sup> Hiebert, *James*, pp. 37-38. These are 1:19-27 (faith tested by its response to the word of God); 2:1-13 (test of faith revealing its nature by its reaction to social partialities and distinctions); 2:14-26 (faith tested by the production of works); 3:1-18 (faith developed by the testing of self control); 4:1-5:12 ('faith's reaction to the world and the various ways whereby worldly-mindedness manifests itself in the lives of believers'); 5:13-18 (the concluding test of faith in relation to prayer and sin) and 5:19-20 (test of faith in restoring those who have strayed, 'which will be an effective manifestation of the beneficial activity of a living faith in their lives'). In 1:2-18 the author elaborates on the theme of tests and temptations from different angles, noting that he asks his readers to let their tests produce their intended results as they steadfastly endure.

<sup>23</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, pp. 156-57.

<sup>24</sup> Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor?*, pp. 215, 216-17.

<sup>25</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 56. These themes are hearing and doing the word (1:18, 21-27; 2:1-26; 3:2; 4:11), speech control (1:19-21; 3:1-12; 4:11-12, 13-17; 5:9, 12), suffering, endurance and perfection (1:2-4, 12-15; 5:7-12), wealth (1:9-11; 2:6-7; 4:1-4, 13-17; 5:1-6), love, mercy and humility (1:27; 2:8, 13, 14-17; 3:13-16), wisdom (1:5; 3:13-17) and prayer (1:5; 5:13-18).

<sup>26</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 57.

<sup>27</sup> McCartney, *James*, p. 62.

<sup>28</sup> Francis, 'Form and Function', 118.



thread which ties the epistle together, although like the thread in any necklace, 'the pattern of the specific ornaments is more often seen than the thread itself'.<sup>29</sup>

Maynard-Reid accepts Davids' proposal for a unifying theme relating to testing/suffering, noting that 'it is most evident from James's concern for the poor and oppressed and for social justice that his focus is on a suffering community'.<sup>30</sup> Maynard-Reid focuses on three main sections in the letter of James - 1:9-11; 2:1-13 and 4:13-5:6, noting that each section posits an opposition between the rich and poor and the reversal of fortune that will bring the rich low and make the poor high.

S. H. Ong points out the 'difficulty' of apprehending the thematic core of the epistle, but for him, his metaphorical reading of the letter of James reveals that 'the thematic unity within each section and the larger thematic unity of the entire epistle is to do with the metaphor of life as a divine trial'.<sup>31</sup> He concludes, 'whether one sees the subject under discussion in each section as wisdom, testing, pure speech or community harmony. All these are offshoots of, and inevitably linked to, the metaphorical concept LIFE IS A DIVINE TRIAL'.<sup>32</sup> Wall takes the theme of 'the testing of faith' through trials as a key theme within the letter.<sup>33</sup> The theme is developed through the three admonitions of 1:19 - be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger - which are developed in the three units 1:22-2:26 ('quick to hear') 3:1-18 ('slow to speak') and 4:1-5:6 ('slow to anger').<sup>34</sup> In 5:7-20 'The concluding exhortations to endure the testing of faith, implicit throughout James, are made more urgent by the author's pointed assertions that the coming of the lord is imminent'.<sup>35</sup>

## 1.6 - Perfection

If we look at the letter of James, particularly its introduction we note the importance of the theme of perfection. Perfection is held as something which is to be strived for. Many of the other themes mentioned above - faith, testing/trial, wisdom -

---

<sup>29</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 35.

<sup>30</sup> Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth*, p. 11.

<sup>31</sup> S. H. Ong, *A Strategy for a Metaphorical Reading of the Epistle of James* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996), pp. 71-120.

<sup>32</sup> Ong, *A Strategy for a Metaphorical Reading*, p. 113. Penner, *James and Eschatology*, p. 133, finds the theme of 'persecution in the time of trial' as providing an eschatological framework for the letter. This unifying theme is set out in 1:2-12 and restated again in the closing unit, 4:6-5:12 (pp. 158-213), providing 'the general grid onto which the specified content of the main body is placed' (p. 212).

<sup>33</sup> These trials have two outcomes which Wall sees the author laying out in the introduction (1:2-21). One outcome is the readers following God through testing, through the word of truth. The other outcome is temptation and eventual deception; cf. Wall, *Community of the Wise*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>34</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, pp. 35-37.

<sup>35</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 37.

are facets of being perfect. This has led some scholars to view perfection as the controlling or unifying theme in the letter. The main title of M. Klein's work, 'Ein vollkommenes Werk', points towards his view of the importance of the role of 'Vollkommenheit' or 'perfection' in the letter. He describes the preservation of the believer in the various trials or temptations of life (1:2-3) as the theme of the letter of James, and argues that the goal of this preservation of faith is 'perfection'.<sup>36</sup>

Baker sees 'perfection' as a unifying theme within the letter as 'it can accommodate most easily all the other themes'.<sup>37</sup> This point is important and it highlights what we stated earlier. Baker notes that perfection, in terms of maturity, is the ideal ethical goal of James and 'is a theme which is able to incorporate 5:19-20 with ease', noting that with this perfection theme, the person who strays can be seen as the polar opposite of the one who achieves complete maturity.<sup>38</sup>

In the light of his rhetorical analysis of the letter Thurén argues that the letter appears to be 'a consistent, carefully constructed text with a clear target'.<sup>39</sup> In the *exordium* (1:1-18) he finds the themes of perseverance and perfection (1:2-4, 12-18), wisdom and money (1:5-11), in the *propositio* (1:19-27), speech and action (1:19-21a), consistency between word and action (1:21b-25), speech and money (1:26-27), in the *argumentatio* (2:1-5:6), action/money (2:1-26), speech/wisdom (3:1-4:12), speech and action/money (4:13-5:6); the *peroratio* (5:7-20), with a *recapitulatio* in 5:7-11 and a *conquestio* in 5:12-20.<sup>40</sup>

Tollefson suggests that a series of contrasts and themes bind the letter together into a coherent unity. He understands the word τέλειος in terms of 'maturity', a key word for him, which he takes to be the central concern of the letter.<sup>41</sup> Testing, group faith, wisdom, rich and poor, and the tongue are other themes within the letter. These various themes are bound together by the theme of group maturity.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Klein, *Jakobusbriefes*, p. 81: 'Thema des Jakobusbriefes ist vielmehr die Bewährung der Glaubenden in den vielfältigen Versuchungen des Lebens (1,2f[...])Das Ziel, auf das diese Bewährung des Glaubens zulaufen soll, ist die "Vollkommenheit".'

<sup>37</sup> Baker, *Personal Speech Ethics*, p. 20.

<sup>38</sup> Baker, *Personal Speech Ethics*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>39</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 282.

<sup>40</sup> Thurén, 'Risky Rhetoric', 281. Thurén sees the discussion of the two main problem areas of the letter - speech and money as the author's attempt to demonstrate what imperfection and inconsistency mean in practice - 'In all three parts of the *argumentatio* he attempts to prove that small deviations from a perfect way of life spring from grave sins, incorrect theology, and dangerous attitudes' (p. 281).

<sup>41</sup> Tollefson, 'James', 63-64.

<sup>42</sup> Tollefson, 'James', 68

Hartin sees the theme of perfection as an 'overarching principle', a 'unifying theme', which provides meaning for the other themes developed throughout the letter such as testing, wisdom, faith, the law and works, and which gives direction to the thought and teaching of the entire letter.<sup>43</sup> Perfection is tied into the theme of testing as it is outlined in 1:2-4 - the one who endures the test faithfully will be made perfect. The theme of wisdom is linked with perfection - 'wisdom as the horizon for attaining perfection'.<sup>44</sup> The theme of law is linked to perfection in 1:25; 2:8-12 and 4:11-12, as is faith, for only 'through works, through action, can faith be brought to perfect completion'.<sup>45</sup>

Bauckham sees the theme of wholeness or perfection as the 'overarching theme of the letter'.<sup>46</sup> He notes that this theme is prevalent in other sections of the letter - in the single minded loyalty to God (1:8; 4:8), in the hearing and doing of the word (1:22-25), in the fulfilment of the whole law (2:8-12; 4:11-12), in a faith with action (2:14-26), consistency in living out all the qualities of God's grace (1:17; 3:2, 9-10, 17) and in the wholeness of a community united in peace and not divided by ambition (3:13-4:10).<sup>47</sup>

In his search for an overarching theme in James, Moo notes that 'any theme that can encompass the varied material of the letter must be quite broad'. It would be better, in his view, not to speak of a 'theme' but of a 'central concern'.<sup>48</sup> He sees 4:4-10 as the thematic centre of the composition as a whole and notes that basic 'to all that James says in his letter is his concern that his readers stop compromising with worldly values and behaviour and give themselves wholly to the Lord'. Thus, Moo sees 'spiritual wholeness' as a central concern in the letter.<sup>49</sup> Witherington adopts a similar position to that of Moo, arguing that the most important theme in James is the 'concern that Christians display spiritual integrity: singleness of intent combined with blamelessness in actions'.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, pp. 10, 89.

<sup>44</sup> Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, p. 65. 'Perfection is the outcome of the gift of wisdom implanted within the souls of the believers' (pp. 77-78). He sees this gift of wisdom in 1:17 and further elaborated upon in 3:13-18 through the wisdom from above and in 4:1-10 through friendship with God.

<sup>45</sup> Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, p. 85.

<sup>46</sup> Bauckham, *James*, p. 100.

<sup>47</sup> Bauckham, *James*, pp. 100-01.

<sup>48</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 45.

<sup>49</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 46.

<sup>50</sup> Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, p. 428.

## 1.7 - Contrasting Themes

While perceiving little or no connection between successive paragraphs in the letter of James, Laws argued that the unifying theme of the letter of James was one of 'anti double-mindedness', seeing an emphasis on imitating 'the singleness of God' in James as complementing the attack on the doubleness of the addressees.<sup>51</sup>

Frankemölle argued in his two-volume commentary and elsewhere for the formal and thematic unity of the letter,<sup>52</sup> a unity made clear by the semantic study of the text. A feature of the work of the author of the letter, he argues, is his use of contrast or 'oppositions' and 'antitheses' which are in a functional relationship to one another and condition one another.<sup>53</sup>

Cargal sees the theme of the letter as the restoration of the brothers to the truth. He sees the theme set out through oppositions and parallels in the four main units in which he divides the letter - 1:2-21; 1:22-2:26; 3:1-4:12; 4:11-5:20.<sup>54</sup> The truth which the brothers have wandered from in 5:19 is the implanted word of 1:21 (unit 1). They have wandered from this truth because they do not do the works of the word (unit 2). They do not humble themselves before the word which means they are set up for a harsh judgement (unit 3). They must instead be restored by the implanted word and cease wandering (unit 4).<sup>55</sup>

Johnson finds coherence in James at a deep structural level. For him an important organising principle in James is a central set of convictions concerning the absolute incompatibility of two constructs of reality and two modes of behaviour. He finds that a 'deep structure' of polar opposition between 'friendship with the world' and 'friendship with God' 'undergirds the inclusion and shaping of James' material'.<sup>56</sup> This 'polar opposition' that James works with throughout the composition is established in 1:2-27.<sup>57</sup> This opposition is between two measures, that which comes from God, and that which comes from the world which opposes God. The second set

---

<sup>51</sup> Laws, *James*, pp. 29-32. See the critique of Baker, *Personal Speech Ethics*, p. 20 n. 61.

<sup>52</sup> Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, p. 71: 'Der Verfasser[...]kam im Zuge der Auslegung nicht nur zur These einer formalen, sondern auch gedanklichen Einheit'.

<sup>53</sup> Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, p. 72: 'Spezifisch für Jakobus ist, dass hier dabei ganz stark mit Oppositionen und Antithesen arbeitet und diese in funktionelle Beziehung zueinander setzt, so dass sie einander bedingen'.

<sup>54</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 53.

<sup>55</sup> Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, p. 53.

<sup>56</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 14. Sleeper, *James*, pp. 19-21, also sees 1:2-27 as an introduction, introducing themes which are developed later in the letter. He notes that we must not expect James to present these themes in a logical progression and notes that organisation may be found in the letter through shifts in theme, giving an outline of these themes which broadly match that of Johnson's.

<sup>57</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 175.

of contrasts is between the attitudes and behaviours consistent with each measure. The third contrast is between sham religiosity and true religion.<sup>58</sup> The oppositions here are built upon in the following units: 2:1-26 (which Johnson sees as continuing the contrast of 1:26-27 between a pure religion and a false religion through one's faith and his works),<sup>59</sup> 3:1-12 (continues the theme of 'doubleness' through a contrast between pure speech and slanderous speech);<sup>60</sup> 3:13-4:10 (a contrast between friendship with the world and friendship with God which Johnson associates with the topic of envy);<sup>61</sup> 4:11-5:6 (a contrast between the positive attitudes of members of the community and the negative aspects of the attitudes towards wealth of other members of the community).<sup>62</sup> Johnson sees 5:7-20 as the closing section of the letter with 5:7-11 acting as a hinge between the negative aspects of 4:11-5:6 and the more positive tone of 5:12-20.

Ó Fearghail identifies 1:2-11 as the opening section of the letter in which themes are presented that are developed in the body of the letter.<sup>63</sup> These themes are testing and temptation, faith, steadfastness, perfection, wisdom, prayer, double mindedness, and the theme of rich and poor. In his view the contrasting themes of τέλειος and δίψυχος, introduced in 1:2-11, provide a unity for the letter, since the contents of the letter can be seen to cohere around them.<sup>64</sup>

Elliott sees the major theme of the letter as the completeness and wholeness of the readers, their community, and their relation to God.<sup>65</sup> This theme is set up in 1:2-4. It is followed by a series of contrasts in 1:5-11 - wisdom/no wisdom and lowly/rich. The main body of the letter expands on these contrasts in a series of positive and negative units.<sup>66</sup> Elliott sees the contrast as being between wholeness and

<sup>58</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 175.

<sup>59</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 218.

<sup>60</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 254.

<sup>61</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 269.

<sup>62</sup> Johnson, *James*, p. 292.

<sup>63</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 73-77.

<sup>64</sup> Ó Fearghail, 'Literary Structure', 78-79.

<sup>65</sup> Elliott, 'James', 72.

<sup>66</sup> Elliott, 'James', 72. The contrasts are as follows: 1:13-27: negative (deception by human desire) / 1:13-16 - positive (God gives perfect gifts) -1:17-27; 2:1-13: negative (partiality) -2:1-7 / positive (fulfilling the royal law) -2:8-13; 2:14-26: negative (divided faith) / 2:14-17 positive (faith and works) -2:18-26; 3:1-18: negative (duplicitous speech) / 3:1-12 positive (wisdom from above) -3:13-18; 4:1-12: negative (friendship with the world) - 4:1-4 / positive (friendship with God) - 4:5-12; 4:13-5:11: negative (no arrogant planning) - 4:13-5:6 / positive (patiently waiting for God) - 5:7-11; 5:12: negative (no swearing) - 5:12a / positive (integrity with a truthful yes or no) - 5:12b.

dividedness, between 'purity and pollution'.<sup>67</sup> These contrasts contribute to the letter having a 'unified and coherent line of thought'.<sup>68</sup>

### 1.8 - Unity in the Letter of James - An Evaluation

There has been a positive shift in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century towards seeing the letter of James as having a unity of thought in how themes are presented throughout the text. Some studies on James have been extremely helpful in highlighting the importance of some themes in the letter. Perfection as a unifying theme has been a popular suggestion by scholars for a unifying theme. Contrasts have also been popular among scholars as a means of unifying the various themes found within the letter. Some scholars, such as Johnson, view the contrast in Jas. 4:4, between friendship with God and friendship with the world, as a contrast which can unify other themes found throughout the letter. Cargal is another scholar who uses contrasts as a means of unifying the contents of James. The contrast to perfection, double-mindedness, a contrast used by the author of James in his introduction, receives very little attention within studies of James which seek out a unity for the letter. Ó Fearghail suggests that the contrast between τέλειος and δίψυχος presents a sustained unity throughout the letter. While many scholars see contrasts as important within the letter and many see perfection as an important theme within the letter, far few scholars combine the two, incorporating double-mindedness into the contrast.<sup>69</sup> Could one use the contrast between τέλειος and δίψυχος, which is present in the introduction of the letter, as a means of unifying other themes in the letter? Let us investigate by first looking at the use of contrasts within the letter.

### 2. A Source of Unity - Contrasts in the Letter of James

That the author of the letter of James likes to use contrast in his writing is clear from the letter itself. Such contrasts are present right through the letter. Already in 1:2-11 there are contrasts between the perfect and the double-minded, between rich and poor, between those who will receive and those who will not receive, and between exaltation and humiliation.

---

<sup>67</sup> Elliott, 'James', 73, 77-78.

<sup>68</sup> Elliott, 'James', 79.

<sup>69</sup> In my review of the literature on James, only Ó Fearghail looks at the contrast between τέλειος and δίψυχος as a unifying theme in James.

The body of the letter opens with a contrast in 1:12-18 between life and death, between the one who endures testing or temptation (1:12) and the one who does not (1:13-15), between those who love God and those who are tempted by their own desires or lust, between God who cannot be tempted and man who can (1:13-15).

In 1:16-18 there is a contrast between the exhortation not to be led astray (deceived) and the word of truth in 1:18, effectively positing a contrast between deception/lies and truth. In 1:19-21, the anger of man and the righteousness which God requires are contrasted, as are, removing or getting rid of all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receiving with humility the implanted word.

In 1:22-25, there is a contrast between doers of the word and hearers only that dominates these verses with the hearer who forgets quickly (1:23-24) being contrasted with the one who does not (1:25). In 1:26-27 religion that is vain or worthless is contrasted with a religion that is pure and undefiled with God. Purity here can also be contrasted with filthiness above in 1:21.

In 2:1-4 there is a contrast between the gold fingered man in fine clothes and the poor man in shabby clothing. The contrast between rich and poor is continued into 2:5-6. God chose the poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith. Those who fulfil the royal law do well (2:8) while those who discriminate, commit sin (2:9). Judgement and mercy are contrasted in 2:13 - judgement is without mercy on the one not showing mercy. Faith with works and faith without works are contrasted repeatedly throughout 2:14-26.

In 3:1-12 the man who falls or stumbles is contrasted with the perfect man who does not fall in a word and who can control the tongue and the whole body (3:2b). The small 'bit' is contrasted with the whole body of the horse that it controls (3:3), the small rudder with the huge ship it steers (3:4), the small tongue with the great things of which it can boast (3:5a), the damage a small fire can do (3:5b) to a great forest. There is a strong contrast in 3:9 between the tongue which blesses the Lord and father and the tongue which curses men made in the likeness of God and a contrast again in 3:10 between blessings and curses which come from the same mouth.

Wisdom from above and earthly wisdom are contrasted in 3:13-18. The latter is described in 3:14-16 as earthly, unspiritual and devilish. Earthly wisdom breeds jealousy and selfish ambition, and where such practices exist there will be disorder and every vile practice. Wisdom from above, described in 3:17, in contrast is pure,

peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits and without uncertainty or insincerity.

In 4:1-12 there is a strong contrast between friendship with the world and enmity of God, between friends of the world and enemies of God of 4:4, between the proud and the lowly of 4:6, between submitting to God and resisting the devil of 4:7, between humbling oneself and being exalted, between the one who judges the law and one who does the law, between the one lawgiver and judge who can save and destroy and the person who judges his neighbour of 4:12. There is a contrast, too, between the friend of God (4:4) and the sinner and double-minded person in 4:8.

In the section 4:13-5:20 we may begin by pointing to a number of contrasts. In 4:13-17 we find the contrast between the merchants and traders who seek profit and those who do the will of God and a contrast between evil and good in 4:17-18. In 5:1-6, there is a contrast between the rich of 5:1 and the workers and harvesters of 5:4 and the just one of 5:6. Those who are patient and who suffer for their faith are contrasted with those who judge and who slander in 5:7-12. In 5:13-20 there is the contrast between those who pray and come together as a community and those who are scattered and are deceived and who are led away from God, a contrast which is summed up between truth and the way of error in 5:19-20.

### 3. τέλειος and δίψυχος - Unifying Themes

The contrast in 1:2-11 between τέλειος and δίψυχος has been noted above. Indeed the other themes in these introductory verses are linked to these two themes. The themes of steadfastness in the face of trial and the testing of faith (ὑπομονή), completeness (ὀλόκληρος), wisdom (σοφία), faith (πίστις), prayer (αἰτέω) are all linked to the theme of τέλειος, while lack of wisdom (λείπεται σοφίας), doubting (διακρινόμενος), inconsistency (ἀκατάστατος), and not receiving from the generous God (μὴ[...].λήμψεταιί τι παρὰ τοῦ) are linked to δίψυχος. The contrast underlines the unity of 1:2-11. Before looking at their role in unifying the rest of the letter, let us look at the meaning of these two terms.



### 3.1 - τέλειος

Hort viewed the term τέλειος in the LXX as reflecting the idea of the Hebrew term כִּמְלֵךְ ('completeness').<sup>70</sup> For Mayor, τέλειος in James (1:6; 3:2) and in other passages in the NT (cf. Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28; 4:12; 1 Cor. 14:20; Heb. 5:12-14) is used of Christians 'who have attained maturity of character and understanding'.<sup>71</sup> For Dibelius τέλειος and ὁλόκληρος both designate 'moral integrity', as is shown by the phrase 'lacking in nothing' in the conclusion of 1:4.<sup>72</sup> The term 'perfect work' (ἔργον τέλειον) denotes 'the perfection of the Christians'.<sup>73</sup> Hiebert sees τέλειος as a borrowing from the teachings of Jesus (cf. Matt. 5:48; 19:21), describing a 'maturity', a ripeness and richness of knowledge and character, such as might be supposed to mark the full-grown man, as contrasted with the babe in Christ'.<sup>74</sup> For Davids the Matthean tradition represented in Matt. 5:48 is significant for the interpretation of τέλειος in the letter of James, for he sees the culmination of the Christian life in 'a fully rounded uprightness...an approach towards the character of God or an imitation of Christ'.<sup>75</sup> The 'perfectionism' of James, he argues, is eschatological.<sup>76</sup> Klein sees perfection in James as intrinsically linked to the eschatology of the letter. Only those who are ethically perfect will be saved.<sup>77</sup> Hartin sees perfection in James to represent wholeness or completeness, the giving of oneself to God, obedience to his will and to the Torah and laws of God.<sup>78</sup> He also sees this theme of perfection as having an eschatological characteristic, seeing the audience of

<sup>70</sup> Hort, *James*, p. 31. He sees τέλειος in 1:4 as synonymous with the term ὁλόκληροι, 'the primary sense of which seems to be freedom from bodily defect either in a victim for sacrifice or in a priest; that is, it is a technical term of Greek ritual' and that the author of James wished his readers 'to think of perfection and entireness not; merely in the abstract but as the necessary aim of men consecrated to God!'. He also refers to the use of the term in Matt. 5:48 and 19:21. Ropes, *James*, p. 138, saw τέλειος as reflecting the OT terms כִּמְלֵךְ and כִּמְשֵׁב and signifying 'perfect' and 'single minded'. See also Tollefson, 'James', 63-64, 68.

<sup>71</sup> Mayor, *James*, p. 36. See also his comments on its use in Philo (pp. 36-37). In Heb. 2:10 the verb τελειώω is used in relation to Jesus 'made perfect through sufferings' (διὰ παθημάτων τελειώσαι).

<sup>72</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 74, cites the Stoic statement in Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 2.7.11, which states that 'every good and noble man is perfect, since he lacks no virtue'. Philo, in *Abrahamo* §34, states that Noah became 'perfect', thereby showing that he acquired not one virtue but all.

<sup>73</sup> Dibelius, *James*, p. 74,

<sup>74</sup> Hiebert, *James*, p. 67.

<sup>75</sup> Davids, *James*, pp. 69-70; he takes James, in his use of τέλειος to be dependant on Jewish apocalyptic rather than Hellenistic philosophical traditions.

<sup>76</sup> Davids, *James*, p. 70. Davids notes the adjacent word 'whole' in 1:4 as stressing the incremental character of the process of maturity - 'perfection is not just a maturing of character, but a rounding out as more and more parts of the righteous character are added[...]In this vein James adds the final phrase lacking in nothing' (p. 70).

<sup>77</sup> Klein, *Jakobusbriefes*, pp. 43-81.

<sup>78</sup> Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, pp. 26, 57-92.

James as striving to be perfect and mature in the face of the coming judgement.<sup>79</sup> Let us look at the term itself.

In the letter of James the adjective τέλειος is found twice in the introduction (1:4), twice in the section 1:12-27 (1:17, 25), and once in 3:2. The verb τελειόω occurs in 2:22. The term has a range of meanings.<sup>80</sup> In secular Greek the term can mean 'whole', and in relation to sacrifices, 'without blemish'.<sup>81</sup> It can also mean 'perfect' or 'mature'.<sup>82</sup> In the LXX the term means 'unblemished', 'undivided', 'complete' and 'whole', and is used especially for מִן־נֶפֶשׁ and מִן־בְּשָׂר׃ and its cognates.<sup>83</sup> The term τέλειος is found with καρδία in 1 Kgs. 8:61 in the sense of obedience to God's will (cf. 11:4; 15:3, 14). In 1 Chron. 28:9 David urges his son Solomon to serve God with 'a whole heart and with a willing mind' (δούλευε αὐτῷ ἐν καρδίᾳ τελείᾳ καὶ ψυχῇ θελούσῃ).<sup>84</sup>

In Wis. 9:5-6 τέλειος is closely associated with wisdom. The text runs: 'If one is perfect men, yet without the wisdom that comes from thee he will be counted as nothing'.<sup>85</sup> Perfection and wisdom are also found together in 1 QS. 11, 1 Cor. 2:6 and Col. 1:28. The term τέλειος occurs in Matt. 5:48 in the statement 'Be perfect as

---

<sup>79</sup> Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection*, p. 53. See also J. Zmijewski, 'Christliche 'Vollkommenheit': Erwägungen zur Theologie des Jakobusbriefes', in *Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt*, Series A, 5, ed. by A. Fuchs (1980), pp. 32-35.

<sup>80</sup> See G. Dellings, 'Teleios', in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, Vol. VIII (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972), 67-78; H. Hübner, 'Teleios', in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. by H. Balz and G. Schneider, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 343-44.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Dellings, 'Teleios', 67-68, who mentions Hom, *Iliad* 1, 66, where the term is used in the context of sacrifice - things which are considered ritually pure for sacrifice: the adjective was also used to describe the gods of Olympus - 'perfect Zeus' (Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 940-943).

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Dellings, 'Teleios', 68-69. The term can be translated 'mature' to refer to a man or animal that is fully grown. Dellings cites Xenophon's use of the adjective τέλειος to describe an adult in his mature years (*Cyropaedia* 1. 2. 4).

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Dellings, 'Teleios', 72. See 1 Kgs. 8:61 LXX which states that to be perfect towards God is to walk holily in his statutes and keep his commandments; in 1 Kgs. 15:14 the heart of Asa is said to have been perfect with the Lord; in 1 Chr. 28:9 David urges Solomon to serve God with a perfect heart. In 1 Kgs. 11:4 and 15:3 it is used of the heart not being perfect (11:4 it was turned after other gods; 15:3: he walked in the sins of his father). The Hebrew term signifies 'complete' and 'undivided'.

<sup>84</sup> See the texts cited in Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. In Gen. 6:9 Noah is described as δίκαιος *dikaios* and τέλειος in his generation and pleasing to God. The 'perfection' of Noah stands in contrast to those who are 'wicked' (κακίαι) and who have 'evil' (πονηρὰ) in their hearts (Gen. 6:5). In Deut. 18:13 Moses calls on his people to remain 'completely' loyal to the Lord their God and not imitate the abominable practices of those who live in the land such as divination, sorcery etc. (Deut. 18:9).

<sup>85</sup> καὶν γὰρ τις ἢ τέλειος ἐν υἱοῖς ἀνθρώπων τῆς ἀπὸ σοῦ σοφίας ἀπούσης εἰς οὐδὲν λογισθήσεται

your heavenly Father is perfect'.<sup>86</sup> The context of this statement is the Sermon on the Mount in which it comes after the beatitudes (5:2-12), sayings on discipleship (5:13-6) and Jesus' re-interpretation of the law (5:17-48), in particular, the law of love which now applies to all, one's enemy included. In Matt. 19:21 Jesus tells the young man who claims to keep all the commandments that to be perfect (τέλειος) he must do more - he must sell his possessions and give to the poor - he must be totally committed in his discipleship. In Rom. 12:2 Paul urges his readers not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewal of their minds that they may discern what God desires, that is, what is good and acceptable and perfect (τέλειος).<sup>87</sup> The adjective τέλειος and the other two adjectives sum up 'the transformed life of the Christian justified and living by faith in Christ Jesus'.<sup>88</sup> The τέλειος of 1 Cor. 2:6, those who have received the Spirit (2:12), are the mature.<sup>89</sup> In 1 John 4:18 τέλειος is used here to describe a love which has no reservations.<sup>90</sup>

In Jas. 1:4 the term is used of the perfect work, the result of enduring the testing of one's faith, and is associated with wisdom (1:4-5). In 1:25 it refers to the perfect law of freedom. In its immediate context in 1:4-6 it is associated with steadfastness, with wisdom, with faith. The one who is perfect is the one who does not lack wisdom, who prays with faith, who does not waver or doubt. He is the opposite of the δίψυχος.

### 3.2 - δίψυχος

The term δίψυχος occurs only twice in the NT, both times in the letter of James at 1:8 (δίψυχος) and 4:8 (δίψυχοι). Scholars have debated whether the Greek term was created by the author James or whether he borrowed the term from another

<sup>86</sup> The parallel verse in Lk. 6:36 uses 'merciful' (οἰκτίρμονες) instead of 'perfect' - 'Be merciful as your heavenly father is merciful'. F. W. Beare, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1981), p. 163, notes that both instances are an attempt to render the term *thamim* in the context of each verse and it can be related to instances in Gen. 17:1; Job 1:8; Deut. 18:13.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible, Vol. 33 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1993), p. 641.

<sup>88</sup> Fitzmyer, *Romans*, p. 641.

<sup>89</sup> J. A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Yale Bible, Vol. 32 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 174, understands *teleios* in 1 Cor. 2:6 as 'mature', seeing it as denoting Christians who have 'developed fully in their faith-lives'. R. F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), pp. 128-129, sees the term as having more the sense of 'fulfilment' than of 'perfection' and sees it as referring to 'someone who under the grace of God, realizes their full potential'.

<sup>90</sup> In the words of Dellling, 'Teleios', 75, "full," 'unlimited' love, 'which lacks nothing of its totality', leaves no room for fear'.

source, since it is not found in secular Greek writings,<sup>91</sup> or in the LXX. Hort saw δίδυμος as a word coined by the author himself and translated it 'of two minds', understanding it to represent either 'dissimulation' or various kinds of 'distraction and doubt', and taking it to mean 'faithless wavering'.<sup>92</sup> For Mayor the concept of δίδυμος conveys the opposite of one who seeks the Lord with all their heart and all their soul (Deut. 4:29). He added that these people who seek the lord in Deut. 4:29 are the ones who are scattered and dispersed (διασπερεί) from the lord in Deut. 4:27.<sup>93</sup> Ropes saw the term as meaning 'a soul divided between faith and the world' noting 4:4 as a possible development of the term. He also describes the term as 'Mr. Facing-both-ways'.<sup>94</sup>

More recently Martin sees the double minded as being similar to the ones who have showed partiality and discrimination to their poor brother, noting that 'James is tracing the sinful behaviour described in vv. 2-3 back to its source, namely a divided mind. The double-minded (1:8; 4:8) Christian is the one who fails to love and obey God wholeheartedly'.<sup>95</sup> Baker sees δίδυμος as depicting the internal division of a 'person's allegiance and the consternation of his soul', paralleling the concept of the double heart.<sup>96</sup> Wall notes a parallel between the one who is double minded and the one who claims to have faith but has no works in 2:14-26.<sup>97</sup> Moo sees double mindedness as the result of the world enticing men away from total, single-minded allegiance to God.<sup>98</sup> Let us look at the term δίδυμος in the letter of James.

<sup>91</sup> A possible parallel may be found in the term *dikranoi* which occurs in a poem of Parmenides (*On Nature* 6.5), in reference to those who are 'in two minds', hesitation guiding 'the wandering thought in their breasts, so that they are borne along stupefied like men deaf and blind. Undiscerning crowds, in whose eyes the same thing and not the same is and is not, and all things travel in opposite directions'; text and translation at <http://philoctetes.free.fr/parmenidesunicode.htm>. The phrase διπλοῦς ἀνὴρ is found in Plato (*Republic* III.397e), that is, the 'two-fold or manifold man'; text cited at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text>.

<sup>92</sup> Hort, *James*, p. 12; he also refers to the Hebrew phrase 'a heart and a heart' in 1 Chron. 12:33 (which is only in the Hebrew text), and he cites Sir. 1:28: 'Disobey not the fear of the Lord, and approach Him not with a double heart'. The context indicates that the phrase has a negative sense, as indeed double tongue found in Sir. 5:9, 14; 6:1; cf. P. W. Skehan and A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: A New Translation with Notes*, Anchor Bible, Vol. 39 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1987), p. 146.

<sup>93</sup> Mayor, *James*, p. 352.

<sup>94</sup> Ropes, *James*, p. 143.

<sup>95</sup> Martin, *James*, p. 63.

<sup>96</sup> Baker, *Personal Speech Ethics*, p. 242.

<sup>97</sup> Wall, *Community of the Wise*, p. 53; cf. Hiebert, *James*, p. 75.

<sup>98</sup> Moo, *James*, p. 194. Hiebert, *James*, p. 75, sees the term as denoting something which is divided between the world and God.

W. Bauer takes the term δίψυχος to mean ‘doubting’, ‘hesitating’ (literally, ‘double-minded’).<sup>99</sup> For Schweizer in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, it denotes ‘the divided man as opposed to the simple man’.<sup>100</sup> G. W. H. Lampe, in the *Patristic Lexicon*, takes the term to mean ‘undecided, uncertain, wavering’.<sup>101</sup>

The term δίψυχος is found in Jas. 1:8 and in 4:8, the only occurrences in the Greek bible. Its occurrences in the letters of Clement and in the Shepherd of Hermas indicate how the term was understood at the turn of the first century AD.<sup>102</sup> In 1 Clement 23:3, having spoken of the all-merciful Father who has compassion on those who fear him and lovingly bestows his favours upon those that draw near to him with a simple mind, he quotes what he describes as scripture (ἡ γραφή), a text which says: ‘How miserable are those who are of two minds, who doubt in their soul’ (Ταλαίπωροί εἰσιν οἱ δίψυχοι οἱ διστάζοντες τῇ ψυχῇ).<sup>103</sup> The sense here is clearly that of ‘doubting’. In 1 Clement 11:3 the example cited of one who is double minded is Lot’s wife who changed her mind. Her punishment, Clement wrote, made known to all who are double-minded and have doubts about the power of God (οἱ δίψυχοι καὶ οἱ διστάζοντες περὶ τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ δυνάμεως), was divine judgement.<sup>104</sup> Here too the sense is one of doubting.

The term occurs frequently in the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Her., *Vis.* 3.3.4, refers to the δίψυχοι who dispute in their hearts whether some things are so or not. In Her., *Mand.* 9.5, the author, echoing Jas. 1:6-8,<sup>105</sup> advises his readers: ‘if you doubt in your heart, you will receive none of your petitions. For those who have doubts towards God, these are the double-minded, and they shall not in any wise obtain any of their petitions’ (ἐὰν δὲ διστάσης ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου οὐδὲν οὐ μὴ λήψη τῶν αἰτημάτων σου οἱ γὰρ διστάζοντες εἰς τὸν θεόν οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ δίψυχοι καὶ οὐδὲν ὅλως ἐπιτυγχάνουσι τῶν αἰτημάτων αὐτῶν).<sup>106</sup> The term is associated with

<sup>99</sup> Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 201.

<sup>100</sup> E. Schweizer, ‘Dipsuchos’, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, Vol. 9 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1973), 665.

<sup>101</sup> G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 374.

<sup>102</sup> On the dating of Hermas see C. Osiek, *The Shepherd of Hermas, Hermeneia - a critical and historical commentary on the Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), pp. 18-20.

<sup>103</sup> Translation from B. D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, I, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

<sup>104</sup> Translation from Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*.

<sup>105</sup> Osiek, *Shepherd of Hermas*, p. 132, does not see a literary relationship here but rather a common background of Jewish-Christian instruction. See the discussion in Dibelius, *James*, p. 31.

<sup>106</sup> Translation from Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*. See also Hermas, *Mand.* 9.6; 10.2.2, *Vis.* 4.2.6.

the heart (καρδία) here and elsewhere (Her., *Vis.* 3.3.4; 4.5; *Mand.* 9.5, 7; *Sim.* 9.21.1).<sup>107</sup> It is accompanied by ἀδιστάκτως in *Hermas*, *Mand.* 9.2 and 4, and by a verb of doubting in the other examples from *Clement* and the *Shepherd of Hermas* (διστάζω), not the verb that is found in *Jas.* 1:6-8, but a verb of doubting nonetheless.<sup>108</sup>

It is possible that δίψυχος may have Hebrew roots, the divided heart of 1QH. 4:14 being a possibility, or the double heart (καρδία δισση) of *Sir.* 1:28 (see above). The double-heart of *Ps.* 12:2 translated in the LXX (11:3) by ἐν καρδία καὶ ἐν καρδία is also of note. The context of the phrase in *Ps.* 12:2 ('Every one utters lies to his neighbour; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak') indicates that it has a negative sense.<sup>109</sup> It is possible that the roots of the term may go back to Semitic sources but if, as seems to be the case, the term was coined by the author of *James*, then its sense is to be sought in the letter of *James* and in its immediate context.

The sense suggested by the immediate context of 1:6-8 is doubting, especially because of the repetition of the verb διακρινόμενος leading up to the use of the term itself and also because of the term ἀκατάστατος coming after it. The one

<sup>107</sup> Cf. *Hermas*, *Mand.* 9.7 ('purify you heart from double-mindedness'); O. J. F. Seitz, 'Antecedents and Signification of the term Dipsuchos', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 66 (1947), 211, notes that δίψυχος is found in close association with the word 'heart' (καρδία) in 2 *Clement* and the *Shepherd of Hermas*.

<sup>108</sup> For O. J. F. Seitz, 'The Relationship of *Hermas* to the Epistle of *James*', *JBL* 63 (1944), 134, δίψυχος 'is intended to convey the Hebrew idea of a double heart'. He notes that the one who is δίψυχος is the one who is double minded, whose prayers are wavering and hesitant and whose mind is not wholly turned to God because it is focused more on worldly desires and pleasures (cf. Seitz, 'Antecedents and Signification of the term Dipsuchos', 214).

<sup>109</sup> The phrase in Hebrew for 'double-heart', which has a negative sense, is כִּלְכִל. This is translated into Greek by ἐν καρδία καὶ ἐν καρδία. S. E. Porter, 'Is *dipsuchos* (*James* 1:8; 4:8) a 'Christian' word?', *Biblica* 71 (1990), 477-78, notes that while the *Manual of Discipline*, *Thanksgiving Scroll* and the *Damascus Document* may shed light on possible parallels to δίψυχος in *James*, through their use of certain words denoting 'dividedness', they do not tell us much about the word δίψυχος in Greek. Davids, *James*, p. 74, sees the origin of δίψυχος in Qumran, among other works. He notes parallels in 1 QS. 2:11-18; 5:4-5; 1 QH. 4:13-14. He relates the wavering nature of a person's conduct in *James* to similar instances in Qumran related to the Two Ways tradition (1 QS. 1:8; 3:9-10; 9:9). The *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* has been seen as providing certain parallels to an understanding of the term δίψυχος. In the *Testament of Asher* - concerning two faces of vice and virtue - we find reference to a number of instances of dividedness. In *Test. Asher* 2 we find a man who has 'two aspects' (*diprosópos*) to his person, a man who loves God but does evil also. Again δίψυχος is not found. The use of the two *yetzers*, from Rabbinic Judaism, one representing one's good intentions and the other, one's bad intentions, has also been seen as a parallel to δίψυχος. The evidence for both is not very convincing, however, and the dating of both the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* and the Rabbinic sources before *James* is problematic. See Seitz, 'Antecedents and Signification', 213-214; Davids, *James*, p. 74; Adamson, *James*, p. 60. Porter, 'dipsuchos', 477, disagrees with an influence from Rabbinic Judaism for several reasons. Firstly, the dating of the rabbinic materials to a period earlier than 70 AD is very problematic, if one takes the letter of *James* as early, and 'these sources can only provide conceptual parallels, not evidence of what has occurred in the development or formation of this word in the Greek language'.

who lacks wisdom is urged to pray to the God who gives freely and he is to ask with faith 'not doubting anything' (μηδὲν διακρινόμενος), for the one who doubts (διακρινόμενος) is like a wave of the sea tossed back and forth, such a person will not receive anything from the Lord. He is a δίψυχος, restless in all his ways. The whole context conveys the tone of doubt, changing opinions and inconsistency. In the second use of the term in the letter, in 4:8, the term is associated with being distant from God, with cleansing one's hands, with being a sinner, with the exhortation to cleanse one's heart (ἐγγίσατε τῷ θεῷ[...]καθαρίσατε χεῖρας, ἁμαρτωλοί, καὶ ἄγνίσατε καρδίας, δίψυχοι), with weeping and howling for the miseries about to come. The immediate context of the second occurrence is negative; the larger context (4:1-12) is one in which the author is very critical of those who are friendly with the world. The term δίψυχος, then, is a negative term associated with doubt and sin. P. J. du Plessis comments that 'its employment here provides a remarkable counter description of a complete or whole Christian character'.<sup>110</sup>

### 3.3 - τέλειος and δίψυχος: Agents of Unity in the letter of James

In 1:2-11, the two terms τέλειος and δίψυχος contrast strongly with one another, but together, they can be said to bind the introduction together. The one who is τέλειος is the one who remains steadfast in the face of trials, who prays to God with faith, who receives from the generous God, who is humble. On the other side, by way of contrast, is the one who is δίψυχος - the double-minded person, inconsistent in all his ways whose prayer is afflicted with doubt, who will not receive anything from the lord (1:7), who is restless, driven this way and that. Let us look at how far this is true of the rest of the letter.

#### 3.3.1 - Jas. 1:12-2:26

The one who remains firm in the face of trial or temptation and who is declared blessed in 1:12 and who will receive the crown of life may be described as τέλειος or perfect, the one who is tempted and attributes his temptation to God rather than to his own desires which can lead to sin and death (1:13-15). The perfect man is aware that the perfect gift comes from above, from the 'Father of lights', but the

---

<sup>110</sup> P. J. du Plessis, *Téleios: The Idea of Perfection in the New Testament* (Kampen: Kook, 1959), p. 236.

δίψυχος must be exhorted not to be deceived in relation to this. Being 'quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger' (1:19) would surely be attributes of the one who is τέλειος; the δίψυχος, not so. The perfect man receives the implanted word which can save souls; the δίψυχος must remove filthiness and rampant wickedness so that he may receive that word and be saved.

In 1:22-26 the double-minded man is a hearer only and not a doer, who deceives himself. The perfect man is not a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts. He is blessed in his doing.

In 1:26-27, the perfect man is the only one who is truly religious, who controls the tongue and whose religion is pure and undefiled to God; he is one who keeps himself unstained from the world. The double-minded person does not control his tongue, his religion is vain, and he does not keep himself unstained from the world.

In 2:1-13 the one who is τέλειος is one whose faith does not permit discrimination or partiality. He does not make distinctions between rich and poor. He is not a 'judge' of evil thoughts. He fulfils (τελεῖτε) the royal law of love (2:8), he keeps the 'whole' (ὅλον) law (2:10). He shows mercy (2:13). The one who shows partiality, who distinguishes between rich and poor, who discriminates against the poor whom God chose to be rich in faith, who does not subscribe to the royal law of love, who does not show mercy (2:13) - he is the double-minded person.

In 2:14-26 the perfect man is the one whose faith is accompanied by his works, who follows the examples of Abraham and Rahab, whose faith is very much alive. Indeed, the faith of Abraham in particular was ἐτελειώθη. The one whose faith is not accompanied by works, the empty man of 2:20, the man whose faith is dead, is the δίψυχος.

### 3.3.2 - Jas. 3:1-4:12

In 3:1-12 the τέλειος ἀνὴρ (3:2) is the one who does not stumble in a word. He is one who controls his whole body, especially the tongue. The one who stumbles in a word, who cannot control the tongue is the δίψυχος; indeed, he is like the tongue, restless (3:8), as he is described in 1:8. Blessings and curses come from the tongue of the double-minded (3:9-10).



In 3:13-18 the one who is τέλειος is the one who is wise and understanding, whose works are done in the meekness of wisdom, whose wisdom is from above, a wisdom that is 'pure', peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering or impartial and without hypocrisy. Those who are double-minded, the ones who in 1:5 are described as lacking wisdom, are the ones with bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in their hearts; they boast and lie against the truth. The wisdom that they have is an earthly wisdom which is characterised by ἀκαταστασία or disorder (recalling the term ἀκατάστατος in 1:8 and ἀκατάστατον in 3:8). The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by the one who is perfect and who makes peace. The behaviour of the double-minded stands in sharp contrast (cf. 1:7-8; 3:16).

The contrast is again evident in 4:1-12. Here the one who is obedient to God, the one who is a friend of God, the one who is near to him, the one who opposes the devil, the one who has clean hands and a pure heart (4:7-8), the one who humbles himself before the Lord, the one who does not slander his brother (4:11) - these are what one would expect of the one who is τέλειος. The one who is the cause of strife (4:1-2), whose desires are warring in his members, who desires but does not have and who asks and does not receive because he asks wrongly (cf. 1:5-8) to satisfy his own desires (4:3), who is a friend of the world and an enemy of God, who is a sinner, who slanders and judges (4:11-12) - he is the δίψυχος (4:8), inconsistent in all his ways.

### 3.3.3 - Jas. 4:13-5:20

In 4:13-17 the one who is conscious of the Lord and takes account of him always (4:15), the one who knows to do good and does it fits the image of the one who is τέλειος. The one who ignores the Lord, whose interest is in gain, the one who boasts in his arrogance, the one knowing to do good and not doing it, the one who sins - these are characteristics of the one who is δίψυχος.

In 5:1-6 the double-minded is the one who ignores the cries of the workers and the harvesters. He is the one who lives on earth in luxury and self indulgence, uncaringly (5:5). This description recalls the earlier descriptions of behaviour associated with the double minded (cf. 1:13-15; 3:14-16; 4:2-3). The negative description of fattening one's heart in 5:5 recalls other negative attributes related to the heart such as deceiving it (1:26), having bitter jealousy and selfish ambition within it (3:14) and needing to purify it on account of one's double mindedness (4:8).

Condemnation has been linked with those who are double minded (cf. 2:1-13; 4:11-12), as has murder (2:10-11; 4:2).

In 5:7-12 the one who is patient (cf. 1:2-4) and awaits the coming of the Lord with patience like the farmer who awaits the Autumn rains, the one who strengthens his heart, who does not slander his brothers or judge them, the one who is steadfast (cf. 1:2-3, 12), the one whose word is his bond (5:12) - these are the attributes of the one who is a *perfect man*. The one who lacks these qualities - the one who is not patient, who slanders his brothers, whose word is not his bond, whose prayer is without faith, and the one who may have wandered from the truth (5:19-20) - he corresponds to the *double-minded man*.

As we can see from the analysis above, the twin themes, τέλειος and δίψυχος, can be seen to provide a suitable contrast for the letter, both positive and negative; positive in the sense of all the characteristics which make a person perfect and negative in the sense of all the characteristics which make a person imperfect or double-minded. The author writes to his readers in the diaspora a letter which sets out two paths a person may follow in life; one which is in servitude to Christ and God, and another path, one which involves enslavement to the world, a path which causes the brothers to wander from the truth. We mentioned earlier that the truth which the brothers wander from in 5:20 is the author's own message here; the truth set forth in his letter. The readers have wandered from God. The author writes the letter with the purpose of guiding them back onto the true path which leads to perfection. Through the use of encouraging reminders, examples, and by positioning his message by means of a simple contrast which is laid out in the introduction and expanded throughout the letter, the letter of James fulfils the main functions of what could be described as *paraenetic*. One of the characteristics of *paraenesis* which we highlighted in the previous chapter was its antithetical structure. The letter of James could be seen as having an antithetical structure from the large number of contrasts used in the letter. The letter of James may be described as a *paraenetic letter*, if one wishes to use that term. By using the letter form, the author aims to reach as many people as possible. The general nature of the contents of the letter and its universality in terms of application is seen from the address in 1:1. The author through his letter seeks to bring back Christian communities which have wandered from the truth, to bring together those who are scattered and dispersed, both psychically and

metaphorically, and to let his readers know what is required of them to be servants of Christ, as the author is himself. This goal must be done in communion with one another. One person which wanders can have drastic negative effects on the whole community, just as one person who saves a wandering soul, or helps his fellow brother, can have positive effects on the whole community. The author exhorts this message in his letter using various contrasts, of which, τέλειος and δίψυχος can be seen to bind together.

## **Conclusion**

Beginning with Martin Luther and continuing on with Dibelius and others, the letter of James was long held to lack thematic unity. In the attempt to discern the structure of James, scholars have gradually turned to a more positive analysis of the main themes of the epistle, seeking out one concept, motif or theme that can be used as a unifying theme or themes for unifying the letter. The structuring motifs have a great range: the testing tradition found in the opening chapter of James (Davids; Tsuji); the emphasis on perfection and wholeness (Klein; Frankemölle); and the thematic contrast between ‘friendship with God’ and ‘friendship with the world’ (Johnson). These are just a few examples, but the various propositions for the unifying theme of the letter can probably be viewed as differing articulations of one or two fundamental themes in James. Nevertheless, these various attempts to understand the unity of the letter in terms of themes demonstrate the importance current research has placed on fitting the various units of the letter into a larger whole.

We looked at various proposals in James for a unifying theme, proposals such as wisdom, faith, testing, Christian conduct, perfection. These are all seen as important themes in the letter but it is difficult to see them as controlling themes. Perfection, as we noted, was an important theme in the letter as it was a theme in the introductory verses of the letter from which the other themes in 1:2-4 flowed towards. Being joyful under testing made one perfect. Having patience made one perfect. Having wisdom made one perfect. Thus, these themes were seen to contribute to a greater theme - ‘Perfection’. Perfection as a controlling theme falls short however, namely in how it functions as a controlling theme for the more negative themes found in the letter. The author gives us another controlling theme in 1:5-8 that is far more

effective - double-mindedness, a theme from which other themes in 1:5-8 flowed, themes such as doubt, faithless prayer, wandering/wavering and lack of wisdom.

As has been suggested, the contrast between τέλειος and δίψυχος can be used to guide the reader in how other themes and contrast in the letter are viewed. We looked in this chapter at the various contrasts found in the letter of James. The first major contrast in James between τέλειος and δίψυχος can be seen as one such contrast, a contrast which can be seen to continue throughout the letter, incorporating the other contrasts. The contrast between rich and poor in 1:9-11, as well as other themes beyond, can be viewed as a variation on the dichotomy between perfection and double-mindedness. The contrast in 1:9-11 acts as the first instance in which the author uses τέλειος and δίψυχος as catch-all contrasts between dichotomies in the letter, a feature found throughout the letter. They both function as an umbrella, under which the other themes are gathered. Every principle and theme in the rest of the letter of James can be seen to be repeated, expanded or derived from 1:1-11. This much is to be seen from our analysis of the introduction in chap. IV and from our analysis in this chapter. The letter of James does have a sustained unity, which can be seen through the contrasting use of τέλειος and δίψυχος in the letter. This contrast helps sustain the author's argument throughout the letter and highlights the dividing line between being a servant of Christ (Perfection) and being a slave to the world and its temptations (Double-mindedness).

## Conclusion

In concluding this thesis on the literary structure, form and unity of the letter of James, several observations can be made from each chapter. We have shown in **Chapter I** how striking the differing opinions on James are. For such a small text, the range of opinion on the structure and form of James is substantial, particularly when compared to other NT. On any major NT text one would expect some general consensus towards its structure or form. In James the general consensus appears to be that there is no general consensus towards its structure or form. This has led to many disparaging remarks being made about the letter of James, with the letter often being treated as a sort of nuisance or 'black sheep' among the books of the NT canon. Questions of literary structure, form and unity have led to over 150 years of scholarship in James, some of which has been questioned, some of which has been accepted, and some of which has been set aside in favour of new approaches. Despite the differing views however, almost all scholars saw one thing - that the letter of James has evidence of a unified structure. The problem then as we saw was agreeing upon it and in many cases, finding such evidence from a fresh point of view. Like one who divines for water, the scholar knows it is to be found somewhere; the question rather, is where exactly is it to be found? The area in which we search for this 'buried' structure is slowly being pinpointed. One can see immediately from the research on chapter I that the key to James' structure lies in how one delimits its introduction and conclusion.

This leads us to **Chapter II**, which focuses more closely on the introduction and conclusion, which lie at the heart of every attempt to discern some measure of unity and structure within James. In relation to the introduction and conclusion the issue of the application to James of rules designed for speeches comes to the fore. Rhetorical studies of James have indeed highlighted the particular role of these sections in the letter as a whole but the lack of agreement among scholars on so many issues relating to the application to letters of norms designed originally for speeches, suggests that there was much more needed to be done in this area. Suggestions for large introductions such as 1:2-27, whether it be in the form of an *epitome* or table of contents, or broken into a double introduction, or from a rhetorical point of view, an *exordium* and *proposition*, do not seem overly convincing. A great many studies rely on the study of Francis and his double introductory proposal, a proposal which is

incorrect and which does not adequately support what it proposes. The same can also be said for proposals for the conclusion of James. Again, Francis leads the charge, which many follow, and again we are left with the impression that many followed Francis without looking where exactly they were going, or if his ends, or conclusions, satisfied their means. Johnson's categorisation of chapter one of the letter (1:2-27) as a table of contents has been followed by nearly all scholars in some way or another, in that they all see themes there which are restated later from there, though the manner in which they marshal those themes differ (*epitome*, double introduction, *exordium*, *propositio*). We saw in this chapter that any structural analysis of James must consider with utmost importance, its introductory and concluding sections, for therein lies the key to unlocking the structure of the rest of the text.

In **Chapter III** we looked at some methodological considerations for the letter of James. We introduced readers to the most common words found in James and the frequency with which they occur. We showed the basics of delimitation which can be found in the text. Delimiting units in James can be a relatively easy task; linking those units together however has led to the basis for this thesis. A superficial glance, as we noted in the Introduction, would leave the impression that every attempt to outline it must fail. We took a brief look at the various methods and suggestions scholars gave as to how James may be outlined before giving a consideration to our own procedures on how we would structure the letter of James. Finally, in this chapter we gave some consideration to how to proceed regarding James' literary form.

**Chapter IV** of the thesis looks at the introductory verses of the letter, and the important question of what verses constitute the opening section of James. It argues that the epistolary prescript is an integral part of the introduction and it concludes that the introduction extends as far as 1:11, in contrast to the usual suggestions of 1:12, 1:18 or 1:2-27. Critical to the choosing of 1:1, 2-11 as the opening section has been the analysis of 1:12, and whether or not it should be included as part of 1:2-11. Here it is argued that the repetitions in 1:12 from 1:2-4, which many commentators have noticed, should be seen as anaphoric-type repetitions, that is, repetitions that mark new beginnings. These repetitions suggest that 1:12 marks the beginning of a new section which in fact is the main body of the letter. This argument is supported by an analysis of the themes introduced in 1:1, 2-11, which are found throughout the rest of the letter. It is suggested that 1:1, 2-11 is far better suited to this task than the other opening sections suggested by scholars. The section, 1:1, 2-

11, may be described as a true introduction to the letter of James, preparing the reader or hearer for what is to follow in the body of the letter. In this sense Jas. 1:1, 2-11 may be seen to function as something of a *proemium* for the letter.

**Chapter V** looks at the body of the letter which begins in 1:12 and concludes in 5:20 and may be seen as arranged in three parts, 1:12-2:26; 3:1-4:12 and 4:13-5:20 each of which displays a structural integrity. Using the methods outlined in Chap. III we set forth to delimit units in James using various indicators and using repetitions which we saw as significant. Inclusions, anaphoric-type repetitions and epiphoric-type repetitions were all used to divide up the letter of James into the arrangement we have put forth. The final exhortation in 5:19-20 may be seen as some manner of an epilogue. This exhortation concludes the letter on an appropriate note and links up with issues mentioned at the beginning of the letter.

**Chapter VI**, looks at the complex issue of the literary form of the letter of James. There have been various suggestions that have been made over the years on the literary form of James, suggestions that range from diatribe to homily, from *paraenesis* to wisdom writing, and those suggestions which propose that the letter is arranged according to rules and guidelines laid out for rhetorical speeches. This thesis suggests that the literary form that most corresponds to James is that of the letter. This is strongly suggested by the epistolary prescript but is also supported by the presence of elements in the closing sections of James that are characteristic of other NT letters. Moreover, evidence from ancient Hellenistic letters suggests that the absence of a farewell greeting does not militate against taking James to have the literary form of a letter. The arguments thus against James being a 'real' letter bear little substance. James can in fact be seen as a real letter, sent to real people - Jewish Christians living in the diaspora. One may go further and suggest its description as a *paraenetic* letter, written to exhort and encourage, to advise and to admonish. The large amount of exhortation, encouraging reminders and antithesis in the letter befits such a description.

Finally, **Chapter VII** looked at a much discussed element in the letter of James - unity. There are so many themes in James which could be called unifying themes. How does one choose one over the other? The large number of views regarding this central theme would seem to indicate that although we are moving away from the older views that the contents of James are chaotic, we still end up with so many diverse and far ranging consensuses over what the author was trying to say

that one would be forgiven for thinking that no progress has been made at all! Clearly not every scholar can be correct in their assessment of what the unifying theme of James is, but we note in this chapter through an analysis of those proposals several underlying patterns which all scholars are seeing. Rather than seeking to present yet another theme as a candidate for a unifying theme we assessed each proposal and tried to draw together the diverse opinions in order to find a central or controlling point of agreement among these scholars in our search for a central or controlling theme or themes in James. In doing so we identified 'perfection' and its relationship to other themes as being quite important. We did, however, note that it was insufficient in unifying other themes, so to this we added another theme - double-mindedness - which could accommodate the more negative themes found in the letter. Contrasts were seen as significant in James and some scholars did adopt contrasting themes as a means of unifying the contents of James. We combined all of this for our study and suggested that the thematic contrast - τέλειος / δίψυχος - which is a feature of 1:2-11 may be seen to run right through the letter and to provide a source of unity for the whole through a variety of contrasts in the letter. It can be seen to accommodate other themes at ease, a feature which should point to the contrast in the introduction (1:2-11) as intentional, perhaps even as a method for deciphering the rest of the letter.

Drawing together over 150 years of study on the letter of James regarding its structure, form and unity, the aim of this thesis was to synthesise succinctly the major stumbling blocks which have hindered finding a suitable overall structure and unity for the letter. These same stumbling blocks were also apparent in studies relating to the literary form of the letter of James. We mentioned in our Introduction to this thesis the words of Todd Penner and his citation of the Nietzschean, 'eternal return of the same' in relation to Jamesian scholarship so far. Older preconceptions regarding James' literary form and structure are still in vogue despite the complete lack of evidence for their findings. Older preconceptions regarding James' exhortative character and miscellaneous contents are also still prevalent, though studies into *paraenetic* texts have become more focused and straightforward, moving away from older preconceptions which bogged down not only James but many studies in other NT works. This thesis hopefully offers new paths from which future scholars will begin, approaching freshly the place which the letter has come from both in terms of scholarship and in terms of the letter's own contents. We hope that this thesis shows



readers new paths to explore in James by clearing away older paths, or even haphazard paths, which, to use the words of the letter of James, can lead to 'wandering from the truth'.

## Bibliography

Adamson, J., *The Epistle of James*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, reprint of 1976 edn (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984)

——— *James: The Man and His Message* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989)

Allison, Jr., D. C., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of James*, The International Critical Commentary (New York, NY: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013)

Amphoux, C. B., “Langue de l’épître de Jacques: études structurales”, *RHPR* 53 (1973), pp. 7-45

‘Systèmes anciens de division d’l’épître de Jaques et composition littéraire’, *Biblica* 62 (1981), 390-400

Aune, D., *The New Testament in its Literary Environment* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1987)

——— *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament & Early Christian Literature & Rhetoric* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003)

Bachmann, E. Theodore, *Luther’s Works, Word and Sacrament I*, Vol. 35 (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1976)

Baasland, E., ‘Der Jakobusbrief als Neutestamentliche Weisheitsschrift’, *Studia Theologica* 36 (1982), 119-39

——— ‘Literarische Form, Thematik, und Geschichtliche Einordnung des Jakobusbriefes’, in W. Haase and H. Temporini, eds, *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, Part II, Vol. 25.5 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988), pp. 3646-684

- Baker, W. R., *Personal Speech-Ethics in the Epistle of James*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Series 2, 68 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995)
- Balz, H. and W. Schrage., *Die Briefe des Jacobus, Petrus, Johannes und Judas* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973)
- Barclay, W., *The Letters of James and Peter*, The New Daily Study Bible, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003)
- Bardenhewer, O., *Der Brief des heiligen Jakobus* (Freiburg: Herder, 1928)
- Barnett, A. E., 'James, Letter of', in G. A. Buttrick, ed., *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. II (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1962), pp. 795-99
- Bauckham, R. A., *Wisdom of James Disciple of Jesus the Sage*, New Testament Readings (London: Routledge, 1999)
- 'James and Jesus' in B. Chilton and J. Neusner, eds., *The Brother of Jesus. James the Just and His Mission*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), pp. 100-37
- Bauer, W. and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd edn (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979)
- Beare, F. W., *The Gospel According to Matthew* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1981)
- Behm, J., 'Noeó', in G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. IV (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1967)
- Berger, K. *Exegese des Neuen Testaments*, (Heidleberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1977)

- Berger P. L. and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966)
- Betz, H. D., 'The Literary Composition and Function of Paul's letter to the Galatians', *New Testament Studies* 21 (1975), 353-79
- Black, D. A., 'The Discourse Structure of Philippians: A Study in Textlinguistics', *Novum Testamentum* 37 (1995), 16-49
- Blomberg, C. L. and M. J. Kamell, *James*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008)
- Blondel, J., 'Theology and Paraenesis in James', *Theology Digest* 28 (1980), 253-56
- Bottini, G. C., *La Preghiera di Elia in Giacomo 5,17-18: Studie della tradizione biblica e giudaica*, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Analecta 16 (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1981)
- *Giacomo, E La Sua Lettera* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 2000)
- 'Correzionen Fraterna e Salvezza in Giacomo 5,19-20', *Liber Annus Studi Francescani* 35 (1985), 131-62
- Burchard, C., *Der Jakobusbrief*, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, Vol. 15, 1 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2000)
- Cargal, T., *Restoring the Diaspora: Discursive Structure and Purpose in the Epistle of James*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, Vol. 144 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993)
- Cantinat, J., *Les Épistres de Saint Jacques et de Saint Jude*, Sources Bibliques (Paris: Gabalda, 1967)

- Cellérier, J. E., *Étude et Commentaire sur l'Épître de St Jaques* (Genève/Paris: Kessmann/Reinwald, 1850)
- Chaine, J., *L'Épître de Saint Jacques* (Paris: Gabalda, 1927)
- Charlesworth, J. H., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 1 (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1983)
- Cladder, H. J., 'Der formale Aufbau des Jakobusbriefes', *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 28 (1904), 295-330
- 'Die Anlage des Jakobusbriefes', *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 28 (1904), 37-57
- Collins, F., *First Corinthians*, Sacra Pagina Series, Vol. 7 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999)
- Colson, F. H., *Philo*, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1971)
- Cornely, R., *Historicae et Criticae Introductionis in U. T. Libros Compendium S. Theologiae Auditoribus Accommodatum* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1889)
- Crotty, R. B., 'The Literary Structure of James', *Australian Biblical Review* 40 (1992), 45-57
- Davids, P. H., *The Epistle of James: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982)
- *The First Epistle of Peter*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, Vol. 21 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990)
- 'Palestinian traditions in the Epistle of James' in B. Chilton and C. A. Evans, eds., *James the Just and Christian Origins* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 33-57

- De Wette, W. M. L., *Kurze Erklärung der Briefe des Petrus, Judas und Jakobus. Kurzgefasstes Exegetisches Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Vol. III, 1 (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1847)
- Deissmann, A. and L. R. M. Strachan, *Light from the Ancient East* (London: Harper & Brothers, 1908)
- Delling, G., 'Teleios', in G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. VIII (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972)
- Dibelius, M. and H. Greeven, *James: A Commentary on the Epistle of James* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1976)
- Donfried, K. P., *The Setting of Second Clement in Early Christianity*, *Novum Testamentum Supplements*, Vol. 38 (Leiden: Brill, 1974)
- *The Romans Debate*, 2nd edition (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991)
- Doty, W. G., *Letters in Primitive Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1973)
- Du Plessis, P. J., *Téleios. The Idea of Perfection in the New Testament* (Kampen: Kook, 1959)
- Edgar, D. H., *Has God Not Chosen the Poor? The Social Setting of the Letter of James* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001)
- Egger, W and P. Wick, *Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament*, 6th edition, (Freiburg: Herder, 2011)
- Ehrman, B. D., *The Apostolic Fathers*, *Loeb Classical Library*, Vols. I-II (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 2003)

Elliott, J. H., 'The Epistle of James in Rhetorical and Social Scientific Perspective  
Holiness-Wholeness and Patterns of Replication', *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 23  
(1993), 71-81

——— '1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy' in C. H. Talbert, ed., *Perspectives on 1  
Peter* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986)

Engberg-Pederson, T., 'The Concept of Paraenesis' in J. Starr and T. Engberg-  
Pedersen, eds., *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für  
die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 125 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 47-72

Exler, F. X., *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter. A Study in Greek Epistolography*  
(Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1923)

Fabris, R., *Lettera di Giacomo, Introduzione, Versione, Commento* (Bologna:  
Dehoniane, 2004)

Fitzmyer, J. A., *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*,  
Anchor Bible, Vol. 33 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1993)

——— *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and  
Commentary*, Anchor Bible, Vol. 31 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1998)

——— *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The  
Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries, Vol. 32 (New Haven, CT: Yale University  
Press, 2008)

Forbes, P. B. R., 'The Structure of the Epistle of James', *Evangelical Quarterly* 44  
(1972), 47-153

Francis, F. O., 'The Form and Function of the Opening and Closing Paragraphs of  
James and 1 John', *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 61 (1970),  
110-26

Frankemölle, H., 'Das Semantische Netz des Jakobusbriefes: Zur Einheit eines umstrittenen Briefes', *Biblische Zeitschrift* 34 (1990), 161-97

——— *Der Brief des Jakobus*, Ökumenischer Taschenbuch Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 17 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1994)

Gammie, J. G., 'Paraenetic Literature: Toward the Morphology of a Secondary Genre', *Semeia* 50 (1990), 41-77

Gnilka, J., *Der Philemonbrief*, Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, Vol. 10.4 (Freiburg: Herder, 1982)

Goppelt, L., *Der Erste Petrusbrief* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978)

Grundman, W., 'Tapeinos', in G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. VIII (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972)

Gummere, R. M., *Lucius Annaeus Seneca. Moral Epistles*, The Loeb Classical Library, 3 vols (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 1917-25)

Guthrie, G. H., *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis*, (Leiden; New York; Köln: Brill, 1994)

Hahn F. and P. Müller, 'Der Jakobusbrief', *Theologische Revue* 63 (1998), 1-73

Hartin, P. J., 'Who is Wise and Understanding Among You? An Analysis of Wisdom, Eschatology and Apocalypticism in the Epistle of James', in *Society of Biblical Literature 1996 Seminar Papers*, Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 35 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), pp. 483-503

——— *James*, Sacra Pagina Series, Vol. 14 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003)

——— *James of Jerusalem: Heir to Jesus of Nazareth* (Collegeville, MN: Interfaces, 2004)



- *A Spirituality of Perfection: Faith in Action in the Letter of James* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999)
- Hartlich, P., 'De exhortationum a Graecis Romanisque scriptarum historia et indole', *Leipziger Studien* 11 (1889), 207-336
- Hawthorne, G. F., *Philippians*, Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 43 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004)
- Hendriksen, W., *Bible Survey: A Treasury of Bible Information* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1949)
- Henrici, C. F. G., *Der literarische Charakter der neutestamentlichen Schriften* (Leipzig: Durr, 1908)
- Hiebert, D. E., 'The Unifying Theme of the Epistle of James', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 135 (1978)
- *James* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1992)
- Holloway, P. A., 'The Letter of James', in D. Aune, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010)
- Hoppe, R., *Der theologische Hintergrund des Jakobusbriefes*, Forschung zur Bibel 110, (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1985)
- 'James, Epistle of', in H. D. Betz, D. S. Browning and B. Janowski, eds., *Religion Past & Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, Vol. 6 (Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishing, 2009), pp. 647-48
- Hort, F. J. A., *The Epistle of St James: Greek Text with Introduction, Commentary as Far as Chapter IV, Verse 7, and Additional Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909)

- Hübner, H., 'Teleios', in H. Balz and G. Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993)
- Hunter, A. M., *Introducing the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1972)
- Isaacs, M. E., *Reading Hebrews and James: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smith and Hewly Publishing, 2002)
- Jackson-McCabe, M., 'A Letter to the Twelve Tribes in the Diaspora: Wisdom and 'Apocalyptic' Eschatology in the Letter of James' in *Society of Biblical Literature 1996 Seminar Papers*, Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 35 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), pp. 504-17
- Jeremias, J., *Die Sprache des Lukas Evangeliums*, KEK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980)
- Jobes, K. H., *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Press, 2005)
- Johnson, L. T., *The Letter of James: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible, Vol. 37A (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1995)
- Jülicher, A., *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1906)
- Kennedy, G. A., *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984)
- Kern, F. H., *Der Character und Ursprung des Briefes Jacobi* (Tübingen: Fues, 1838)
- Ketter, P., *Hebräerbrief, Jacobusbrief, Petrusbriefe, Judas brief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1952)
- Kittel, G., 'Der geschichtliche Ort des Jakobusbriefes', *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 41 (1942), 71-105

- Klauck, H. J., *Ancient Letters and the New Testament: A Guide to Context and Exegesis* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006)
- Klein, M., *Ein vollkommenes Werk, Vollkommenheit, Gesetz und Gericht als theologische Themen des Jakobusbriefes* (Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln: Kohlhammer, 1995)
- Kloppenborg, J. S., 'Diaspora Discourse: The Construction of Ethos in James', *New Testament Studies* 53 (2007), 242-70
- Kot, T., *La Lettre de Jacques La Foi, chemin de la vie*, ReSem 2 (Paris: Lethielleux, 2006)
- Krodel, G., *The General Letters: Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, Jude, 1-2-3 John* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995)
- Krüger, R., *Der Jakobusbrief als prophetische Kritik der Reichen, Eine exegetische Untersuchung aus lateinamerikanischer Perspektive*, Beiträge zum Verstehen der Bibel, Vol. 12 (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2005)
- Lampe, G. W. H., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961)
- Lange, J. P., *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Bielefeld: Velhagen und Klasing, 1862)
- Lange, J. P. and J. J. Van Oosterzee, 'The Epistle General of James', in J. P. Lange, ed., *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal and Homiletical with Special reference to Ministers and Students*, Vol. 9 (New York: Scribner & Co., 1867), pp. 3-148
- Lategan, B., 'Textual Space as Rhetorical Device', in S. E. Porter and T. Olbricht, *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 90 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 397-408

- Lausberg, H. J., *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study*, ed. and trans., M. T. Bliss, A. Jansen and D. E. Orton (Leiden: Brill, 1998)
- Laws, S., *The Epistle of James*, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1980)
- Llewelyn, S. R., 'The Prescript of James', *Novum Testamentum* 39 (1997), 385-93
- Lockett, D. R., 'The Spectrum of Wisdom and Eschatology in the Epistle of James and 4QInstruction', *Tyndale Bulletin* 56 (2005), 131-48
- Longenecker, R. L., *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 41 (Dallas, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1990)
- Luck, U., 'Weisheit und Leiden: Zum Problem Paulus und Jakobus', *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 92 (1967), 253-58
- Malherbe, A. J., *Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Sourcebook*, Library of Early Christianity (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1986)
- *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study 19 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988)
- *The Letters to the Thessalonians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible, Vol. 32 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2000)
- Marcus, R., *Josephus, Jewish Antiquities*, Books XIII-XIV, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1976)
- Martin, R., *James*, Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 48 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985)
- Marulli, L., 'A Letter of Recommendation? A Closer look at Third John's 'rhetorical' Argumentation', *Biblica* 90 (2009), 203-23

- Massebieau, L., 'L'Épître de Jacques est-elle L'oeuvre d'un Chrétien', *Revue d'Histoire des Religions* 32 (1895), 249-83
- Maynard-Reid, P. U., *Poverty and Wealth in James* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987)
- Mayor, J. B., *The Epistle of James. The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes, and Comments* (London: MacMillan, 1913)
- Metzger, B. M., *The Text of the New Testament. Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)
- McCartney, G., *James, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Press, 2009)
- McKnight, S., *The Letter of James, The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010)
- Michaelis, W., 'Parakupteó', in G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. V (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968)
- Michaels, J. R., *1 Peter, Word Biblical Commentary 49* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1988)
- Michl, J., *Die katholischen Briefe, Regensburger Neues Testament*, Vol. 8.2, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Regensburg: Pustet, 1968)
- Mitton, C. L., *The Epistle of James* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1966)
- Moo, D. J., *The Letter of James, The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000)
- Moule, C. F. D., *The Birth of the New Testament, Black's New Testament Commentaries* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1981)

- Mussner, F., *Der Jakobusbrief*, Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 13 (Freiburg: Herder, 1987)
- Niebuhr, K. W., 'Der Jakobusbrief im Licht frühjudischer Diasporabriefe', *New Testament Studies* 44 (1998), 420-43
- Noack, B., 'Jakobus wider die Reichen', *Studia Theologia* 18 (1964), 10-25
- Norlin, G., *Isocrates with an English Translation in three volumes* (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 1980)
- Oesterley, W. E., 'The General Epistle of James' in W. Robertson Nicoll, ed., *The Expositor's Greek New Testament*, Vol. IV (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1910)
- Ó Fearghail, F., *The Introduction to Luke-Acts, A Study of the Role of Lk 1,1-4, 44 in the Composition of Luke's Two-Volume Work*, *Analecta Biblica* 126 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1991)
- 'The Jews in the Hellenistic cities of Acts', in J. R. Bartlett, ed., *Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman Cities* (London/New York: Routledge, 2002)
- 'On the Conclusion of James', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 35 (2012), 74-93
- 'On the Literary Structure of the Letter of James', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 19 (1996), 66-83
- Ong, S. H., *A Strategy for a Metaphorical Reading of the Epistle of James* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996)
- Osiek, C., *The Shepherd of Hermas, Hermeneia - A critical and historical commentary on the Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999)

Painter, J., *Just James. The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1997)

Penner, T. C., *The Epistle of James and Eschatology: Re-reading an Ancient Christian Letter*, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series*, no. 121 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996)

——— 'James in Current Research', *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 7 (1999), 257-308

Perdue, L., 'Paraenesis and the Epistle of James', *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 72 (1981), 241-56

——— 'The Social Character of Paraenesis and Paraenetic Literature', *Semeia* 50 (1990), 5-39

Perkins, P., *First and Second Peter, James and Jude*, *Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1995)

Pfeiffer, E., 'Der Zusammenhang Des Jakobusbriefes', *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 23 (1850), 163-80

Polhill, J. B., 'The Life-Situation of the Book of James', *Review and Expositor* 66 (1969), 369-78

Popkes, W., *Addressaten, Situation und Form des Jakobusbriefes*, *Stuttgarter Bibelstudien* 125/126 (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1986)

——— *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001)

——— 'The Mission of James in His Time' in B. Chilton and J. Neusner, eds., *The Brother of Jesus. James the Just and His Mission*, (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), pp. 88-99

- *Paränese und Neues Testament*, Stuttgarter Bibelstudien 168 (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1996)
- ‘Paraenesis in the New Testament: An Exercise in Conceptuality’ in J. Starr and T. Engberg-Pedersen, eds., *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, Beihefte zur *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 125 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 13-46.
- Porter, S. E., ‘Is *dipsuchos* (James 1:8;4:8) a ‘Christian’ word?’, *Biblica* 71 (1990), 469-98
- Porter, Jr, V., ‘The Sermon on the Mount in the Book of James, Part 1’, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 162 (2005), 3-60
- Prätscher, W., *Der Herrenbruder Jakobus und die Jakobustradition* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1987)
- Prasad, J., *Foundations of the Christian Way of Life According to 1 Peter 1, 13-25: An Exegetico-Theological Study*, *Analecta Biblica* 146 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000)
- Quinn, J. D., ‘Paraenesis and the Pastoral Epistles: Lexical Observations Bearing on the Nature of the Sub-Genre and Soundings on its Role in Socialization and Liturgies’, *Semeia* 50 (1990), 190-210
- Reese, J. M., ‘The Exegete as Sage: Hearing the Message of James’, *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 12 (1982), 82-85
- Reicke, B., *The Epistles of James, Peter and Jude*, Anchor Bible, Vol. 37 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964)
- Reid, M. L., ‘A Consideration of the Function of Rom 1:8-15 in Light of Greco Roman Rhetoric’, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 38 (1995), 181-92



- Robert, A. and A. Feuillet, 'The Epistle of James', in A. Robert and A. Feuillet, eds., *Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Desclee Company, 1965), pp. 553-69
- Robinson, J. A., *St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (London: Macmillan, 1903)
- Ropes, J. H., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. James*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1916)
- Ruckstuhl, E., *Jakobusbrief, 1.-3. Johannesbrief*, Die Neue Echter Bibel, Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament mit Der Einheitsübersetzung (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1985)
- Russell, R., 'Pauline Letter Structure in Philippians', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 25 (1982), 295-306
- Sandnes, K. O., 'Revised Conventions in Early Christian Paraenesis - 'Working Good' in 1 Peter as an example', in J. Starr and T. Engberg-Pedersen, eds., *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 125 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 373-403
- Schmidt, K. L., 'Diaspora', in G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. II (Grand Rapids, MI: Eedrmans 1962)
- Schnider, F., *Der Jakobusbrief*, Regensburger Neues Testament (Regensburg: Pustet, 1987)
- Schnider, F. and W. Stenger, *Studium zum neutestamentlichen Briefformular*, New Testament Tools and Studies 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1984)
- Schrage, W., *Die Katholischen Briefe: Die Briefe Des Jakobus, Petrus, Johannes Und Judas* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1993)

- Schweizer, E., 'Dipsuchos', in G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. IX (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1973)
- Scroggie, W. G., *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption: The Bible as a Whole*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970)
- Seitz, O. J. F., 'Relationship of the Shepherd of Hermas to the Epistle of James', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 63 (1944), 131-40
- 'Antecedents and Signification of the term Dipsuchos', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 66 (1947), 211-19
- Senior, D. and D. J. Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, Sacra Pagina Series, Vol. 15 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008)
- Shepherd, M. H., 'The Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 75 (1956), 40-51
- Sidebottom, E., *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, The New Century Bible Commentary (London: Thomas Nelson, 1967)
- Skehan, P. W. and Di Lella, A., *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: A New Translation with Notes*, Anchor Bible, Vol. 39 (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1987)
- Sleeper, C. F., *James*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998)
- Songer, H. S., 'The Literary Character of the Book of James', *Review and Expositor* 66 (1969), 379-89
- Spicq, C., *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, ed. by J. D. Ernest, Vol. 2 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994)

- Spitta, F., *Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Urchristentums*, 3 vols (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1896)
- Stern, M., 'The Jewish Diaspora', in S. Safrai and M. Stern, eds., *The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions*, Vol. 1 (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1974), pp. 117-83
- Stowers, S. K., *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, Library of Early Christianity (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1986)
- Swanccutt, D. M., 'Paraenesis in Light of Protrepsis' in J. Starr and T. Engberg-Pedersen, eds., *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 125 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 113-53
- Taatz, I., *Frühjüdische Briefe: die Paulinischen Briefen im Rahmen der offiziellen religiösen Briefe des Frühjudentums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991)
- Taylor, M. E., 'Recent Scholarship on the Structure of James', *Currents in Biblical Research* 3 (2004), 86-115
- Taylor, M. E. and G. H. Guthrie, 'The Structure of James', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68 (2006), 681-705
- *A Text-linguistic Investigation into the Discourse Structure of James*, Library of New Testament Studies, no. 311 (London: T&T Clark, 2006)
- Thackery, H. St. J., *Josephus, The Jewish War*, Loeb Classical Library, (London: William Heinemann, 1979)
- Thrall, M., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Vol. 2 (London: T&T Clark International, 2004)
- Thurén, L., 'Risky Rhetoric in James?', *Novum Testamentum* 37 (1995), 262-84

- Thyen, H., *Der Stil der judisch-helleniscischen Homilie, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, Vol. 47 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955)
- Tollefson, K. D., 'The Epistle of James as Dialectical Discourse', *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 27 (1997), 62-69
- Tsuji, M., *Glaube zwischen Vollkommenheit und Verweltlichung: Eine Untersuchung zur literarischen Gestalt und zur inhaltlichen Kohärenz des Jakobusbriefes*, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Series 2*, 93 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1997)
- Van der Westhuizen, J. D. N., 'Stylistic Techniques and their Functions in James 2:14-26', *Neotestamentica* 25 (1991), 89-107
- Verseput, D. J., 'Wisdom, 4Q185, and the Epistle of James', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117 (1998), 691-707
- 'Genre and Story: The Community Setting of the Epistle of James', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 62 (2000), 96-110
- Vetschera, R., *Zur griechischen Paränese* (Smichow: R. Vetschera, 1912)
- Von Lips, H., 'Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament' in *Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament* 64 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990)
- Vouga, F., *L'Épître de Saint Jacques. Commentaire du Nouveau Testament*, Vol. 13a (Genève/Paris: Labor et Fides, 1984)
- Wachob, W. H., *The Voice of Jesus in the Social Rhetoric of James*, *Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series* 106 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

- Wall, R., *Community of the Wise: The Letter of James. New Testament in Context* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997)
- Watson, D. F., 'James 2 in Light of Greco-Roman Schemes of Argumentation', *New Testament Studies* 39 (1993), 94-121
- 'An Assessment of the Rhetoric and Rhetorical Analysis of the Letter of James', in R. L. Webb and J. S. Kloppenborg, eds., *Reading James with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of James* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), pp. 99-120
- 'The Rhetoric of James 3:1-12 and a Classical Pattern of Argumentation', *Novum Testamentum* 35 (1993), 48-64
- 'Rhetorical Criticism of Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles since 1978', *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 5 (1997), 175-207
- 'Rhetorical Criticism of the Pauline Epistles since 1975', *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 3 (1995), 219-48
- Weima, J. A. D., *Neglected Endings: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994)
- Weiss, B., *Die Katholischen Briefe. Textkritische Untersuchungen und Textherstellung* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1892)
- Wendland, P., *Anaximenes vom Lampsakos: Studien zur ältesten Geschichte der Rhetorik. Festschrift für die XLVIII Versammlung deutscher Philologen und Schulmänner in Hamburg* (Berlin: Wiedmann, 1905)
- Wessel, W. W., 'An Inquiry into the Origin, Literary Character, Historical and Religious Significance of the Epistle of James' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1953)

——— ‘James, Epistle of’ in G. W. Bromley, ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), pp. 958-66

White, J. L., ‘Introductory Formulae in the Body of the Pauline Letter’, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90 (1971), 91-97

——— *The form and function of the body of the Greek letter: a study of the letter body in the non-literary papyri and in Paul the Apostle*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 2 (Missoula, MT, Scholars Press, 1972)

Whitters, M. F., *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study in Form and Message*, Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 42 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003)

Witherington, B., *Letters and Homilies for Jewish Christians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Hebrews, James and Jude* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007)

Wuellner, W., ‘Paul’s Rhetoric of Argumentation in Romans. An Alternative to the Donfried-Karris Debate over Romans’, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 38 (1976), 330-51

——— ‘Der Jakobusbrief im Licht der Rhetorik und Textpragmatik’, *Linguistica Biblica* 43 (1978), 5-66

Zmijewski, J., ‘Christliche ‘Vollkommenheit’: Erwägungen zur Theologie des Jakobusbriefes’, in A. Fuchs, ed., *Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* Series A, 5 (1980), 50-78