GENERAL EPISTLES FALL 1987

OVERVIEW OF THE GENERAL EPISTLES

Why are the called "General?"

They were not addressed to any particular Church, but were addressed to certain groups. See Jas.1:1; 1Pet.1:1; 2Pet.1:1; 1Jn.1:1; 2Jn.1 (The 'Elect Lady' = The Church); 3Jn1 (To Gaius); Jd.1 (To all those who are called).

The information contained in them is directed to all those who are in the faith. In Jas.3:3 he exhorts those in the faith to develop patience.

The General Epistles contain the deepest of spiritual truth.

See how perfection is found in these epistles...

1) James has 14 themes about going onto perfection (see below).

2) 1Pet.2:1 - The language Peter uses is for those strictly in the faith.

3) 2Pet.1:2-3 - Here, Peter speaks to those already in the faith.

4) 1Jn.1:7 - John exhorts us to continue to walk in the light.

5) 2Jn.1 - John speaking to those who know the truth.

6) 3Jn.3 - Again, he is speaking to those who know the truth and are walking in it.

7) Jd.1 - Jude speaks to those who have been called and sanctified in the truth.

With the above, you see that the General Epistles cannot be understood unless you are converted.

Heb.6:1-2 - The 7 basic doctrines of the Church is the direction necessary for going onto perfection.

1) Repentance.

2) Faith in God.

3) Baptism. There are three kinds of Baptism found in the Bible - the baptism of water...the baptism of the Holy Spirit...the baptism of fire. It is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that puts you into the Church.
4) The laying on of hands. (It is at this point where you can start to understand the General Epistles).

5) The Resurrection. We are to live a resurrected life while in the flesh. Then comes the spiritual resurrection (Gal.2:20).

6) The Judgement. This equals two things - the time of testing, and the passing of a sentence (i.e. testing completed).

7) Perfection. What the General Epistles deal with.

NOTE: The first six lead to the seventh.

Romans and Galatians are necessary as background material for the Epistles. You need a thorough understanding of these two before you can grasp the General Epistles. They deal specifically with the first six doctrines mentioned above.
Romans is threaded with the six doctrines...

1-3 - Repentance.
4-5 - Faith.
6 - Baptism.
7-8 - Laying on of hands.
9-11 - Resurrection and Judgement.
12-16 - Perfection. See 12:1-2..."present yourselves as a living sacrifice."

In 1Pet.2:9-10 it says we are to be a holy priesthood a chose nation. But how?

Gal.3 - It is by faith and by being of the seed of Abraham.

Gal.6:16 it speaks of the Israel of God. Who is the Israel of God?

Gal.3:26-29 - It is those who are the sons of God.

(With all this being well known to Peter, He could write about us being a holy nation without explanation, for his audience should have been aware of the sames facts.)
NOTE: Gal.3:26-29 - your baptism does not change your ethnic origin. Though spiritually, it has been done away.

There are two kinds of knowledge for understanding the General Epistles:

1) Intellectual. See 2Pet.3:16 - Were Paul's writings hard? No, Paul had gone above and beyond trying to spell everything out plainly when he wrote. Peter is speaking about certain things that were hard to understand in the whole Bible, as well as in Paul's writings. Also, what Peter is saying is that Paul's writings are hard to understand only for those who are unlearned.

2) Spiritual. This type of understanding is necessary in three areas: Faith, Hope and Love (1Cor.13:13).

James is the writer of Faith.

Peter is the writer of Hope.

John is the writer of Love. (And Paul said that these three will abide forever!)

Jude is the writer of the faith that was once delivered.

James speaks of a living faith (1:3,6; 2:7).

Peter knew he was going to die by a crucifixion, so who could better write of hope? (1:13,21; Jn.21:18-19)

John speaks of loving our brother more than any other writer in the Bible (1:5,7-10).

Jude concentrates on the faith that was once delivered (v.3).

If you walk in faith and in hope, the end result will be the character of God...LOVE!

Living in faith brings the outcome of love.

In order to go onto perfection, one must be weaned from the milk. See Isa.28:9-13 -

v.9 - Who is he who is weaned from the milk? They are those able to be taught doctrine. Solid meat is for those ready to go onto perfection.

v.11 - If you don't heed God's word (v.10), you will be brought to the tribulation (also v.12 - "they would not hear").

v.13 - And if you fail to hear God, you will fall into a snare.

The deeper spiritual things of the Bible deal more with what you are becoming rather than what's ahead for the end time.

Faith is to believe God and to do what he says.

So, as you read these Epistles, Always consider the words that are found in 1Cor.3:1-4...Use these vv. when evaluating how carnal you really are.

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

IDENTIFICATION OF THE FIVE JAMESES FOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1) Lk.6:16 - James, the father of Judas (not Iscariot).

2) Lk.6:15 - James, the son of Alphaeus.

3) Mk.15:10 - James, whose mother is Mary.

4) Mk.3:17 - James, the brother of John, sons of Zebedee.

5) Mt.13:55 - James, the half-brother of Jesus Christ.

PROOFS THAT THE EPISTLE WAS WRITTEN BY JESUS' BROTHER

1) Mk.12:46-47 - Here we see that Christ had physical brothers.

2) Mk.6:2-3 - He had both brothers and sisters, James being one of them (It can be noted here that none of Jesus' family believed who he was during his lifetime. It wasn't until after his resurrection that they had change of mind. They are found as part of the 120 found in Acts1:20).

3) 1Cor.15:6-7 - When Jesus appeared to James, it could have been the episode that changed James' thinking concerning who his brother was. It is this same James that will become a prominent leader at Jerusalem after the death of James, brother of John (Acts12).

4) Gal.1:17-18 - Here is irrefutable proof that James, the Lord's brother, was an apostle.

5) Gal.2:9 - Paul had gone westward to Greece and possibly through to Spain and Britain. Peter had gone eastward. Therefore, there was a need for an apostle to stay in Jerusalem.

BUT, TAKE NOTE: James was not the chief apostle just because he was stationed at the headquarters church. The scriptures clearly state who the chief apostle was...it is Peter.
6) It is said that it was Peter and John who ordained James to be the apostle over Jerusalem. Think. If James were the chief apostle, why would he let the others tell him where he was to be stationed? See Barclay's Comm. p.10.

DATE OF THE EPISTLE

It is most logical that he wrote the epistle in the late 60's AD. Why? First, he would have been 20 yrs. strong in the Church. Secondly, his epistle would have been good teaching to exhort the brethren just before the seige of Jerusalem, 70AD.

JAMES, THE MAN

Acts15:13-19 - James is here speaking as the leader of the Church. (Vs.16 speaks of the Church being the Tabernacle of David. The vv. overall speak about the building of the Church).

Acts21:18-26 - James remained in the ritualistic law. He was very well known and a prominent figure among those of the synagogue. He may have had trouble parting from them.

v.21 - "Customs" here are the traditions of the Jews found in OT law.

vv.22-26 - Here is James in Jerusalem keeping the OT law (This was the main cause for the dissention that plagued Paul).

A SUMMARY OF JAMES' LIFE

1) He was converted after the resurrection of Jesus.

2) He became an Apostle and resident Pastor of the Jerusalem Church.

3) He kept the ritualistic law.

4) He was not over Peter and John.

THE AUDIENCE HE ADDRESSED

The epistle itself was circulated outside Jerusalem.

James says the epistle is for those "scattered abroad" (Gr. Diaspora). What he means is the epistle is to be read by all the churches scattered abroad.

Jerusalem at this time had a record where all the churches were located.

Now consider, we are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, like Abraham was (1Pet.1:1). In Jas.1:2, James calls this Diaspora "my brethren" (See also Jas.2:1; 3:1; 5:14,19). So, they are not just the scattered Jews, but the scattered

brethren making up the twelve tribes.

James had sent the epistle out knowing it was going to read by both Jews and Gentile. Why? Because all of us make up the Israel of God (Gal.3:14-16,26-29; 6:15-16).

So, the twelve tribes of Israel found in Jas.1:1 make up God's Church.

THE THREE LANGUAGES OF PALESTINE

1)Greek.

2)Hebrew/Aramaic.

3)Latin.

SECTS THAT WERE PRESENT IN JAMES' DAY

1) Scribes and Pharisee's. They were the lawyers of the day. They were the ones in charge of interpreting the law. They sat in Moses' seat (Mt.23:2-3). They had the power to throw people out of the synagogue (Jn.9:13-22). This is why many people feared them (v.22).

2) Sadducees. They were of the priestly line of Zadok (Acts23:6-8).

3) Essenes. They believed in communal living.

4) Zealots. These were political fanatics (Lk.6:13).

5) Herodians. They believed that through Herod, Jerusalem would be restored (Mt.3:6).

6) Theraputae. They were mystics who were spread widely throughout Egypt.

7) Samaritans. They adopted Jewish culture and thought. Also called Arameans.

DIVISION OF THE JEWS

1) Hellens. They were Jews who had adopted the culture, thought and language of the Greeks.

2) The Hebrews. These would only speak Hebrew/Aramaic (Acts6:1).

OUT OF 105 VERSES, THERE ARE 60 IMPERATIVE STATEMENTS (COMMANDS) FOUND IN THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

TEXT

CHAPTER ONE

VERSE 1:

James, a servant...

The name 'James' can be translated Joshua, or Jesus. It literally means, "take hold of the heel", or "supplant".

Servant = Gr. dulos, which means "bond-slave". Two aspects of dulos are...1) Absolute obedience, humility, and loyalty...2) One who is paid for and bought with a price. We are not our own, for we have the mind of Jesus (1Cor.6:19; Phil.2:5).

God and the Lord Jesus Christ...

James recognizes that there are only two in the Godhead.

To the twelve tribes scattered abroad...

Scattered = Gr. diaspora. Which means, "Dispersion". There were five of these dispersions in Israel's history...

1) Jud.5:17; 18:1 - Dan had built ships to sail the Mediterrenean. Then they migrated to various parts of it.

2) 2Kgs.17:4-6 - Israel gets carried away to Assyria.

3) 2Kgs.24:10-11,14 - Nebuchadnezzar takes the Jews to Babylon.*

4) 333-330BC - Alexander the Great had come onto the scene. He had treated the Jews kindly. He would gather many together and transport them to various areas. Alexandria of Egypt became a haven for many of the Jews. While they lived there, they built a Temple at Leontopolis that matched the beauty of the Jerusalem Temple.

5) Pompeii transports the Jews to Rome, c.63BC.

* Concerning the Jews at Babylon: It was during this captivity that they developed the synagogue for private worship. When they were deported from Jerusalem, they had taken with them various portions of scripture. This action had a great affect on spreading of the Gospel to the Gentile world. For it gave exposure to OT scripture in the pagan world.

willing to forsake all.

Rom.8:34-39 - Here are some examples of what can stop us from overcoming and from the love of Christ. The key to conquering these is found in v.36...This v. is the attitude that carries us through trials. It's the attitude God wants us to have. It is with this that yu can survive spiritually. But to do this you must draw near to God with prayer, study, meditation, and fasting. Vv.37-39 are done by applying v.36 also.

VERSE 4:

Let patience have her perfect work...

Patience = Gr. hupomone. It denotes anxious anticipation. Hupomone is a means by which we move forward, i.e. to take a trial for what it is and see what the end result will be while enduring it.

...that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Perfect = Gr. teleios. Perfection towards a given end; Maturity in being full grown.

Complete = Gr. holokleros - entire, perfect in every part.

Lacking nothing = Gr. heiposthai - a failure to meet a standard that must be met.

THE PURPOSE FOR TRIALS

1) SO THAT YOU WILL CEASE FROM SIN. 1Pet.4:1 - "he that suffers in the flesh ceases from sin." Learn the lesson of the sin committed to you and remember how much they hurt. This is how you learn not to do them to others. There is not always the Jas.1:2 way of sin (i.e. having various trials).

2) SO WE WILL LEARN OBEDIENCE. Heb.5:8-9 - Jesus became perfect through suffering. So, we also learn obedience through suffering.

3) SO YOU WILL HATE EVIL. Take a good, hard look at the world and see how it is going; where it is going. Pr.8:13 - * * * Learn to hate evil. When you see the fruit of evil ways, seek to understand why there is a need to hate them.

4) SO WE WILL GO ON TO MATURITY. In other words, so we may become perfect (Eph.4:13).

5) SO WE WILL LEARN TO TRUST GOD, RELY ON HIM, AND BELIEVE THAT HE IS OUR CREATOR (PS.27). Learn to flee to Christ our Rock. To put our faith and confidence in him. Ps.27:14 says to "Wait on the LORD." It is so we might trust in him.

6) TO LEARN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD. The providence of God is, God has our best interests at heart. An example is found in Gen.45:1-5 - God is looking out for us years in advance. Joseph's life was equal to a life of providence. By having God with you, not one thing will happen to you that does not have God's best interests. See all that <u>God did</u> (vv.6-8 cf. Rom.8:28).

7) THAT WE MIGHT BEAR MORE FRUIT. Jn.15:1-2 - God the Father has a direct hand in giving trials (note, "...he purges...").

8) THAT WE MIGHT DEVELOP COURAGE AND PATIENCE FOR THE TIME OF TRIALS. They are to make you seek God through his Word (Jas.1:4).

9) TO HAVE THE CREATOR GOD CREATE HIS CHARACTER IN YOU. If you are praying, fasting, studying, and meditating, God can develop his character in you.

1Pet.1:6-7 - "...our faith which is much more precious than gold..." We want to develop God's <u>pure</u> gold.

1Jn.4:8,16 - "God is love." Love = Gr. agape. This love is God in action; spiritual love. We want to become God as God is God. Love = Faith + Hope...(see below)...

FAITH + HOPE = LOVE

1Cor.13:13 - What do you need to become God? Love. Love is what we're to be searching for in life. 1Cor.13 shows how God -with our active participation- will create in us his mind. Vv.4-8 shows God's character in action. Verse 13 speaks of three things that will abide forever - faith, hope, and love. Note, they are here in a sequence. One leads to another: Living by faith and hope will lead to love i.e. the character of God. Faith in God helps to see the hope that God is and he will see things through. 1Tim.1;5 - Faith gives you hope. Heb.11:1 says faith is what leads you to the things hoped for.

Rom.4:17-18 - Here is an example of Heb.11:1 ("...contrary to hope..." = the hope of this world; "...in hope believed..." = the hope of God). Vv.19-20 - Abraham and Sarah came together (they did works by their faith), they believed what God said, and so Isaac, the son of promise,

was conceived (if Abraham and Sarah would not have come together, Isaac would have never been born). Isaac was the substance of things hoped for - the Son of Promise. Faith is: based upon the law of God, for you must belive in God and do what he says, which, by the way, involve the weightier matters of the law (Mt.23:23).

Hope is: more abstract. It's wishing for the right to come, which is by faith based on God's law.

Rom.4:22-5:2 - We go through the process of justification and reconciliation by faith in the death of Christ and by the hope of having eternal life in the family of God (5:2).

Rom.5:3-5 - Here is the actual process of God creating in you his character. Note v.3 - We are to glory in this process (Jas.1:2)!

Rom.5:3-4 - Once we go through all the trying, God counts that as proof (character), that we are willing to stand before him. Therefore, love is the substance that we are to hope for.

Hope = 1Thes.5:8 - It is having the big picture constantly burning within our mind (Eph.6:17).

VERSE 5:

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

To inherit wisdom, you must first go to God and really beseech him. Seek to understand how God gives wisdom. Wisdom is correct knowledge put into practice. Jas.3:13-18 - God's wisdom vs. Satan's. Here James shows the characteristics of someone who is truly wise: He is "...pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

Liberally = Gr. haplotes. Having no ulterior motives; without dissimilation.

Ask = Gr. aiteo. To diligently seek; to pour out your heart for; to beseech.

HOW DO YOU OBTAIN GOD'S WISDOM?

In Jas.3:14,17 God's wisdom and Satan's wisdom are contrasted. Satan's = envy, strife, confusion. God's = pure, peaceful, gentle.

So, how do you get this kind of Wisdom? Pr.1:1-7 - As you begin to obtain knowledge and properly use it, you will start to inherit wisdom. As God begins to give you knowledge, and after that show that you love that knowledge, you start learning to hate this world's knowledge. Pr.2:1-9 = Eight ways that lead to wisdom:

1) Receive God's Word.

2) Hide the commandments.

3) Incline my ear to it (wisdom).

4) Apply my heart to understanding.

5) Cry for knowledge.

6) Lift up my voice for understanding.

7) Seek her (wisdom) as silver.

8) Search for her (wisdom) as hidden treasure.

Ps.111:10 - In the pursuit of wisdom, you need a good understanding of God's commandments. An example of wisdom used in a wrong way is Job. He had a mind for wisdom, but did not as yet understand. Job judged God and justified himself instead of the other way around. We must JUDGE OURSELF AND JUSTIFY GOD! The latter is the theme of the Book of Job. Note the following...

Job1:1 - Job shunned evil which is the beginning of wisdom. But what proceeds this helps us to see that this is not enough.

Job31:5 - Job -with his wisdom- thought he could reason with God face to face (We have this chance 24 hrs. a day. We talk to God through prayer and he talks to us through his Word).

Job32:7,9 - Wisdom in and of itself is not always the answer...God gives the understanding.

Job33:6 - Here, Elihu is giving Job his wish to talk to God face to face.

Elihu had realized he was made up of clay, so he did not judge Job himself (Ministers should carry this same attitude).

Vv.7-9 - But Job had thought that he was perfect.

Verse 10 - So Job blamed God for his trials rather than

thinking that God had his best interests at heart when he let Satan test him (Job was attributing the works of Satan to God).

Verse 13 - God shows that he does not have to answer to a man.

Verse 24 - The Ransom and Atonement = a mediator for the sinner (See v.23 [Today, it is Christ]).

Verse 26 - God would have given Job righteousness if he had only obeyed.

Verse 27 - Saying "I have sinned" is judging yourself.

Verse 28 - If you will judge yourself and repent, then God will take away the trial that he's been using in trying to get you to repent!

Verse 33 is the key verse. Job had not yet learned that God is justified in everything he does and so man needs to judge himself, to see what he's doing wrong, and turn to God.

Job36:4-6 - You must be willing to look onto the heart.

Job42:1-3 - Job is saying that he did not understand the purpose of his trials. But then he came to see that his own self stood against God (vv.4-5). Job then repents after acknowledging his mistakes (v.6).

See the example of David and how he immediately judges himself before God (Ps.51). To have wisdom you must always judge yourself and justify God.

1Cor.11:27-28 - In order to judge yourself, it must be in the light of God's Word (examine = Gr. dokimizo - to try; test).

Verse 29 - "discerning (Gr. diakrino = to discriminate between the two) the Lord's body." The Church is his body (Eph.5:23).

1Cor.10:16-17 - And we are all one body. The problem with the Corinthians was that did they not discern (judge) what the Church was. So, they became divided and judged among themselves, not according to God's standards.

Verse 31 - If we will not judge ourselves, then God will judge us for us via trials; lest we die unconverted.
Your life is like a circle divided up into many slices. You cannot dwell on just one and expect to be a whole. You must partake of all pieces, thus partaking of the whole circle.

VERSE 6:

But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

Doubting = Gr. diakrino. It means here thorough judgement. Doubting is one of the four great enemies of faith.

The context of this v. is rejoicing in our trials. Why should we not lack faith during trials? See Eph.6:16 - Having the shield of faith with you, the fiery darts of Satan will not penetrate you...No matter what he fires at you. By letting patience have her perfect work (v.4), no fiery darts will harm you. (See comments on v.4).

VERSE 7:

...receive anything from the Lord.

You must have the prayer of faith to receive anything, which is merely believing what God says.

VERSE 9-10:

Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, but the rich in his humiliation, because as the flower of the field he will pass away.

Consider this: How many rich are there in this world that would rejoice in being made low? There <u>is</u> a good example of someone who <u>did</u> rejoice...that one was Job. He was a man very rich, and when God brought him low, he was repentant and rejoiced in his trials.

VERSE 11:

For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat thaan it withers the grass...

This scorching heat was called is (Gr.) kauson. It is caused by a southeast wind called the Simoon. It came straight from the deserts and would burst out like a blast of hot air as when an oven door is opened. In one hour, the Simoon can wipe out all vegetation in the land.
So the rich man will also fade away in his pursuits.

(The use of the rich man in James is here introduced. He will be used two more times in the epistle).

VERSE 12:

Blessed is the man who endures temptation...

Temptation = Gr. dokimos. To test; to try

...for when he has been proved...

Proved = Gr. dokimion.

...he will receive the crown of life...

Crown = Gr. stephanus. In Paul's day, the crown went to victor of the Olympic games.

VERSE 13:

Let not one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted of God."

Tempted = Gr. piradzo. Eng. enticed. God never entices/tempts with evil.

...for God cannot be tempted by evil...

Tempted = Gr. apierasto. Eng. not temptable.

VERSE 14:

But each one is tempted when he is drawn away...

Drawn away = Gr. planaomi. Eng. To be led astray; deceived; seduced.

...by his own lusts...

Lust = Gr. epithumia. Eng. Longing desire. See also v.15.

...and enticed.

Enticed = Gr. deleazo. Eng. to lure by bait.

VERSE 15:

Then when desire has conceived...

Conceived = Gr. sulambano. Eng. to cease; arrest; capture.

ON VV. 13-15:

God does not tempt, but allows us to be tried. Isa.45:7 - "...I make peace, and create evil..." Evil = Heb. ra'a. Eng. calamity; upset. This is the same calamity (ra'a) that came upon Job (And God did not deal with Job with <u>evil</u> intent).

Jer.17:9-10 - "I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind." God tests us. Just like he tried and tested Abraham.

(NOTE: In Jas.1:2 the word for "trials" is pierasmos. Again, it means to try, to prove. It does not carry the connotation of "entice" as it does in v.13).

HOW ARE WE ENTICED AND LED AWAY?

There are three things that appeal to us so as to entice (1Jn.2:15-16).

1) The lust of the eyes.

2) The lust of the flesh.

3) The pride of life.

- Human nature desires these three things naturally. And, on top of that, these are the very things that are continually set before your face every day of your life. Your flesh <u>wants</u> the senses satisfied (found in #1-2 above), and it wants it satisfied <u>NOW</u> (#3)!

Life's three tempters are...

1) Satan.

2) Society.

3) Self.

Jas.1:14-15 - James does not say in this context that Satan or society entices us, but our own selves. You see, in order for you to be accountable for your sins in God's eyes, it has got to come from your own mind, then <u>you</u> must commit the act. BUT NOTE: The more you make yourself accessable to Satan and Society, the easier the temptations will arise. An example of this is found in the story of Lot. He lived closer to Sodom than Abraham did, so he was tempted more than Abraham, who had camped <u>away</u> from there.

Your mind has two parts: The conscious, and the sub-conscious (or, the warehouse of memories). Everything that goes through the conscious mind is stored in the sub-conscious. And anything that is stored in the sub-conscious (i.e. your sub-conscious contains all your past experiences, both good and bad) can be brought to your conscious by an event or circumstance.

Now consider: At baptism, the dead man is submerged under water and the new man surfaces. BUT, the dead man will always try to resurface and come back to live it's life in you. It's the job of the new man to beat the dead man down and keep him underwater.

As society bombards you by having its pulls come into your mind, you need to set up barricades.

You see, Satan can transmit his thoughts unconsciously. But you still can't say, "The devil made me do it." The transmissions of Satan must come through your desire to bring them to fruition in order for sin to take place. Satan triggers the bad in your past that's in your sub-conscious. BUT, when it comes to your conscious mind, it's YOU who decides whether or not to do it. Therefore, it is YOU who are accountable for your sins, not Satan or Society as was stated above.

(On subliminal seduction: This may happen, that's true, but, it still must come to your conscious mind to be made known to you in order to take action. Therefore, YOU ARE STILL RESPONSIBLE!)

So ask the question, Does Satan make us sin? No. Well, where does sin come from, then? First, in order for us to sin, it must come through to the conscious mind. Secondly, we attribute sin to Satan, Society, and Self. But the doing of sin is of and by ourself (Jas.1:14). Always remember, Society is an enticer; Satan is an enticer as well (or tempter). BUT, the two DO NOT make us sin! It is only when we're drawn away by our own lusts. Even if things enter you via your sub-conscious level, it must still go through your conscious thought in order to become sin. NOTE: it becomes sin when you put the thoughts into action.

See Gen.3:7 - Adam and Eve were naked. To be naked is either a state of innocency or a symbol of sin. Verse 8 - Here they covered up their own flesh, i.e. they covered up thier sins. This is the first of three reactions that man does with sin. First, he tries to cover it up (Gen.3:8); Second, he blames it on others (v.12); Third, he tries to justify his actions.

EXCURSUS: SOCIETY'S WAY OF SELF-JUSTIFICATION

Society, today, uses the above three principles for trying to erase personal responsibility. It does this by instigating permissiveness and then putting the blame for our actions on the past. And since we cannot do anything about the past, man is absolved from all guilt as well as all responsibilty for living a moral life.

In psycho-medicine, doctors have found that the brains' chemical make-up can become disordered and therefore must be fixed in order to be made well. This disorder is their way of justifying man's incapability to live a moral life.

The Behaviorist blames the environment for immorality.

Humanists believe that the past corrupts man's ability to expand.

Concerning Back-Masking: It is very doubtful that it works (I think it's just one of Satan's devises to get people to steer away from what's being played forward. ca.). Think. Can you read something backwards and then expect to comprehend what you just read? Whether it be done to have others do good or do bad, what good is it?

On the other hand, see what <u>God does</u>. God brings the good in you to the surface and then convicts you to do it. After he does this, it's up to you whether or not you do the good that's before you. This is real character. Not like the pre-programmed "do good, don't steal" messages that are in today's department store muzak or back-masking. We are to develop character from the conscious level.

On Eastern Philosophy: We have, throughout history, taken on the French, German, and Russian literature and have adopted them to mold our thinking (Israelites have always taken on the enemies way of doing things) without even looking into their type of thinking. We, as Christians, don't have to be a part of that thinking (i.e. evolution = German thought; Freedism = French, etc.) It's not "inbred" within us, folks. It can be rooted out. We can become dislocated from it by REPENTANCE.

HOW CAN WE BE PROTECTED FROM THE LUST OF OUR OWN NATURE AND THE TEMPTATIONS OF SOCIETY?

In light of the above, the Bible itself speaks of past, present and future behavior (Heb.4:12; Jer.17:9 "...the heart is deceitful above all things..." And who knows the heart? GOD!).

The Word of God and the Spirit work in concert together (Jn.16:8-11). And the Word of God and the Spirit of him will convict a man and show him what he really is (Rom.10:14-17).

Consider this. What is man apart from God? First of all, he is carnal (Rom.8:7; Jer.10:23). But when God's Spirit is mixed with our spirit, God convicts us of our sin. And after sin has been shown, guilt takes shape (This is what the psychologists try their best to combat, but always fall short).

There is a way that guilt can be removed, and that's by going to God and confessing your sins (blaming it on your past doesn't remove the guilt of sins committed. Try it sometime). Then the sacrifice of Christ can be applied. And by applying Christs' sacrifice, the guilt of past sins will be removed.

Now, in the subconscious is a warehouse of guilt that can be repented of and erased. How? By faith in God. After faith, God requires you to be baptized. After baptism, the dead man is underwater and the new man is above water. The old man that is underwater takes the warehouse of sin with him. Now, it's up to you -as a new man- to keep it (sin) there (with the old man underwater).

You see, baptism doesn't <u>totally</u> erase the mind of sins. You must start to make changes in your life. You must not give in to the old sins that are still in your warehouse of memories (i.e. your sub-conscious). <u>You are not to continue sinning with the old mann's sins</u>. God requires that we knock down the old man every time it tries to come up out of the watery graves that it has been placed in (the old man being sins prior to baptism).

CONCERNING ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR:

See 2Cor,10:3-4 - "For the weapons of our warfare are...for pulling down strongholds." The "strongholds" mentioned here are the pulls of Satan, Society, and your own addictive pulls. Addictive behavior is something that comes on your mind to the point where you become obsessed with it. Verse 5 - "...bringing every thought into the captivity to the obedience of Christ." You don't have to be clinging on to your past in order to justify the way you are. Rather, you are to be justified by Christ, not your past life (unlike what the psychologists of today would have you believe).

Phil.3:12-14 - You must forget those things that are past and press on to the high calling of Christ (note that Paul

said this in light of him calling himself the chief of sinners and chief persecutor of the Church. So, if you think that your past is full of sin, consider the Paul's past life).

The weapons for this kind of warfare are found in Eph.6:11-16 - With this armor on you, Satan cannot penetrate you at all. Verse 15 - "...having you feet shod with the gospel of peace..." This is being willing to take the gospel to the world. Verse 16 - "...having the shield of faith..." You have this because you must believe that God can protect you from the past, present, and future problems that you have had and will have. So, when Satan tries to shoot at you the four enemies of faith (Fear, Doubt, Anxious care, Human reason), you will rely and run for help from God. And when you have done this, Satan will fall helplessly.

Ps.119:9 - This verse is the key for stopping addictive behavior. There are five ways with heeding God's word.

1) Put on the whole armor of God. The Word of God is the mind of God. So, instead of dwelling on the past, fill your mind with God's Word.

(NOTE: Our mind is divided into two parts - the conscious and the warehouse of memories. In our warehouse, we still have all our old memories. But, our desire and need is to have a new warehouse of memories. We must strive to fill our warehouse with God's thoughts. So when the old thoughts come up, we have a storehouse of spiritual arsenal to combat the old man of sin).

2) Remove the externals. Get rid of your triggering devises that make you think the way you do.

3) Change the environment. When this is difficult to do (i.e. "it makes me get out of bed."), you need to...

4) Go to your place of prayer. Go to God with the Psalms and pray for replacement in your thoughts.

5) You must choose. You must decide to make the changes. And remember, the Spirit of God will not force you. It will convict you to do the right, but it's up to you to do it! Ps.51:7-10 - "...create in me a clean heart..." The creation of this new heart is putting together a new package that contain God's Word and his Spirit dwelling in us. It is with these that we seek after God when putting on his whole armor.

CONCERNING DREAMS:

Basically you can give no credence to dreams. Daniel never took credit for interpreting dreams (as some like to do). It was God who would interpret.

God doesn't speak through dreams today. He speaks through his Word.

2Cor.10:5 - If you're the kind who is experiencing nightmares, you should take a good look at what you do with yourself throughout the day. There are some who open themselves to demon-influence as well as nightmares through LSD and Demon-Rum. But, if you're having difficulty sleeping without these instigators, read the Psalms, or listen to some soothing music (Remember David and Saul). Put your Faith, Trust, and Confidence in God and Christ.

Some ask the question - "Can Satan work on our minds while we sleep?" Yes, <u>if</u> we set ourselves up for it by living standards full of bad music, movies, and lack of prayer and study.

Well then, what controls our mind when we sleep? Pr23:7 - Whatever we've put into our conscious stream of awareness will probably be in our dreams.

VERSE 16:

Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

deceived (KJV - err) = Gr. planao. Eng. led astray, deceived, or seduced.

In other words, don't get tricked into believing, "the devil made me do it," as discussed above (vv.13-15).

Heb.3:13 - Sin is very deceitful, and Satan and Society makes sin very pleasant looking.

VERSE 17:

Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of Lights...

Contrast this v. with v.13. Note also the fact that God does NOT give <u>any</u> bad gifts.

Perfect = Gr. teleios. Eng. complete; mature.

CONCERNING EVERY GOOD AND PERFECT GIFT

Ex.35:30-35 - God gives gifts according to his purpose. But God doesn't give his gifts supernaturally. Many times, we have them, either genetically, or by heredity. Then God steps in and uses them to his glory and honor.

1Cor.12:1,6-10 - There are nine gifts enumerated here. Then Paul goes on in Ch.13 to show the greatest of gifts...LOVE. Then in Ch.14, he goes back into the other types of gifts. The gifts we have are to edify, exhort and comfort others (v.3). This is true whether your gifts be physical abilities or spiritual abilities.

God commands you to use the talents you have (Mt.25). In the three parables that are found in this chapter, you find the three basic necessities of life conveyed...

1) The parable of the ten virgins are your life with God.

2) The Talents are what you do with your life.

3) The sheep and the goats are what you do with your neighbor. I.e. by loving your neighbor.

(These parables are concerned about what you do with your life before Christ comes).

Whatever God has allowed you to do well, he expects you to pay the price and increase it!

Mt.25:15-16 - God wants us to double what he has given us, NOT to try to double our money, as some would like to think.

VV.24-28 - The punishment for failure to obtain these three parables is separation from God (see also vv.12; 29-30; 45-46).

God has given us gifts in this flesh: our life, talents and abilities. But once in the Spirit, he gives us spiritual gifts.

...with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

Variation = Gr. parallege. A word used to describe the transportation of orbit or space (see Clarke's comm.)

CONCERNING VARIATION WITH GOD

There is no variation with God. But some will argue the point. Does he really deal with everyone the same way?

Mal.2:17 - Many asked, "Where is the God of Judgement?" God shows where in Ch.3...He has been working according to his plan from day one. When it is time for something to be fulfilled ("Behold, I will send my messenger") it will be done when the appropriate time comes. God is not slack concerning his promise.

Mal.3:6 - Many thought, "God doesn't treat anyone different; he doesn't care, for the evil prosper and the righteous are poor. BUT, just because they are getting away with evil now doesn't mean God has changed in his exercising judgement (2:17 Cf. 3:6). God will repay. But God is longsuffering (the main reason why we are not consumed - 3:5-7).

Heb.13:8 - Many will use this and put it with Mal.3:6 and Jas.1:17 to say God cannot change his mind ever! But what God is talking about is this: God does not change in his character. He will never waver his law or his righteousness. But he does change certain things when necessary. (For example, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant; sacrifices and offerings; physical Temple and the Spiritual Temple).

VERSE 18:

Of his own will he brought us forth...

"His own will." God the Father is personally involved with our begettal (Jn.6:44).

...by the word of truth...

We are first convicted by the Word of God, then we are to live the doctrines of Heb.6.

...that we might be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Christ is the firstfruit. When we are changed into Spirit, we will be the firstfruits (1Cor.15:20-23).

VERSE 19:

Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

"Therefore" = In view of all this.

Swift to hear. There is a tremendous need to think and concentrate (See notes below).

VERSE 21:

(Verse 21 is the most powerful v. concerning listening)

Therefore...

> He is answering the question, "How to receive the word of truth."

...lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

> Filthiness = Gr.ruparia. Eng. filthy, or defiled.
>
> Wickedness = Gr. kakia. Eng. naughtiness; vice.
>
> Meekness = Gr. prautes. A teachable spirit without resentment.
>
> Implanted = Gr. emphutos. Engrated within you.

ON VERSES 19-21:

> What we do with listening is very valuable. We use it to receive what God says for us to do.
>
> Verse 21 - Lay aside <u>anything</u> that would separate you from God. To "lay aside" is a word that meant "to strip off one's clothes."
>
> The implanted word can be likened to a sperm as it enters the ovum. They become one and grow <u>because of each other</u>.
>
> Heb.10:16 - The Word is to be implanted in our minds. The process = 2Cor.3:3..."written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone but on tables of flesh, that is, of the heart." God will do this only with a teachable (prautes) spirit.
>
> So to paraphrase: "Strip off all the filthy wax build-up that was in your ears that made you deaf to your sins, and receive with a teachable spirit the Word that's been ingrafted within you, which is able to save your soul."

VERSE 22:

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

James is saying, "Now that you have the wax out of your ears, become a DOER!"

VERSES 23-25:

The Word of God is your spiritual mirror for removing your spiritual dirt. How? By looking <u>into</u> it (Heb.4:12-13).

ON VERSE 25:

But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

There are three reasons why the Law is perfect (Gr.teleios - perfection toward a given end).

1) It is <u>God's</u> law (Ps.19:7).

2) It cannot be bettered. The result of keeping the commands of God is Love (1Tim.1:5).

3) It is a law of liberty.

CONCERNING LAW AND LIBERTY

Satan's angels throughout the ages have tried to make God's law appear grievous (2Pet.2:18-19). But it is not. God's law gives liberty and freedom.

A motto at a college university stated..."The state hath decreed that all free men shall be educated; But God hath decreed that all educated man shall be free." The only people who are free in mind and spirit are those who keep God's law (Therefore, you can be in prison and still be free).

So, God Has decreed that all educated men -i.e. those who know the truth- shall be free.

Jn.8:31-32 - You must <u>abide</u> -know- the truth and <u>then</u> you shall be free.

VERSE 26:

If anyone thinks himself to be religious...

Think (KJV-seems) = Gr. dokeo.

Religious = Gr. threskos. To worship in a ceremonious form.

VERSE 27:

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this...

Religion = Gr. threskia. Pure religious ceremony.

...to visit orphans and widows in their trouble...

Trouble = Gr. thlipsis. Eng. pressure.

Widows experience pressure because they have the weight of being both male and female role models to their children.

The orphan has no role model.

ON VERSES 26-27:

You need not depend on religious ceremony with its pomp and glamour. You need to visit the widow and the fatherless.

CHAPTER TWO

VERSE 1:

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.

Partiality = Gr. prosopotempsia. Favoritism because of outward appearance.

"The Lord" is not in the original text.

A better trans. is: "You don't have the faith of Christ if you show to be a respector of persons."

(James proceeds to hit this doctrine as hard as you can hit it)

VERSE 2:

...in fine apparel...

Fine = Gr. lampros. Eng. clear, bright.

Apparel = Gr.esthes. Eng. clothing; raiment; robe.

VERSE 3:

And you pay attention to the one...

Pay attention = Gr. epibleop. To look upon with individual favoritism.

VERSE 4:

...have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

Partiality = Gr. diakrithete. To make a distinction in your mind based on outward appearance.

James <u>is not</u> talking about the distinction of one's office and authority (Eph.4:10-11).

Partiality in the OT: 2Chr.19:7; Lev.19:15; Mal.2:7-9.

VERSE 5:

Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to those who love him?

The ones who respond to the message of Christ are basically poor. Especially those who are poor in spirit <u>in this world</u> (Mt.5:3).

These are not the poor who go around saying, "Woe is me," nor those who are financially poor. It is those who have their heart and affection set on those things that are above (Rom.8:14-17...to be chosen heirs implies Sonship).

VERSE 6:

But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?

What James is stressing here is this: Why do you make distinctions in your mind and give preferential note to the ones who drag you into court. And why do you look down at the one who is poor but is living an honest life?

VERSE 7:

Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?

Noble name = Gr. epikaleo. To entitle or take a name.

Called = Gr. epikaleisthai. To take on a name as a wife takes on her husband's name.

We literally take on Christs' name and are we are his espoused wife.

Acts11:26 - We first took on Christs' name at Antioch.

Acts4:10-12 - It is through Christ that we are called a Christian.

VERSE 8:

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;

The Royal Law = the summation of Mt.22:37-39.

How does fulfilling the Royal Law fulfill the law of God? By loving your neighbor, it shows that you love God. For if you cannot love your neighbor, you cannot love God [and visa-versa] (1Jn.4:19-21).

Gal.6:1-2 - Here's an example of loving your neighbor.

If you don't keep God's commands, you will die; <u>this is a form of suicide!</u>

Loving your neighbor starts at <u>the household of faith</u> and then extends to others.

NOTE: Putting yourself above others is being partial as well.

VERSE 9:

But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and you are convicted by the law as transgressors.

James equates the respecter of persons as one who breaks the law (see also v.10).

VERSE 13:

For judgement is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgement.

If you are going to be a respecter of persons, you will be judged without mercy.

CONCERNING JUDGEMENT, MERCY, AND FAITH

We are judged by God's law.

Mt.23:23 - J,M,F, are the weightier matters of the law. Weightier matters spring from the law. For if you look into the law, you have made known that you have sinned.

Rom.7:7-12 - Verse 10 shows the purpose of the law ("...which was to bring life..."). It does not <u>give</u> life, it is <u>for</u> life. Why? The law reveals to us whether or not we have sinned (The law, with the Spirit, will convict us when we hear or read [in the Bible] of our sins. This leads us to say..."I have sinned").

If we walk with God and our neighbor, we are practicing J,M,F.

Zech.7:8-9 - It was the lack of J,M,F that led Israel into captivity (se vv.12-14). And without the truth of God, you cannot make accurate judgements (4:1-6).

Zech.8:16-17 - Here is God's example of exercising J,M,F (God had expressed this when Judah came back from captivity. Also speaking toward the Millenium).

If we do not exercise judgement on ourselves, God will chasten us to make us judge ourselves. Then after we know our sins, we go to God and ask him for mercy; to forgive us of all unrighteousness. Once this has been done, God wants us to go and sin no more - i.e. to go and walk in faith.

Jn.8:1-11 is an illustration of J,M,F under the New Covenant.

Verse 5 states the judgement. But how was it to be

administered?

VV.6-7 - We see here that if they would have judged themselves like they judged the woman, they themselves would have been stoned (Therefore they all left!). Verse 11 - This woman's attitude was one of desiring mercy. So, again, how was judgment administered? "Go and sin no more" or, Go and walk in faith.

To walk in a reconciled position with God, we must be constantly walk in J,M,F.

We must extend J,M,F to our neighbor. See Mt.6:14-15 - We are to go to our brother, find the fault (judgement), forgive him (mercy), and then help him (faith).

Jn.17:17 - For us to be at one with each other and with God, We need that continuous execising of J,M,F.
OT reference of J,M,F:

Lev.19:16-18 - If you don't help your brother from coming out of the pit, you are hating your brother.

Lev.5:1 - It's not only that your brother has sinned against you; even if you see him sin, or even think that he has sinned, you must go to him. And, if you don't, you will bear his sin.

NT reference of J,M,F:

Mt.5:23 - The "gifts" are our prayers of thanksgiving to God. You must go to your brother before you pray. In contrast to this is the prayer of the wicked man (Pr.15:8).

Mt.18:15-17 - Bring your brothers' sin to his attention so he can get back on the road to God (Jas.5:19-20).

YOU ARE YOUR BROTHERS' KEEPER!!

VERSE 14:

What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?

The word "works" is from the Gr. ergon which usually means physical labor. But in this context, James equates works as obedience.

VERSES 15-17:

If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things that are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also, faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Here is a physical example of faith and works.

Spiritually, it means: If you come before God and say, "Forgive me of my sins," but then you don't do what God says (i.e. Turn from your sins) the act of asking for forgiveness is worthless.

In other words, if I ask for forgiveness of sins (which is by faith), but do not continue trying to overcome (which are works), my faith is meaningless.

VERSE 18:

You have faith, but I have works.

Remember, faith = obedience.

VERSE 19:

You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe - and tremble!

The demons <u>know</u> that God and Christ exist. They encountered Jesus while he was here on the earth. You see, they <u>believe</u>, but they do not <u>obey</u>.

VERSE 20:

But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

This is the great dividing line; It is whether or not you will submit yourselves to obey.

VERSE 21-24:

The example of Abraham's faith <u>and</u> works.

VERSE 22:

Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect.

Abraham believed God (faith) and then he did what he was

told (works). Therefore faith was made perfect through obedience.

NOTE: Walk in faith = To still believe God and to do what he says even when prayer is not answered, and realize that he has your best interests at heart (God's Providence).

It is to say, even in trials, I will walk in faith; i.e. I will continue to do what God says even when my trials hit me the hardest.

VERSE 23:

Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

What does "accounted as righteousness" mean to us? It means, "Doing what you've been told to do."

VERSE 24:

You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

James is speaking of the continual walking in faith after the initial faith that was necessary for accepting Christs' sacrifice.

CHAPTER 3

VERSE 1:

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

Teacher = Gr. didaskalos.

"Be not many." The desire to be an Overseer is not wrong in itself (1Tim.3:1). But have love as its motivating force. The method for this = Service. Remember, you will receive a stricter judgment.

Every time you open your mouth, you become a teacher to one degree or another.

Words are the greatest power used in the world today as well as in the past. The nations themselves have risen and fallen because of great words.

1Cor.14:3 - The purpose of the mouth = edification,

exhortation and comfort.

Heb.5:4 - No one can take an office to himself. You just cannot do it!! So be careful about how you speak when trying to teach others! Don't come off as a self-appointed teacher.

VERSE 2:

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

The controlling of the tongue is the main key to going onto perfection. When you speak according to scripture, you had better make sure it is according to the law and the testimony (Isa.8:20).

With the use of the tongue, we are to be used as teachers in the Millenium (Isa.3-6).

VERSE 4-5:

...a very small rudder...a little fire...

Two examples of the POWER of the tongue.

VERSE 6:

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity (unrighteousness). The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature (existence); and it is set on fire by hell (Gehenna).

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE USES OF THE TONGUE:

Three people are necessary for the use of the tongue to come to fruition...

1) In the course of making the tongue "active" one will come up with a "source."

2) Then comes the "medium." He takes what the "source" has said and mouths it about wherever he pleases.

3) Then there is the "recipient." He is the Passive part. He hears and listens.

Out of all these, it is the "medium" that does the Devils dirty work. For Satan himself is the accuser/medium of the brethren (Rev.12:10).

USE AND MISUSE OF THE TONGUE:

1) GOSSIP. (Both active and passive)

- Pr.26:20 - When there's no medium, the fire goes out.

- vv.21-25 - The active tongue of the wicked

- v.19 - You are not to listen to what the gossiper has to say.

- Pr.6:19 - The wicked use of the tongue God calls an abomination.

- Ps.15 - Here is an example of the active and passive tongue.

- v.3 - "receives (endures) a reproach" = passive use of the tongue. A person who listens to evil is as bad as one who speaks it.

- Isa.33:14-15 - An example of "Hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil."

- Eph.5:4 - In trying to get our brother to listen to us, we make light of his problem instead of facing him seriously. THIS IS WRONG!!

2) FLATTERY. The opposite of deprecation (as stated above) is flattery. People use this not only to make you feel good, but to make you like them. Thus making themselves feel good.

- Pr.26:24-25 - If there are flatteries, chances are it's because they hate you!

- vv.26-28 - Flattery works ruin.

- 2Sam.15:1-7 - Absalom was the Supreme Flatterer. After saying all the things he did to David, he went on to lead a rebellion against him...God's very anointed.

- Note: When you don't respond to the words of a flatterer, he will turn and try to kill you (like Absalom).

PROPER USE OF THE TONGUE:

Pr.15:1-4 - You have the power of life in your tongue. See also Pr.18:21.

Pr.15:30 - It's a nice feeling to speak a good word at the right time.

Pr.12:25 - You have a chance to turn a person's whole life around with your tongue.

Pr.3:27 - You are not to withhold the good of your tongue.

Pr.25:11 - An example of the POWER of the spoken word.

VERSES 7-8:

For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

THREE STEPS TO TAMING THE TONGUE:

1) What you think and meditate on will come out of you (Pr.4:25; 23:7; Mt.12:34).

2) Hide God's Word in your heart (Ps.119:9-11). Meditate on his Word also (vv.97-108).

3) Through the Word and Spirit of God, we tame the tongue (Phil.4:8 = what to think on).

Jas.3:11-12 = Examples of how nature tames herself.

VERSE 13:

Who is wise and understanding among you?

Or, who is able to be a TEACHER among all of you?

VERSE 14:

But if you have bitter envy or self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.

I.e. evaluate youself. If you're the type that hates it when others get promoted, then don't go out and start breaking God's Law because of your own instability.

CHAPTER FOUR

VERSE 1:

Where do wars and strife come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasures that war in your members?

> "Desires for pleasure." (KJV = lust) Gr. hedone. Eng. sensual pleasure. Or, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die!" (Tit.3:3).

VERSE 2:

You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

> Lust = Gr. zeloo. Eng. Inordinate desire.

VERSE 3:

You ask and do not receive because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

> Pleasures = Gr. hedone (see v.1). Doing what the flesh wants to do. You cannot serve God and Mammon (v.1). You cannot love God and be in the world either (v.4).

ON JAS.4:1-3 - WAYS TO ENHANCE YOUR PRAYER LIFE

> 1) By The Recognition Of God And Respect For His Office.
>
> - Mt.6:9 - When you are addressing God, use his name "Father" more. It recognizes his office, what he is, and who he is. It is a loving respect for him.
>
> 2) Reconciliation With God. (I.e. making yourself right before him).
>
> - Dan.9:3-4 - Here, while praying, Daniel first recognizes who God is, then reconciles himself to him (v.5).
>
> - God does not hear sinners. Therefore, you must clean up your sins with him (Mt.5:12).
>
> 3) Reconciliation With Your Brother.
>
> - Mt.5:23 - We are to offer the fruit of our lips, i.e. thankfulness towards God.
>
> - The trouble between you and your brother must be cleared

before going to God (Pr.15:8).

4) Pray In Faith - Don't Be Double-Minded.

- Jas.1:7-8.

5) Ask That God's Will Be Done.

- Mt.26:39,42 - Have the attitude of totally submitting yourself into God's hands.

- Come to deeply understand that it is God in his wisdom that wills, and that he knows what he is doing.

- Rom.8:26 - Come to know the will of the Faithful High Priest and know that he intercedes for us.

6) Be Willing To Accept The Answer Given.

- Sometimes there is no answer immediately.

7) Pray Fervently.

- Jas.5:16 - "effective" = Gr. energeo. Eng. energetic. Fervent = Gr. zelotes. Eng. hot, heated.

8) Surrender And Humble Yourselves To God.

- Jas.4:6 - "More grace" = more favor = Gr. charis (Grace has two meanings - 1) divine favor; 2) unmerited pardon).

9) Fasting - A Way To Humility.

- Dan.9:3 - Daniel was going to fast for four days, but it turned into weeks.

10) Persevere In Prayer.

- 1Thes.5:17 - Lit. means to pray until the answer comes.

- When you have "dead space" (i.e. those times when all you can do is talk to yourself), use it to talk with God rather than yourself. It is not necessarily a mode of prayer, but rather, of conversation. Talk about examining yourself, for instance.

11) Pray For God's Work And His Servants.

- Eph.6:15 - Saying that you are willing to take the Gospel to the world.

- vv.18-19 - An example of praying for the saints and

apostles.

12) Pray That God Will Give You A New Heart And A New Mind.

- Ps.51:10-11 - "...create in me...renew..." Words that show a newness of life, not a doctoring up of the old. By asking God for newness of life, we will have <u>added</u> power to overcome.

13) Pray To God For Protection From Satan.

- Eph.6:16.

14) Combine Prayer With Study.

- The Psalms are the best place to start for getting your mind on God and who he is.

15) Use The Name Of The Father Throughout Your Prayers.

16) Pray In The Name Of Christ.

- Or, better said, the <u>authority of Christ</u>.

17) Make A Prayer List With Names And Situations.

- Not to be used <u>all</u> the time, but whenever helpful.

18) Have a <u>Real</u> Conversation With God.

- Num.14:11-17 - Moses used sound logic with God.

- vv.18-20 - Then Moses appealed to the characteristics of God. You should ask that he will deliver you.

If you ask with the attitudes listed above, asking amiss (Jas.4:3) will be nullified.

VERSE 4:

Adulterers and adulteresses!

Speaking of spiritual adultery by putting God second.

Your members = your body. See v.5. Also Rom.8:20 - We, as flesh and blood human beings, are subject to vanity.

VERSE 5:

Or do you think that the scripture says in vain, "The spirit that dwells in us yearns jealously"?

Better trans. "The spirit that dwells in us leads to envy."

REALIZE THAT THERE IS A FIGHT GOING ON WITHIN YOU!!! You are in a fight for your life!!

VERSE 6:

But he gives more grace. Therefore he says: God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

There is a way out of that spirit (v.5). That is, by God's grace and power. The more the world throws at you, the more grace God will give you to combat with.

VERSE 7:

Therefore submit to God. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you.

Turn yourself totally toward God. If you submit to Satan, your sin will cling with you.

VERSE 8:

Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands you sinners; and purify your hearts you double-minded.

If you do this, God will receive you. 1Kgs.18:21 - An example of correcting double-mindedness.

VERSE 9:

Lament and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

Lament = Gr. teleiporeo. Eng. to realize the state that you are in; to realize your misery.

To really come out of this world, realize that the world has nothing to offer.

Mourning - Here is what the Church will be doing when times get worse. When you notice the afflictions of the land, it is time to weep and mourn (Isa.61:2-3; Eze.9:2-4). But, at the same time, you must set the example of the hope and joy that is yours.

Eze.9:6 - "Dwelling place" = the Church. Those who sigh and cry will be spared. God is shown as not even being considered in the world's ways (vv.7-9). They invent music that's the opposite of David - God's servant (Amos6:5). In Amos, God goes on to show the afflictions of the world because of their ways (vv.6-7).

VERSE 10:

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Ways to humble yourself are to fast and mourn. This is our responsibility, as Christians, to carry out.

Isa.58:5-8 - Concerning fasting. Getting close to God increases your spiritual understanding. It re-orients you with what you ought to be doing. God asks, "Is putting on a show a real fast" (v.5)?

Verses 6-7 - Speaking of setting your heart on spiritual things. "Cover him" = with the spiritual righteousness of the saints, i.e. the linen garments. "Hide myself" = from God my sins.

VERSE 11:

Do not speask evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

Speak evil = Gr. katakaleo. Eng. To slander; to bring slander against. I.e. do not be a slanderer like Satan is.

The verse is saying, "Do not bring a slanderous report when judging your brother." But then, how does one judge righteously? By relying on what God says is right and wrong when considering the ways of your neighbor.

And how to do this? By looking into the Law that tells you what is good and what is evil (Lev.5:1 e.g.). Can <u>you</u> judge <u>that</u> Law (v.12)?

VERSE 12:

Who are you to judge another?

<u>JUDGE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT ACCORDING TO THE LAW</u> - <u>PRACTICE JUDGMENT, MERCY AND FAITH!!!!</u>

VERSE 13:

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit."

Come = Gr. age. Buy and sell = Gr. emporeuomai. Today's stock market mentality.

VERSES 13-14:

These are people who base their lives on buying and selling for a profit. In other words, they're not doing a single thing to help betterg anyone's life or to benefit society.

VERSE 17:

Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do, to him it is sin.

WAYS TO SIN:

1) Acts Of Commission - Lit. Breaking the Law (1Jn.3:4). Anything with a "Thou shalt not" attached to it.

2) Acts Of Omission - A failure to do what you're told to do. Anything with a "Thou shall" attached to it.

3) What Is Not Of Faith Is Sin - Rom.14:23.

- With law, there is a latitude of how to keep the commandments. For when it comes to keeping them, you can only do so much with a conscience effort. There is a need therefore, step out on faith. E.g. when keeping the Sabbath holy, or honoring your parents. You don't know how to keep these laws perfectly save by practice and spiritual growth. Thus, there is a latitude God allows you to have.

- Rom.14:14,19-20 - In this context, Paul speaks of offending your brother because of food.

- v.14 - He is not talking about eating pork, but speaking about meat-eaters vs. vegetarianism; wine drinkers vs. tee-totalers.

- Saying, "Don't divide the Body of Christ because of food (for many a Gentile had a conscience concerning meat. For in their past ways, meat was used to sacrifice to their idols. Therefore, the Gentile mind would be concerned with whether or not to eat meat for fear of it being a pagan sacrificial offering. This is the reason why they preferred to abstain...they were doing it for the sake of keeping a

clean conscience toward God). For if one is abstaining from meat (which is lawful - I.e. God has ordained no laws against such), don't condemn him because of it. He is doing it by faith (he knows that it is lawful because there is no law against it). He is doing it willfully and with a clean conscience.

- 1Tim.4:1-5 - (Speaking to those in the Church) These were commanded to stay away from meat...which God calls a doctrine of demons. They were making the abstinence of eating meat a thing of righteousness. The person in the Book of Romans did not stop eating meat to appear more righteous, but by reason of choice and for conscience sake.

- Rom.14:15-16 - You are held responsible for your brother because of your knowledge (i.e. you know that the meat has not been given to idols, or, the fact is, idols are nothing, so the meats has not been defiled or unfit for food).

- You know that it is all right to eat meat and that it just as all right not to eat meat. Therefore, if you know that your brother does not eat meat (because of his conscience, as in this case here) do not eat meat in front of him. It is on your head if you cause your brother to stumble while having the knowledge of your brothers' weakness (v.21).

- v.22 - You know it's all right to eat meat or to fast on any given day. So don't condemn others for doing what they know is lawful. You do what you do by faith - not by law - and so do they.

4) Sins Of Unbelief.

- Heb.4:1-3 - They did not enter God's rest because of unbelief (i.e. disobedience [vv.5-6]).

- Belief (obedience) is the first step when coming to God (Heb.11:6).

CHAPTER FIVE

VERSES 1-2:

The rich man will be called into account for his ways. These are they who do not contribute to man or society (see notes on ch.4 vv.13-14).

VERSES 5-6:

> You looked to those who lived in luxury; whereas you looked down upon the blue-collar worker...the very ones who strive to make an honest living for an honest wage. You (the rich) spit on him with out care (Jas.2:5-6).

VERSE 10:

My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.

> Suffering = Gr. kakopatheia. Eng. to suffer ill or evil.

VERSE 11:

...the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

> Compassionate = Gr. polysplonchnos. Eng. extremely compassionate.

VERSE 12:

But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes" be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.

> (This verse closes the thought that started at 4:13)
>
> Why not Swear?
>
> - Under the terms of the New Covenant, we now have God's Spirit...his very presence in us. We also have his Word. Therefore, there is no need to swear.
>
> - Under the Old Covenant, they would take an oath and claim God's name. Today, we submit to God's will and live according to it.
>
> - By not living in accordance with God's will, you set yourself <u>before</u> God!
>
> Swear = Do not say <u>on your own</u> that you will do such and such. That's what the rich man did in 4:13 and look what he has become now (v.14). 4:15 shows what you ought to do. Do not take the prerogative of God. And don't go around saying "God willing" all the time either.

VERSE 13:

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.

Suffering = Gr. kakopatheia. Eng. to suffer ill or evil.

Pray = Gr. prosuchomai. to pour out your whole being; to earnestly beseech.

Sing psalms = this is one way to offer spiritual sacrifices to God - by the fruit of your lips.

VERSES 14-16:

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

GREEK WORDS

Verse 14...

- Sick = Gr.astheneo. Eng. infirm; without strength (it carries a very broad connotation when used).

- Call = Gr. proskalpomai. Eng. to summon or to invite; a legal invitation.

- Pray = Gr. prosuchomai. Same as v.13.

- Over = Gr. epi. Eng. downward pressure exerted; down.

Verse 15...

- Faith = Gr. euche. Eng. to petition God in a votive obligation.

- Save = Gr. sozo. Eng. to make safe; to protect.

- Sick = Gr. kamno. Eng. the exhausted one.

- Raise up = Gr. egeiro. Eng. to awaken or arouse from a sleep or disease.

- Sins = Gr. harmartia. Eng. to miss the mark; to sin.

Verse 16...

- Trespasses = Gr. paraptoma. Eng. willful transgression; error.

- Pray = Gr. euchomai. Eng. to pray; to wish.

- Healed = Gr. iaomai. Eng. to make whole.

- Effective = Gr. energeo. Eng. with energy.

- Fervent = Gr. zelos. Eng. hot.

- Prayer = Gr. deesis. Eng. request, prayer, supplication.

EXCURSUS: CALLING FOR THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH (JAS.5:14-16)

"And the prayer of faith will save the sick." It does not say "heal," but "save" (see Gr.v.15). In v. 16 it says, "that you may be healed." This is the first time that "healed" is used in this context.

These verses indicate that it is more than just going to the Elderand getting anointed for being sick.

1) The men are representing God. Therefore, you are recognizing that God is working through that man when you call for an anointing.

2) "Sick." A very broad sense of the word is being used within the context.

3) What we're talking about here is putting together the whole package of Christianity (This is a good reason why these scriptures are found at the end of epistle that has spoken of going onto perfection).

4) Examples of people praying for others...

- Gen.20:1-3,7,17 - Abimelech and his wife were unable to bear children, so he was looking for someone to bear his child for him. But note: Abimelech was not anywhere close to being under the Old Covenant. He simply obeyed by doing what God had told him to do. Therefore, God healed him.

- Job42:7-10 - Job's prayer was answered when he forgave others, thus healing him.

5) Sickness and Healing. Though healing is one of God's benefits, Jas.5:14-16 does not do away with the rest of the

Bible and the formulas for the development/creation of holy, righteous character. Jesus himself left us the example that we are to follow his steps. Christ suffered, and so must we (1Pet.4:1). And that suffering may be through sickness.

6) What causes Sickness?

a) Sin. Or, the transgression of God's Law (1Jn.3:4). BUT, sin will not always be the cause for sickness. Likewise, sickness does not mean the person has sinned.

- Mt.9:1-6 - (the paralyzed man healed) This man was not converted, and he did not have the holy Spirit either. He was healed to show that Christ had the power to forgive sins. We, now, are in the transition period between covenants. In these verses, they were not. People were still going to the Temple to offer animal sacrifice. There was no one aware yet, of the change taking place in the Covenants. People were still looking to the Levitical priesthood for the cleansing of sin and to administer sacrifice. Hear, we see Jesus coming on the scene with the power to forgive sins and heal the people. This was definitely something foreign to their thinking! (With this, Christ was showing that he was more interested with the spiritual than with the physical).

b) The sins of the father are passed on to the third and fourth generation.

- Ex.20:5 - Note the following example...babies are born deformed because of venereal disease. Did the baby sin? No, but the parents did. The same with drug addicts and others.

c) By not properly judging ourselves and not properly discerning the body of Christ, thereby bringing judgment down upon ourselves.

- 1Cor.11:16-21 - The brethren were having like a pot-luck style dinner. Except that even here, some were being gluttons and eating all the food. Then the rest would end up having nothing. The end result of all this was division within the body of Christ (v.21).

What is done at the passover service...

- Christs' literal body has paid for both our physical and spiritual sins (Jn.6:51). Thus you must eat both his flesh and blood (Jn.6:54). Now, Jesus himself was given a physical, mortal body (Heb.10:5). When that body was offered, there was no distinction between the body and the blood for the payment for sin (i.e. no distinction between

physical and spiritual sins - vv.6-10). The offering of himself was one whole sacrifice for sin. THE BLOOD AND BODY EQUALS A TOTAL SACRIFICE (Heb.10:19-20; Col.1:20-22; Eph.2:13-15).

- 1Cor.11:23-25 - The bread/body of Christ = 1) the lit. body of Christ; 2) the Word of God.

- 1Cor.10:16-17 - The bread/body = the Church of God. Both Christ and the Church make up one body (1Cor.12:12).

- 1Cor.11:29 - "unworthily" = irreverently. First of all, NONE are worthy of partaking of the sacrifice. BUT, Christ is willing to give it if we come to him by faith.

- v.30 - The Corinthians were not discerning the body of Christ. In other words, they were not considering that Christ and the Church are one. It was in this way that they were taking the Passover without reverence.

- v.29 - "discerning" = Gr. diakrina. Eng. thoroughly judging. You must discern the Lord's body and be reconciled to your brother before partaking of the Passover.

- v.30 - The result of "not discerning (not thoroughly judging) the Lord's body?" Death and sickness.

- v.31 - If we do not judge others, God will bring judgment down upon us.

- v.32 - "But when we are judged." You will be tried. But it will be for your own growth, not because of judgment. For whom the Lord loves, he also chastens (Heb.12:6). This chastening also includes sickness. God may even allow us to die by sickness even while in the faith.

- v.33 - A nice way of saying...DO NOT TAKE THE PASSOVER IRREVERENTLY!!

d) That the works of God can be made manifest.

- Jn.9:1-4 - Even the disciples realized where sickness can come from.

e) That we might have created in us holy, righteous character.

- God allows us to be tried and tested. He also lets Satan tempt us for a purpose. Why? Our judgment is now, and God wants us to be ready to inherit his kingdom now rather than to be in the judgment later. With this, therefore, there is the need for faith...

There is a formula (recipe, methodology) whereby God creates in us his holy, righteous character. He doesn't create within us character by fiat, but by a process.

- Mt.9:27-29 - These men had a type of faith that made them realize that Jesus was Messiah and that he had the power to heal them. But, were these men converted? No. At this time even the Apostles were not converted. None had as yet entered the covenant of sacrifice. There were none who had entered the process of going onto perfection. Though these men were told, "by your faith," you must always consider the circumstances when you see a healing in the Bible.

- At this time, many will apply Heb.13:8 and say that the above example must always come to pass. But this is just not so. God had healed many in the OT who were not under the covenant of sacrifice, and yet were healed...none were converted. Christ did it different then than he does now because the covenants have changed. WHAT GOD IS AND WHO GOD IS HAS NOT CHANGED, ONLY THE COVENANTS HAVE CHANGED. The way he has dealt and is dealing with his people has always changed all through the centuries. Why? Because there have been needs for change (e.g. the new covenant).

- Heb.13:8 is a slight paraphrase of Mal.3:6. This v. relates to the question posed in 2:7, "Where is the God of judgment/justice?" God has always been the God of justice. Asking such a question was saying that God had changed his righteous character. So God refutes them by saying, "I change not, therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Israel" (3:6). If God is not a God of justice, Jacob would have been wiped out a long time ago.

- God had said all of the above around the statement made that he is going to send his messenger of the New Covenant. What that says, overall, is that though certain things must change concerning men, God's purpose and character does not. God does not change. He does do justice, i.e. he will send his Messiah.

The need for faith (cont.)...

At Corinth, the people had many problems. They were debating about who was the greatest; they were taking each other to court; they let incestuous relationships remain in the Church and they kept the Passover incorrectly. And to top it all off, they thought they needed to parade the gift of tongues to show how great they were and put on all kinds of thrill shows with their gift. So Paul uses 1Cor.13 to show them what they REALLY need.

- 1Cor.12:31 - "excellent" = Gr. hyperbole. Eng. far more exceeding. Paul goes on to show that ch.13 is the more excellent way.

- 13:2 - Love = Gr. agape. Eng. spiritual love. If anything I do is not done in love, no matter how noble, it will profit me nothing. Therefore, my life must constantly be moving in the direction of spiritual love.

- vv.4-8 - Here are some of the chief qualities of love that must be manifested in our lives.

- v.13 - "Abide" = Lives. FAITH IS THE SPRINGBOARD TO ALL THINGS SPIRITUAL. It's the beginning towards your relationship with God (Heb.11:6). Faith is also the springboard to hope. The hope that you have while in this world and the hope to come. Faith and Hope go on to produce holy and righteous character within you. And the outcome of living by these (faith and hope) is love (1Tim.1:5).

Defining faith...

Heb.11:1 - "now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Faith + hope = love. But what is hoped for? What is the evidence?

An example is in Rom.4:17 - As far as Abraham was concerned, Isaac was dead. But Abraham knew that it was through Isaac that Abraham's name was to be passed onto. So, Abraham knew that, if anything, he would live by a resurrection (thus Abraham <u>was</u> going to kill Isaac) [Heb.11:17-19].

- Rom.4:18-21 - "against hope" = the hope that is in the world; "in hope" = the hope of God...THIS IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR - <u>THE RESURRECTION</u>!! Abraham had been hoping that Isaac would be born and it was by the holy Spirit that God made it possible by opening Sarah's womb. And though this is what happened - and it only happened by God's intervention - it took Abraham, by faith, to come together and have intercourse in order for the barrenness to be gone. It took faith and hope for Abraham and Sarah to come together and conceive Isaac.

- Rom.4:22-5:2 - "Now, being justified by faith." I.e. submitting to God, being convicted of sin, thus repenting; after repentance, we are baptized; in being baptized, we have hands laid upon us and receive the gift of the holy Spirit <u>by faith</u>. This is the process wherewith Christ justifies us by faith (5:1).

- After all this, we come to the point in our lives - by getting baptized and submitting to God in obedience - we say to God, "I will be faithful to my death. No matter what it takes." And look onto what is hoped for (this includes anywhere from financial problems, sickness, unfaithful wife, etc.). GOD WILL GIVE YOU WHAT IS NECESSARY TO SEE TO IT THAT YOU ARE THERE IN THE MILLENIUM!

- Now, look at Rom.5:3-4 - Here is a succinct list of <u>what is to be hoped for</u>. We are to glory in our tribulations which will come in many forms. Why? Because these trials produce patience. And patience is necessary for becoming perfect and complete. So, if you are sick, it could be so that you may produce the patience necessary to go onto perfection (Jas.1:2-4). If a person is anointed for healing and is not healed, it may be because of lack of faith, <u>or</u>, it could very well be that <u>God isn't done producing the patience necessary for you to go onto perfection</u>! God wants you to learn from the sickness <u>what he wants you to learn</u>. Therfore, healing by anointing may not readily take place. Remember, when you came under the covenant of sacrifice, you gave your life totally to God and said, "Whatever it takes; whatever you need to do to me; whatever is best for me, that I will do in order to have your character produced in me." This can entail sickness or even death.

- Rom.5:4 - "perseverance" (Gr. hupomone. Eng. p roof-testing). In this context, things are given in their course in order to produce other things. So, in this light, if you are not immediately healed, chances are your testing is not over yet.

- v.5 - "...hope does not disappoint..." Hope = the resurrection. "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts..." How? By <u>being</u> tested, <u>being</u> found approved and <u>living</u> by faith. Saying, therefore, whether you are living now or will be in the resurrection, you still have hope.

- 2Cor.12:7-10 - (Paul's example of living faith)
Paul was given a thorn in his flesh (prob. a physical ailment like, eyesight, or ulcers). But God allowed this. Paul, a chief apostle of God, who had healed literally hundreds of people <u>by faith</u>, was not healed himself. Why? God allowed it to remain so Paul could produce the patience necessary for perfection. His reaction to all this? Paul gloried in his infirmities (v.10). To count them as joy was relying on God to see him through them.

The Will Of God...

- Lk.5:12-13 - This man, too, was not on the road to perfection, nor under the covenant of sacrifice. Yet, it was God's will to perform this miracle of healing.

- v.12 - Clean = Gr. katharizo. Eng. purify, purge, cleanse.

- Rom.8:25-26 - It's the Spirit that intercedes for us and helps us to cry out to God in our infirmities. Thus, you will be learning God's will when you are not even sure what God's will is while patiently enduring your diverse troubles. The Spirit itself will intercede for us on these occasions.

The question may arise..."Should we pray for an individual's healing if it isn't God's will to heal?"

- First of all, God doesn't <u>want</u> anyone to be sick. God did not ordain sickness to be used for the trials that he now may put us through. The very fact that we sin <u>is</u> why these trials -like sickness- occur and exist. God uses sickness as a tool to have us endure and overcome and be judged while here on earth. God will continue to allow sickness as long as you need to endure trial. So, pray with all your heart and being -as David did- that the sickness of another can be taken away (which may mean the person will learn the lessons the trial is trying to incur and go onto the next problem.

- Rom.8:27-28 - Realize also that when you are sick, or somebody else is, that Jesus himself is also praying with us, according to the will of the Father, as we also pray for healing.

VERSE 16:

Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. (See above for greek words)

If there is anything between you and your brother, go to him and be reconciled. In <u>this</u> context, you will go to the Elders. Note: When it comes to confessing your sins to one another, make sure they are sins that are between you and he. Don't start popping off a list of sins so as to compare yourselves with each other. The idea of confessing your sins <u>is to be reconciled with the brother you sinned against</u>. When it comes to the confession of sins, you are to go to God and get counsel with a minister, <u>not your friends</u>. <u>ALWAYS</u>, when sin is confessed, it is for the forgiveness of sins, not the swapping of war-stories.

VERSE 17:

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.

James uses this illustration to bring the topic down to earth. It is to show that we can have the same power Elijah had <u>if</u> we put in the prayer and power that Elijah did. You know, we tend to immortalize people like Elijah and make them bigger than they are. There's nothing wrong with showing honor and respect to their office, but always remember that they were human just like we are.

VERSES 19-20:

Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

Folks, <u>you are your brothers keeper</u>. You are hating your brother -which is a form of murder (1Jn.3:15)- when you don't go to him and confront him with his sin (Lev.19:17).

Verse 20 - Sin cannot be covered unless it is first confessed and repented of by the person himself to God. But, you as a brother can help the process (Mt.18:15; 1Jn.3:12-18 - esp. v.14). For, being your brothers' keeper is to <u>love him</u> (1Pet.4:8)!