

A Syntactical Analysis of Christian Teaching According to James 1:16-27

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ABSTRACT

The book of James reveals three purposes of Christian’s tribulation. First, it comes from the present argument: let his endurance have a perfect result which is you become mature and complete, and lack of nothing (1:4). The second purpose derives from the future argument: blessed the one who endures in the tribulation. Because, after these things, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him (1:12). The last purpose uses the past argument: He gave us birth with his true word so that we might become the first fruit amongst his all creations. This article analyses the second and the last purpose through a syntactical analysis.

Keywords: *Syntactical Analysis, James, Christian Teaching, Purposes.*

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INTRODUCTION

Chapter one of the book of James has two kinds of outlines. First, James gives an exhortation. There are five exhortations throughout chapter one (1:2, 5-6, 9-10, 13, 16). The last two exhortations are presented in negative way with the word ‘don’t’. Each exhortation speaks of a different topic: mind, prayer, feeling, words, and belief. The second outline is a reason or purpose of each exhortation. James repeats the same words to denote his thesis and to move from one topic to another.

1:2-8	
Positive	Negative
Imperative: Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις (2).	
Reason/Result: γινώσκοντες ὅτι τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν. (3). ἢ δὲ ὑπομονὴ ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω, ἵνα ᾗτε τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι. (4).	
Imperative: Εἰ δέ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας, αἰτεῖτω παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος, καὶ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ. (5).	Imperative: αἰτεῖτω δὲ ἐν πίστει μηδὲν διακρινόμενος· ὁ γὰρ διακρινόμενος ἕοικεν

	κλύδωνι θαλάσσης άνεμιζομένω και ριπιζομένω. (6).
	Result: μή γάρ οίεσθω ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος ὅτι λήμψεται τι παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου, (7)
	Reason: ἀνὴρ δίψυχος, ἀκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ. (8)

1:9-12	
Positive	Negative
Imperative: Καυχάσθω δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς ἐν τῷ ὕψει αὐτοῦ (9).	Imperative: ὁ δὲ πλούσιος ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ (10a).
	Reason/Result: τι ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου παρελεύσεται (10b) ἀνέτειλεν γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος σὺν τῷ καύσωνι καὶ ἐξήρανε τὸν χόρτον, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος αὐτοῦ ἐξέπεσεν, καὶ ἡ εὐπρέπεια τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀπώλετο· οὕτως καὶ ὁ πλούσιος ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ μαρανθήσεται. (11).
Result: Μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν, ὅτι δόκιμος γενόμενος λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν. (12).	

1:13-18	
Positive	Negative
	Imperative: μηδεὶς πειραζόμενος λεγέτω ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ πειράζομαι (13a).
	Reason: ὁ γὰρ θεὸς ἀπείραστός ἐστιν κακῶν, πειράζει δὲ αὐτὸς οὐδένα. (13b) ἕκαστος δὲ πειράζεται ὑπὸ τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας ἐξελκόμενος καὶ δελεαζόμενος· (14).
	Result: εἶτα ἡ ἐπιθυμία συλλαβοῦσα τίκει ἀμαρτίαν, ἡ δὲ ἀμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα ἀποκτείνει θάνατον (15).
	Imperative: Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί (16).
Reason: πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθῆ καὶ πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον ἄνωθέν ἐστιν καταβαῖνον ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων, παρ' ᾧ οὐκ ἔστι παραλλαγή ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα. (17)	
Purpose/Result: βουληθεὶς ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς λόγῳ ἀληθείας εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἀπαρχὴν τινα τῶν αὐτοῦ κτισμάτων. (18)	

RESEARCH METHOD

This article uses syntactical analysis as its research method. A syntactical analysis is a method that seeks out the relationship between a word with the other words. In other words, this article analyzes the function of nominative such as either a nominative subject or predicate nominative. Nominative itself is a form and it needs to be exegeted its function.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Verse 16

Text

Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί.

Analysis

Μὴ πλανᾶσθε] ‘do not be deceived’. Imperfective aspect.

ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί] ‘my beloved brothers’. Simple address of vocative.

Verse 17

Text

πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δῶρημα τέλειον ἄνωθεν ἐστὶν καταβαῖνον ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων, παρ’ ᾧ οὐκ ἔστι παραλλαγὴ ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα.

Analysis

πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ] ‘every good gift’. Nominative subject of ἐστὶν.

καὶ πᾶν δῶρημα τέλειον] ‘and every perfect present’. Nominative subject of ἐστὶν.

ἄνωθεν] ‘from above’.

καταβαῖνον] ‘coming down’. Predicate participle.

ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς] ‘from the Father’. This preposition with a genitive case indicates the source.

τῶν φώτων] ‘of lights’. Genitive of product.

παρ’ ᾧ] ‘with whom’. Association.

οὐκ ἔστι] ‘there is no’. State.

παραλλαγὴ] ‘change (variation)’. Nominative subject of οὐκ ἔστι. Appears only in here. It seems James wants to contrast to verse 6.

ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα] ‘or shadow of turning’. Nominative subject of οὐκ ἔστι.

Verse 18

Text

βουληθεὶς ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς λόγῳ ἀληθείας εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἀπαρχὴν τινα τῶν αὐτοῦ κτισμάτων.

Analysis

βουληθεὶς] ‘with willingness’. Participle of manner.

ἀπεκύησεν] ‘he gave birth’. Constativ aorist. Perfective aspect and semelfactive. Contrast verse 15.

ἡμᾶς] ‘us’. Accusative of direct object of ἀπεκύησεν.

λόγῳ] ‘with the word’. Dative of means.

ἀληθείας] ‘truth’. Descriptive genitive.

εἰς τὸ εἶναι] ‘so that might’. This construction indicates a purpose.

ἡμᾶς] ‘we’. Accusative of subject infinitive.

ἀπαρχὴν τινα] ‘certain first fruit’. Predicate accusative.

τῶν αὐτοῦ κτισμάτων] ‘among his creatures’. Partitive genitive.

Verse 19

Text

Ἰστε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί· ἔστω δὲ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ταχύς εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι, βραδύς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι, βραδύς εἰς ὀργήν·

Analysis

Ἰστε] ‘you know (this)’. Perfective present.

ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί] ‘my beloved brothers’. Simple address of vocative.

ἔστω] ‘let (human being) be. Command.

δέ] ‘now’.

πᾶς ἄνθρωπος] ‘human being’. Nominative subject. Cf 1:9; 2:20, 24; 3:8-9; 5:17.

ταχύς] ‘quick’. Predicate nominative.

εἰς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι] ‘to hear’. This construction indicates a purpose or reference.

βραδύς] ‘slow’. Predicate nominative.

εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι] ‘to speak’. This construction indicates a purpose or reference.

βραδύς] ‘slow’. Predicate nominative.

εἰς ὀργήν] ‘to anger’. Purpose or reference.

Verse 20

Text

ὀργὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ οὐ κατεργάζεται.

Analysis

James repeats the word ὀργή.

ὀργή] ‘anger’. Nominative subject of κατεργάζεται. This verb appears first at 1:3.

γάρ] ‘because’. Causal.

ἀνδρός] ‘of man’. Attributed genitive.

δικαιοσύνην] ‘the righteousness’. Accusative of direct object of κατεργάζεται.

θεοῦ] ‘of God’. Attributed genitive.

οὐ κατεργάζεται] ‘(the anger of man) does not achieve. Gnomic present. Imperfective aspect.

Verse 21

Text

διὸ ἀποθέμενοι πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν καὶ περισσεῖαν κακίας ἐν πραύτητι δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον τὸν δυνάμενον
σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν.

Analysis

διό] ‘therefore’. Inferential Conjunctions.

ἀποθέμενοι] ‘getting rid’. Attendant circumstance participle.

πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν] ‘every moral uncleanness’. Accusative of direct object of ἀποθέμενοι.

περισσεῖαν] ‘abundance’. Accusative of direct object of ἀποθέμενοι.

κακίας] ‘of evil’. Attributed genitive.

ἐν πραύτητι] ‘with humility’. Manner.

δέξασθε] ‘receive’. Perfective aspect.

τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον] ‘implanted word’. Accusative of direct object of δέξασθε.

τὸν δυνάμενον] ‘which able’. This article has a function as a relative pronoun.

σῶσαι] ‘to save’. Complementary infinitive.

τὰς ψυχὰς] ‘souls. Accusative of direct object of σῶσαι.

ὑμῶν] ‘your’. Possessive genitive.

Verse 22

Text

Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου καὶ μὴ μόνον ἀκροαταὶ παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς.

Analysis

Γίνεσθε] ‘be’. Imperfective aspect.

δέ] ‘and’. Connective.

ποιηταὶ λόγου] ‘doers of the word’. Nominative subject of Γίνεσθε. Descriptive genitive.

καὶ μὴ μόνον ἀκροαταί] ‘and not only forgetful hearers. Nominative subject of Γίνεσθε.

παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς] ‘who deludes’. BDAG interprets it as deceive as well. Accusative of direct object of ἑαυτούς.

Verse 23

Text

ὅτι εἴ τις ἀκροατῆς λόγου ἐστὶν καὶ οὐ ποιητής, οὗτος ἔοικεν ἀνδρὶ κατανοῶντι τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ.

Analysis

James repeats the word ἀκροατῆς λόγου and ποιητής. James also provides the reason. James likes to present an imperative with its reason, and illustration.

ὅτι] ‘for’. Causal.

εἴ . . . ἐστὶν] ‘if . . . is’. This construction indicates the first-class condition: the assumption of truth for the sake of argument (Wallace 690).

τις] ‘anyone’. Nominative subject of ἐστὶν.

ἀκροατῆς λόγου] ‘a hearer of the word’. Predicate nominative of ἐστὶν.

καὶ οὐ ποιητής] ‘and not a doer’. Predicate nominative of ἐστὶν.

ἔοικεν] ‘is like’. Perfect with a present force. This verb appears only in Job (6:3, 25) and James (1:6, 23). Cf Genesis 1:26 (εἰκόν). Stative aspect. Appears in 1:6 as well.

ἀνδρὶ] ‘a man’. Dative direct object of ἔοικεν.

κατανοῶντι] ‘contemplates’. Predicate participle.

τὸ πρόσωπον] ‘face’. Accusative of direct object of κατανοῶντι.

τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ] ‘his origin’. Genitive of reference.

ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ] ‘in the mirror’. Spatial.

Verse 24

Text

κατενόησεν γὰρ ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἀπελήλυθεν καὶ εὐθέως ἐπελάθετο ὅποῖος ἦν.

Analysis

James repeats κατανόηω.

κατενόησεν] ‘he contemplated’. Constativ aorist or gnomic aorist. Perfective aspect and accomplishment.

γὰρ] ‘for’. Causal.

ἑαυτὸν] ‘himself’. Accusative of direct object of κατενόησεν.

καὶ ἀπελήλυθεν] ‘then he has departed’. Transitional conjunction and gnomic perfect. Perfective aspect and semelfactive.

καὶ εὐθέως] ‘and immediately’. James uses immediately only in this verse.

ἐπελάθετο] ‘he forgot’. Constativ (consummative) aorist or gnomic aorist. Perfective aspect. State aktionsart.

ὅποῖος] ‘what kind of person’. Predicate nominative of ἦν.

Verse 25**Text**

ὁ δὲ παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας καὶ παραμείνας οὐκ ἀκροατῆς ἐπιλησμονῆς γενόμενος ἀλλὰ ποιητῆς ἔργου, οὗτος μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται.

Analysis

This verse repeats some words in 1:22-23.

ὁ . . . παρακύψας] ‘he who looks intently’. Substantival participle and pendent nominative.

δέ] ‘but’. Adversative.

εἰς νόμον τέλειον] ‘into the perfect law’. The word ‘perfect’ appears five times in the book of James (1:4 [2x], 17, 25; 3:2). Preposition εἰς plus accusative case indicates location. NASB gives bible references to law: Joh 8:32; Rom 8:2; Gal 2:4; Gal 6:2; Jam 2:12; 1Pe 2:16.

τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας] ‘which of liberty’. The article here functions as a relative pronoun. Attributive participle. καί] ‘and’. Connects two participles.

παραμείνας] ‘continues’. Substantival participle.

οὐκ . . . γενόμενος] ‘not . . . becoming’. The function of this participle is difficult to determined. It could be a substantial participle, or manner, or complementary participle.

ἀκροατῆς ἐπιλησμονῆς] ‘a hearer of forgetfulness’. A predicate nominative and attributive genitive. The word forgetfulness only appears in the book of James.

ἀλλά] ‘but’. Adversative.

ποιητῆς ἔργου] ‘a doer of work’. A predicate nominative and descriptive genitive.

οὗτος] ‘this man’. Nominative subject of ἔσται.

μακάριος] ‘blessed’. Predicate nominative of ἔσται.

ἐν τῇ ποιήσει] ‘in the work’. This preposition with dative case indicates a location.

αὐτοῦ] ‘of him’. Subjective genitive.

ἔσται] ‘(this man) shall be’. Impersonal verb and it denotes a state.

Verse 26**Text**

Εἴ τις δοκεῖ θρησκὸς εἶναι μὴ χαλιναγωγῶν γλῶσσαν αὐτοῦ ἀλλ’ ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ, τούτου μάταιος ἡ θρησκεία.

Analysis

Εἴ . . . δοκεῖ] ‘if . . . (anyone) thinks. This construction indicates the first-class condition: the assumption of truth for the sake of argument (Wallace 690).

τις] ‘anyone’. Nominative subject of δοκεῖ.

θρησκός] ‘religious. Predicate nominative. It appears only once in the book of James.

εἶναι] ‘to be (he is)’. Subject of infinitive.

μὴ χαλιναγωγῶν] ‘but not bridle’. It appears only once in the book of James. Manner.

γλῶσσαν] ‘tongue’. Accusative of direct object of χαλιναγωγῶν.

αὐτοῦ] ‘of him’. Possessive genitive.

ἀλλά] ‘exclamatory force’. Exclamatory force.

ἀπατῶν] ‘deceive’. Manner. What is the meaning of this participle? Mislead or deceive.

καρδίαν] ‘heart’. Accusative of direct object of ἀπατῶν.

αὐτοῦ] ‘of him’. Possessive genitive.

τούτου] ‘of him’. Possessive genitive.

μάταιος] ‘worthless. Predicate nominative.

ἡ θρησκεία] ‘religion’. Nominative subject. It appears only once in the book of James.

Verse 27

Text

θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὕτη ἐστίν, ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ὀρφανούς καὶ χήρας ἐν τῇ θλίψει αὐτῶν, ἄσπιλον ἑαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου.

Analysis

James repeats θρησκεία.

θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος] ‘pure and undefiled religion’. Predicate nominative of ἐστίν.

παρὰ τῷ θεῷ] ‘before God’. Sphere.

καὶ πατρί] ‘and Father’. Connective.

αὕτη] ‘this’. Nominative subject of ἐστίν.

ἐστίν] ‘(this) is’. Impersonal verb.

ἐπισκέπτεσθαι] ‘to visit (care)’. BDAG says to visit with a helpful intent. Appositional infinitive.

ὀρφανούς καὶ χήρας] ‘orphans and widows. Accusative of direct object of ἐπισκέπτεσθαι.

ἐν τῇ θλίψει] ‘in (their) affliction’. Temporal.

αὐτῶν] ‘of them’. Subjective genitive.

ἄσπιλον] ‘unstained’. Double accusative object-complement.

ἑαυτόν] ‘oneself’. Double accusative object-complement.

τηρεῖν] ‘to keep’. Appositional infinitive.

ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου] ‘away from the world’. Separation.

CONCLUSION

This syntactical analysis demonstrates that there are two enemies of human beings: external and internal. James reveals, however, that the external enemy is not really the believers’ problem. It just provokes the problem of the heart. In other words, the main problem is not the external one, but it is the heart problem. Thus, James encourages the believers to use an external problem as a mirror to the internal problem. Then, the believers should fix their heart problems instead of the external problem.

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