

## **“When You Need Wisdom (Part 1)” – James 1:5-8**

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*[What follows is the transcript of a sermon. It was originally intended to be heard, not read, so the tone is more conversational than academic. It has only been loosely edited, so forgive any grammatical, syntactical, or spelling errors. If you have questions please contact Southern Oaks Baptist Church through their official website, [www.welovethegospel.com](http://www.welovethegospel.com)]*

Take a Bible and meet me in James, chapter 1...

Last week's text guided us to consider what God is doing in our trials. We discovered that God doesn't waste trials and uses them to develop steadfastness in His people, which is necessary for our spiritual growth, that we may be, in our author's words, *“perfect and complete, lacking in nothing”* (James 1:4). In a fallen world, trials are a necessary means of developing Christlikeness in the people of God. So we must *“let steadfastness have its full effect”* and learn to *“count it all joy”* when we face trials, in light of how God can use *“trials of various kinds”* in our lives.

In our text this morning, James shifts our focus to the topic of wisdom. There is no real transition, so the shift in subject matter is rather abrupt and has left commentators scratching their heads, wondering what connection, if any, James sees between these two paragraphs. Should they be viewed as one single unit or two distinct units? It's not entirely obvious. And interpretations range from those, like Martin Luther, who see in James' “staccato style” proof enough to charge him with “throwing things together haphazardly”, to those, like myself, who are inclined to give James a bit more credit and to seek to discern how the subjects relate.<sup>1</sup>

This seems as good a time as any to pause for a moment and consider just how these instructions on trials and wisdom fit into the larger letter as a whole. James progresses differently than the last letter we studied, the epistle of Hebrews. Hebrews, you will remember, reads like a sermon (and, in fact, likely was a sermon converted into a letter). There we saw its author take up an Old Testament text, reflect on it, apply its implications to the readers, and then repeat that several times with different biblical texts. That's how it moved—exposition, exhortation, exposition, exhortation, exposition, and so on. It's sermonic. It's what you're used to if you are a member here. We take a text, we consider that text in detail, and then we tease out its implication for our lives.

James' letter progresses differently. It accelerates quicker. It's much less theologically dense. It's basically exhortation on steroids, where he moves from one command to the next in rapid succession. You don't have time to recover from one challenge, before he rains down the next. You feel like you're on the ropes the entire time, but you never lose sight of the fact that James has your best interest at heart even as he puts you through the ringer. He knows what he's doing. And it's for your good.

But, as with Hebrews, there is a ton of debate on the structure of this letter. I won't bore you with all those discussions, but let me make a few comments on the suggestion put forth by Craig Blomberg and Mariam Kamell, who, for my money, offer as good an explanation as any. Basically they argue that James, throughout this letter, is working with three key themes that he cycles through three different times. They are the first to admit that their outline may “be imposing more structure on the text than James had in mind” (a charge, I suppose, that could be levied against any scholar's attempt), but it's nonetheless “worth generating” since it “enables us merely to identify the three dominant themes of the letter,” and I'm inclined to agree.<sup>2</sup>

After the greeting in verse 1, James introduces those three themes to us in verses 2 through 11. And here they are:<sup>3</sup>

## **Introduction of the Three Themes:**

Trials/Temptations (1:2-4)  
Wisdom (1:5-8)  
Riches and Poverty (1:9-11)

These are the themes that will dominate throughout and, not surprisingly, James introduces them at the beginning (as is often the case with New Testament letters). Beginning in verse 12 of chapter 1, he restates the themes in greater detail.

## **Restatement of the Three Themes**

Trials/Temptations in Relation to God (1:12-18)  
Wisdom in the Areas of Speech and Life (1:19-26)  
Riches and Poverty: The Relationship of the “Haves” and the “Have-Nots” (1:27)

Then, just for good measures, James cycles through these themes one final time in even greater depth:

## **Expansion of the Three Themes**

Riches and Poverty: The Relationship of the “Haves” and the “Have-Nots” (ch. 2)

- Favoritism Condemned (2:1-13)
- The Problem of Faith without Works (2:14-26)

Wisdom in Speech and Life (3:1-4:12)

- The Power of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- Wisdom from Above and Below (3:13-18)
- The Misuse of Speech (4:1-12)

Trials/Temptations (4:13-5:18)

- Planning apart from God’s Will (4:13-17)
- Responding to Oppression (5:1-12)
- Pray for the Seriously Ill (5:13-18)

And then the final two verses close out the letter.

Now, if you look carefully there is something interesting about this accounting of the structure. It has a chiastic shape to it, which is to say it unfolds via some brilliant parallelism that has the effect of focusing the reader on the center. Look at it again, this time color-coded to make the parallelism more obvious:

A - Trials/Temptations (1:12-18)  
B – Wisdom in Speech and Life (1:19-26)  
C – Riches and Poverty: Haves/Have-Nots (1:27 and 2:1-26)  
B’ – Wisdom in Speech and Life (3:1-4:12)  
A’ – Trials/Temptations (4:13-5:18)

That’s called a “chiasm,” so named for its resemblance to one side of the Greek letter “chi” (which looks like an English “X”). Generally it’s employed as a way of guiding our attention to something central in the author’s thought. And what do we have at the center? I would argue that it’s there we find the letter’s thesis statement, at the turn from chapters 1 and 2. And here it is:

*“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” (James 1:27)*

If this is truly at the heart of the letter, then it would suggest (even if we quibble about verse divisions here and there) that “the central theme of a right approach to wealth and poverty turns out to be the dominant concern.”<sup>4</sup> And yet, ironically, that theme has probably received the least amount of attention among the trio in most literature on James and the use of James in Christian circles. All that to say, you are probably in for some surprises.

For our purposes today, what I want you to see, as we move from the theme of trials into the theme of wisdom in the letter’s introduction, is that while these themes are often inserted in ways that make them look distinct, there is actually an interrelationship between these three key themes. So one of the things I will highlight today is that wisdom has a lot to do with “*the trials of various kinds*” we face in the world (1:2). At least it should.

With that in mind, let’s look at our text for today. I’m going to begin reading in verse 5. The most important thing for you to understand is what I am about to read now. So follow along as I read. This is God’s Word...

*“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” (James 1:5-8)*

Let’s pray...

There are several things that are important for us to pick up on in this text. We are reminded about the importance of wisdom in the Christian life. We learn something of why God answers our prayers and why He does not. We are cautioned about the danger of doubt. We are reminded of the importance of faith in our prayers. We are given useful information about what our way of prayer says about our spiritual condition. And there are several misconceptions and mishandlings of these verses that we need to address.

But this is too much for one sermon. So today I want to do something less ambitious. I want us to really focus on what this text teaches us about God and how that knowledge really woos us toward prayer. So we will ask probably the most important question we could ask about any text, namely, “What does this text teach us about God?” And I think you will like the answer. I know I do.

First, however, in light of my introductory remarks about the structure and themes of James, let me draw your attention to how this paragraph relates to the one that comes before it. Our first clue that James means for us to see these two paragraphs as related is hinted at by the verbal similarity, the catchword they share. Immediately before this paragraph, James states that our trials are useful in our development as people, so that eventually it can be said that we are “*lacking in nothing*” by way of Christian maturity (1:4). Then, in the next verse, he addresses the one who “*lacks wisdom*” (1:4). See the connection?

In order for us to become Christ-like, God must fill up what we are lacking. One of the things we are lacking is wisdom. And in order for our tests to foster maturation (which, as we saw last time, is *not* automatic), we are going to need to face them with wisdom. So now, in verses 5 and following, James is concerned with how we can acquire the wisdom we need in and for those trying times, the wisdom we need so that we can grow through our adversities, the wisdom we need so that we don’t squander the opportunity those challenges afford us.

If there is one thing that tends to accompany our trials in life, it’s confusion. Everyone thinks themselves at least fairly wise, until we face a trial that forces us to come to grips with our inadequacy. All of the sudden, we don’t know what to do. Anxiety grips us. Uncertainty subjects us. We’re at a loss. It’s hard to be wise in your own eyes when you face serious trials, though, I suppose, some manage to do so. The Bible calls them fools. But for

the rest of us, when humbled by the realization that we are not wise enough for the task at hand, we seek wisdom. But where do we seek it?

James tells us where we should seek it. We should seek it from God. “*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God*” (1:5).<sup>5</sup> Why should we ask God? Because no trial enters our lives without first being sifted through His sovereign hand. They are not arbitrary. God is at work. Our loving Father is accomplishing His purposes. And even what others intend as evil against us, God can use for our good (Gen. 50:20). Indeed, He works all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:38). And if this is true, who better to turn to than God. He alone knows what He is up to. And He alone has the all-seeing perspective. So why do we, who are finite in our understanding, neglect turning to the only one who is infinite in understanding?

Perhaps you have come across this anonymous poem from a previous century:

My life is but a weaving,  
    between my Lord and me;  
I cannot choose the colours.  
    He worketh steadily.  
Ofttimes He weaveth sorrow  
    and I in foolish pride,  
Forget He sees the upper  
    and I the under side.  
Not till the loom is silent  
    and the shuttles cease to fly,  
Shall God unroll the canvas  
    and explain the reason why,  
The dark threads are as needful  
    in the Weaver’s skillful hand,  
As the threads of gold and silver,  
    in the pattern He has planned.<sup>6</sup>

What a beautiful reminder. In response to these words, Kent Hughes summarized the implications well:

“This old poem correctly expresses the truth that in this life we will never fully understand the particular blending of joys and woes in our lives because we see only the underside of the tapestry. Only when death stills the loom and we stand before God will he turn the canvas over and allow us, to our eternal delight, to see what he has done.”<sup>7</sup>

That is so true. It gives me so much hope. And yet what James would have us see is that even though we cannot discern everything that God is up to in our lives and some of the answers we seek will always escape us this side of glory, that does not mean that these things are “totally inscrutable” or that there is nothing we can understand here and now. There is wisdom available to us. Indeed, he’s already told us that we can understand something of what God does in our trials—He works steadfastness and maturity—which gives us a reason to find a measure of joy within them (1:2-4).<sup>8</sup>

But the truth of the matter is that this is a tough pill of counsel to swallow when you are in the midst of trying times. James gets that. Let’s not forget that his own brother was an innocent “*man of sorrows*” (Isa. 53:3), who died at the hands of a murderous mob. He knows firsthand that some things just don’t make sense. But he also came to realize that some of those things that look foolish in the eyes of world, go on to prove the wisdom of God in ways we never could have imagined. So instead of allowing us to wander about in despair, he tells us to take our confusion to the Lord. “*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God...*” (James 1:5).

Is that what you do in the midst of your adversity? Do you turn to God or to the wisdom of men? And if you turn to God, is it only after all your own resourcefulness is exhausted?<sup>9</sup> Do you turn to Him only to ask, “Why me?” or “Please get me out of this mess”? There is a time and a place for those kinds of prayers. But in every adversity we should be turning to God to say, “Lord, I need wisdom—Please use this trial to increase my wisdom and understanding of you, your people, and life.”<sup>10</sup>

Yet, interestingly, it’s not really in the omniscience of God—His all-knowing nature—that James grounds this instruction. He doesn’t say, in this instance, “Go to God because he sees what you don’t.” He says, “Go to God because God is a giver.” Look at the rest of verse 5. This God we are to go to for wisdom is described as one “*who gives generously to all without reproach...*” Literally, the original language calls Him “the giving God”. That’s who He is—the giving God. And the Greek tense suggests that He is constantly giving.<sup>11</sup> “When God gives, he acts according to his nature or character.”<sup>12</sup> It is His nature to give. He’s always the giver. Never the one with need to receive. “‘Giving’ is not the whole truth, but it is ceaselessly true.”<sup>13</sup> He’s more than this, but never less.

This is the God who, according to Acts 17:25, “*gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.*” The God who, as we discover when we first believe the message of the Gospel, loved the world in such a way “*that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life*” (John 3:16). The God who is so generous that He “*did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all,*” which led Paul to ask, “*how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?*” (Rom. 8:32).

And this, brothers and sisters, is why it is so important for us to preach the Gospel to ourselves always, including when we face times of testing. When we look at that empty cross and that empty tomb, we are to be reminded of the extravagant generosity of God. The Father has sent the Son to bring us into the family of God. The Son willingly laid down His life on the cross in your place in order to absorb the wrath that you deserved for your sin against the Holy God. He rose from the dead three days later and lives today, offering forgiveness of sins and everlasting life for all those who will believe on Him for salvation. This is the Gospel. God made a way for us to be saved when we could not make a way. And the Way is Jesus. So turn from your sin and trust in Christ alone. This is the path to forgiveness, atonement, adoption, everlasting life, salvation. Not your work, but His on your behalf. You can cry out to Jesus now and He will save you. All you need is need. Bring it to Jesus. Confess your sin and need. Ask Him to save and deliver you. He will. Why? Because, as James says, He’s the giving God, “*who gives generously to all without reproach*” (James 1:5).

But, for those of you who are already Christians—those of you who know the giving God by virtue of your salvation—don’t forget that He is no less giving on this side of your conversion. “God’s generosity does not dry up the moment we become a Christian.” It’s part of who He is and, therefore, it’s inexhaustible.<sup>14</sup> And yet, somehow, we are so prone to convince ourselves to turn to anything and everyone else before we turn to Him in times of distress. Maybe we tell ourselves that these tough times are “when all our training is supposed to kick in” and “when we have to prove ourselves—to show God we’ve been paying attention in class and now have it all figured out.”<sup>15</sup> Nope. Now is the time to turn to God to give you the wisdom you need. It’s not the time for you to demonstrate your strength. It’s the time to demonstrate His.

But sometimes it’s not our false-sense of adequacy that keeps us from His throne in prayer, it’s our keen sense of failure. I recently learned of a book, by John Bunyan, called *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ*. In typical puritan form, the entire book is basically an exposition on one verse. The verse is John 6:37 and it was one of his favorite verses, as evidenced by how often he mentions it in his writings. The verse records these words from Jesus:

“*All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.*” (John 6:37)

That's a remarkable statement for a number of reasons, but Bunyan's primary focus in the book is the second half of that statement. And, of course, Jesus is referring to our drawing near for salvation, but it is often the same fears that keep non-believers from drawing near in salvation that keep believers from drawing near for wisdom and help. For this reason it's worth reading Bunyan at length on this point. Keep in mind though, the English translation of his day read "him that comes to me I will no wise cast out" (KJV). That's not good modern English, but the meaning is the same. It's an emphatic way of saying that Jesus will not ever cast aside those who come to Him. Bunyan writes,

"They that are coming to Jesus Christ, are often time heartily afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them. This observation is implied in the text. I gather it from the largeness and openness of the promise: 'I will in no wise cast out.' For had there not been a proneness in us to 'fear casting out,' Christ needed not to have waylaid our fears, as he does by this great and strange expression, 'In no wise.'

There needed not, as I may say, such a promise to be invented by the wisdom of heaven, and worded at such a rate, as it were on purpose to dash in pieces at one blow all the objections of coming sinners, if they were not prone to admit of such objections, to the discouraging of their own souls.

For this word, 'in no wise,' cuts the throat of all objections; and it was dropped by the Lord Jesus for that very end; and to help the faith that is mixed with unbelief. And it is, as it were, the sum of all promises; neither can any objection be made upon the unworthiness that find in yourself, that this promise will not assoil.

But I am a great sinner, say you.

'I will in no wise cast out,' says Christ.

But I am an old sinner, say you.

'I will in no wise cast out,' says Christ.

But I am a hard-hearted sinner, say you.

'I will in no wise cast out,' says Christ.

But I am a backsliding sinner, say you.

'I will in no wise cast out,' says Christ.

But I have served Satan all my days, say you.

'I will in no wise cast out,' says Christ.

But I have sinned against light, say you.

'I will in no wise cast out,' says Christ.

But I have sinned against mercy, say you.

'I will in no wise cast out,' says Christ.

But I have no good thing to bring with me, say you.

'I will in no wise cast out,' says Christ.

This promise was provided to answer all objections, and does answer them."<sup>16</sup>

That just resonates with me so much. Does it not with you? Do you not so often talk yourself out of turning to God for help because you fear that God will not receive you because of your recent (or not so recent) track record? But James has our number. It's as though he is preempting that inner struggle, for no sooner does he tell us to ask God for wisdom than he is already reminding us of the nature of the God we are to ask. He's the giving God. He's the God who "*gives generously*". He's the God who gives "*without reproach*". And it is because of this that we can rest in knowing that "*it will be given*" (1:5). "I will in no wise cast out," says Christ.

I love that. But, again, "we tend to deflect Christ's assurances." As Dane Ortlund so relatably captures in a book called *Gentle and Lowly*...

"Fallen, anxious sinners are limitless in their capacity to perceive reasons for Jesus to cast them out. We are factories of fresh resistances to Christ's love. Even when we run out of tangible reasons to be cast out, such as specific sins or failures, we tend to retain a vague sense that, given enough time, Jesus will finally grow tired of us and hold us at arm's length."<sup>17</sup>

Can you relate? Is that what has kept you from responding to Christ's offer of salvation? Is that what has kept you from drawing near to Christ in prayer? Is this the inner angst that has prevented you from coming to God for wisdom in your trial? Then you must hear the point of James' description and Jesus' words. For every "But I..." you can muster, there Jesus stands to say to His people, "I will never cast out." That's what Bunyan was reflecting on. That's what Ortlund describes. Listen.

"'No wait'—we say, cautiously approaching Jesus—'you don't understand. I've *really* messed up, in all kinds of ways.'

*I know*, he responds.

'You know most of it, sure. Certainly more than what others see. But there's perversity down inside me that is hidden from everyone.'

*I know it all.*

'Well—the thing is, it isn't just my past. It's my present too.'

*I understand.*

'But I don't know if I can break free of this any time soon.'

*That's the only kind of person I'm here to help.*

'The burden is heavy—and heavier all the time.'

*Then let me carry it.*

'It's too much to bear.'

*Not for me.*

'You don't get it. My offenses aren't directed toward others. They're against you.'

*Then I am the most suited to forgive them.*

'But the more of the ugliness in me that you discover, the sooner you'll get fed up with me.'

*Whoever comes to me I will never cast out.*"<sup>18</sup>

That's what we do. And that's what Christ does. But we forget that this is the nature of our God. So James reminds us, He "*gives generously to all without reproach*" (James 1:5). He is poised to help us. That's His nature. But you'll never ask until you recognize this about Him. There really is no limit to His grace as our very salvation attests. If he can be gracious to me, then you are not beyond the reach of His grace. A broken and contrite heart, He does not despise (Psalm 51:17). That's the idea of His giving "*without reproach*".<sup>19</sup> He's not waiting to belittle or mock us when we come to Him for help. He gives sincerely. Liberally. He gives.

That's the promise: "*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given to him*" (James 1:5). And what a fine promise it is. Especially when we come to realize that "we cannot fill the lack of wisdom without God's generosity."<sup>20</sup> But there is a condition that we have yet to consider and it's found in the next verses.

*"But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."* (James 1:6-8)

These verses help us to understand something about unanswered prayers. When we pray, we are to pray in faith. But what does he mean by "*doubting*"? The answer may surprise you. But these are things that we are going to have to circle back to next week, when we take up this passage of Scripture once more and clarify a few things that are often misunderstood.

Between now and then the application should be clear. Remember the nature of the God to whom we pray. Remember that He invites us to ask Him for wisdom. So ask Him. Pray to Him. He has assured us that He loves to answer such prayers because He is the giving God. So James says, "*ask God*," because he knows that "as is so often the case with prayer, we find God is far more willing to answer our prayers than we are to offer them."<sup>21</sup>

The timing of this text and its invitation comes at a good time in the life of our church. As a staff we have been prayerfully wrestling with how and when to transition our community back into our weekly worship services. By God's grace, we are getting close. We are in the process of putting the final touches on that plan and will be communicating some of that this coming week. So stay tuned.

But first things first. In light of these decisions and in light of this text, it seemed fitting for us to set aside a day for prayer and fasting. So that's what we are going to do tomorrow, Monday, May 4. So watch your email communications and our social media channels as we will be sending out some prompts to help you join us in prayer in this time. We will be praying for wisdom on how to transition back. We will be praying for this new season ahead, post-pandemic, that God would bring revival in our community and beyond. And we want you to join us in these prayers.

Of course, we know that many of you find yourselves facing many trying circumstances. What better application of this text than to turn to God and seek His face for wisdom and help! So why not today? Why not tomorrow? Why not invest the day in asking God to give you wisdom for what you are facing? Join us as we do the same. And if you are able, you can fast with us as well. That's up to you. But, at the very least pray. And we will let this text shape our prayers.

So if you are a part of our church, join us tomorrow for our day of prayer and fasting. And tune in next week as we continue to dig further into the riches of this text of Scripture.

Let's pray...

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<sup>1</sup> Robert L. Plummer, "James," in *Hebrews-Revelation* (ESVEC; Wheaton: Crossway, 2018), 229.

<sup>2</sup> Craig L. Blomberg and Mariam J. Kamell, *James* (ZECNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 26.

<sup>3</sup> I have altered the wording of the outline slightly throughout this sermon, but not the overall organization proposed by Blomberg and Kamell.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "The [Greek] present tense of 'ask' suggests possible ongoing action—repeated or continuous prayer—and combined with 'it will be given' (δοθήσεται) likely reflects James's knowledge of the Jesus tradition behind Mt 7:7 already in Greek." Ibid., 51.

<sup>6</sup> Drawn from R. Kent Hughes, *James: Faith that Works* (PW; Wheaton, Crossway Books, 1991), 25.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 25-26.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>9</sup> Sophie Laws writes, this is a "lack that cannot be made up by human effort, for it is a gift of God and must therefore be asked of him." Sophie Laws, *The Epistle of James* (London: Black, 1980), 54.

<sup>10</sup> Hughes, 26.

<sup>11</sup> "We are told to ask of the "giving God" (διδόντος θεοῦ). Here the present participle suggests that "giving" represents a continuous characteristic of God. More surprising, perhaps, is the promise that God gives "to all" (πᾶσιν), showing his nature as the one who gives whether or not we deserve it." Blomberg and Kamell, 51.

<sup>12</sup> Daniel M. Doriani, *James* (REC; Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2007),

<sup>13</sup> J. A. Motyer, *The Message of James* (BST; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 38.

<sup>14</sup> Sam Allberry, *James for You* (Good Book Company, 2015), 20.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 18-19.

<sup>16</sup> John Bunyan, *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ* in *The Works of John Bunyan*, 3 vols., ed. George Offor (repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1991), 1:279-280. The language above is slightly updated by Dane Ortlund, *Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2020), 61-62.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 63-64. "With Christ, our sins and weaknesses are the very resumé items that qualify us to approach him. Nothing is required—first at conversion and a thousand times thereafter until we are with him upon death." Ibid., 64.

<sup>19</sup> "Some commentators introduce here the thought that human giving is often spoilt and made a burden to the recipient, because the giver cannot forget the gift and alludes to it again and again. This is hardly a suitable meaning for *reproaching*, which must surely refer, not to the conduct of the giver, but to some misdemeanor on the part of the recipient. In other words, James here calls to mind everything which we know to stand in the way of a free asking and everything which we might imagine the Lord would hold against us. It is a true impulse which prompted the hymn-writer to plead, 'Look not on our misusings of thy grace.' Right though confession in in our prayers, however, our 'misusings' never call in question his generosity or make him other than the giving God." Motyer, 39.

<sup>20</sup> Blomberg and Kamell, 51.

<sup>21</sup> Allberry, 19.