

Jeremiah 44:13 I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt with war, starvation, and disease just as I punished Jerusalem.

v. 14 None of the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will escape or survive to return to the land of Judah. Though they long to return and live there, none of them shall return except a few fugitives. (NET)

Philippians 3:18 For many live, about whom I have told you, and now, with tears, I tell you that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.

v. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, they exult in their shame, and they think about earthly things. (NET)

Revelation 3:16 So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth! (NET)

1 Corinthians 10:13 No trial has overtaken you that is not faced by others. And God is faithful: He will not let you be tried beyond what you are able to bear, but with the trial will also provide a way out so that you may be able to endure it. (NET)

Psalms 118:17 I will not die, but live, and I will proclaim what the Lord has done.

v. 18 The Lord severely punished me, but He did not hand me over to death. (NET)

5. Reversionism intensifies suffering:

Psalms 77:1 I will cry out to God and call for help! I will cry out to God and He will pay attention to me.

v. 2 In my time of trouble I sought the Lord. I kept my hand raised in prayer throughout the night. I refused to be comforted.

v. 3 I said, "I will remember God while I groan; I will think about Him while my strength leaves me." (Selah)

v. 4 You held my eyelids open. I was troubled and could not speak.

v. 5 I thought about the days of old, about ancient times.



Psalm 77:6 I said, “During the night I will remember the song I once sang; I will think very carefully.” I tried to make sense of what was happening.

v. 7 I asked, “Will the Lord reject me forever? Will He never again show me His favor?”

v. 8 Has His loyal love disappeared forever? Has His promise failed forever?

v. 9 Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has His anger stifled His compassion?”

v. 10 Then I said, “I am sickened by the thought that the sovereign One might become inactive.

v. 11 I will remember the works of the Lord. Yes, I will remember the amazing things You did long ago!

v. 12 I will think about all You have done; I will reflect upon Your deeds!’

v. 13 O God, your deeds are extraordinary! What God can compare to our great God?[†]

v. 14 You are the God Who does amazing things; You have revealed Your strength among the nations.

v. 15 You delivered your people by your strength – the children of Jacob and Joseph. (Selah)

M. Reversionism was a major subject of the writer of Hebrews to the Christians living in Israel:

1. The believers who received the book of Hebrews were in reversionism. Reversionism is always toward doctrine, but more than that, it is negative toward anything related to God:

Hebrews 5:11 On the topic of Christ we have many doctrines to communicate yet hard to explain because you have become apathetic in hearing.

v. 12 For also during the time [**similar to that of the present hour**] of national crisis you are obligated to be communicators of divine viewpoint, you require once more teaching of certain things, the elementary principles of doctrines from God; yet you have become ones having need of milk, and not of solid food.

[†] This rhetorical question assumes the answer, “No one!” (Psalm 77:13, *The NET Bible*, tn 13, p. 1004.)



Hebrews 5:13 For everyone who habitually lives on milk is unaccustomed to the doctrine of righteousness [δικαιοσύνη (*dikaiousúvē*): **integrity**], for he keeps on being an immature believer.

v. 14 But solid food [**advanced doctrine**] belongs to the mature believer, the ones because of self-discipline keep having their perceptive faculties well-trained with reference to differentiating between what is honorable and what is evil. (EXT)

2. Reversion recovery is impossible apart from the daily metabolization of basic doctrine:

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore we must progress beyond the elementary instructions about Christ and move on to maturity, not laying this foundation again: repentance from dead works and faith in God,

v. 2 teaching about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

v. 3 And this is what we intend to do, if God permits. (NET)

3. Reversion recovery is impossible when religious reversionism is perpetuated in the life:

Hebrews 6:4 For you see, it is impossible for those having once been enlightened by the Holy Spirit and having tasted for themselves the gracious gift from haven [**salvation**] and having become partners with the Holy Spirit,

v. 5 and having tasted for themselves the noble doctrines from God and His inherent abilities of the coming age [**Millennium**],

v. 6 and then have committed apostasy to renew them again to repentance, since they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves all over again and holding Him up to contempt.

Summary:

- (1) The context here refers to the proximity of the fifth cycle of discipline for Judah and its capital city, Jerusalem. The book of Hebrews was written in A.D. 68 and was directed to Messianic Jews in Jerusalem about two years before Roman general, Titus, took down the nation on August 10, A.D. 70.



- (2) The principle of this verse indicated to people that the time is short. The only preparation for disaster is the advance into the sophisticated spiritual life and the full function of the royal priesthood of the believer.
- (3) A priest nation on the eve of such disaster needs doctrine as never before. It is the objective of the writer of Hebrews to provide that information as the nation moves toward national disaster.
- (4) Messianic Jews who accepted the challenge to grow in grace were delivered from the chaos that led to national disaster.
- (5) What enabled them to endure and overcome was their advance to the level of spiritual maturity characterized by occupation with Christ and the imputation of escrow blessings.
- (6) These grace blessings accrue even greater aspects. In time of approaching national disaster God delivered those who grew in grace.
- (7) Many of these Jews ended up living in Egypt, some moved to Rome, others to Ephesus, the Greek islands, and ultimately throughout the Roman Empire. Wherever they went, God poured out more blessings, first by deliverance and then by economic well-being.
- (8) Contrarily, the reversionist is caught up in the scrum of national disaster and for many the sin unto death in the midst of national disaster.
- (9) When God delivers from national disaster, mature believers enjoy personal prosperity regardless of their geographical location.
- (10) Principle: During a period of national disaster is not the time for the believer to be caught up in the spiritual swirl of reversionism.
- (11) No matter the dreadful consequences of the fifth cycle of discipline to a nation, God always pours escrow blessings on mature believers.

Reasonings for a Detailed Study of Reversionism:

In our exegesis of the Letter of James, we have studied four verses that reveal the loss of thought that existed in the souls of those in James's congregation and generally throughout Judea and Jerusalem.

In our entire study of James, we have observed the cosmic inventory of ideas that populate the souls of the Jews in his church as well as the Diaspora.



A quick analysis of this situation may be summed up by such terms as living in the cosmic systems and failures to apply doctrines James has taught related to the circumstances of life.

The reasons for these failures include facilitated wheel-tracks of wickedness which override recall of any doctrine they may have learned, consistent application of human viewpoint, establishment viewpoint, and most critically divine viewpoint.

James 4:7–10 expose these failures. James has taught the doctrines. His parishioners have by and large refused to apply what they have heard.

To conclude our study of reversionism, we will go back and review these four verses which conclude the first paragraph of James: Chapter Four.

James 4:7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (NASB)

This short verse, containing two short sentences, sums up your battleplan while living in the hostile environment of *cosmos diabolicus*. Two imperative moods are contained within it: (1) “submit and (2) “resist.” These two verbs summarize the strategy and tactics the believer must deploy to survive in the hostile environment of the devil’s world.

Verse seven begins with the aorist active imperative of **ὑποτάσσω** (*hupotássō*): “to subjugate, place in submission; to cause to be in a submissive relationship, to subordinate.”

In this context, Scripture, through the agency of James, is commanding the believer to submit to God. The Bible is the authority to which the believer is to respond in fulfilment of the verses’ two imperative moods:

James 4:7 Subordinate [aorist middle imperative of **ὑποτάσσω** (*hupotássō*)] yourself to God’s divine authority.
Stand fast [aorist active imperative of **ἀνθίστημι** (*anthístēmi*)] in opposition to the devil—*diábolos*—and he will flee, avoid, shun, escape from all of y’all. (EXT)

This short verse presents a strategy for doing battle in the Invisible War. The battle to be waged is not against flesh and blood but against the invisible spiritual forces that can only be confronted with a high inventory of divine truth which Paul brilliantly describes in Ephesians 6:12–17.

The believer who is positive to what the Bible has to say willingly responds to its imperative moods. This is referred to as positive volition toward an authority that is considered by the believer as authentic, superior, and trustworthy.



When a person recognizes the Bible as the source of absolute truth, then he willingly submits to its authority without hesitance and with appreciation. Scripture is qualified to have command authority over the believer.

God the Father is the Commander-in-Chief. The Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity Who sequentially communicated the Word of God to 40-plus men who served as His amanuenses.

Once the canon was completed, c. A.D. 95, the Holy Spirit had already begun the process of providing men with two gifts of communication: (1) evangelist and (2) pastor-teacher. (Ephesians 4:11b)

Their duties are to (1) present the gospel of salvation to heathen who, if positively responsive, will place their personal faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. This is to be followed by (2) growing in grace in a local church under the teaching authority of a pastor-teacher.

At this point is when the commandment in verse 7 becomes operational: “Subordinate yourself to God.” What happens next is the process of growing in grace by means of concentration, inculcation, retention, facilitation, and application of the doctrine you know to life and circumstances.

The believer is now engaged in the process of being a good soldier for God by acquiring the artillery of thought through Bible study. This is the system by which we learn how to submit to the immutable Word of God.

However, this imperative mood will be challenged if the believer does not submit to the next aorist active imperative mood, the verb, **ἀνθίστημι** (*anthístēmi*): “to stand against, resist; be in opposition to, set oneself against, oppose.” Who is to be resisted is identified next with the noun, **διάβολος** (*diábolos*): “the devil.”

There are two imperative moods in James 4:7 while James 4:8 provides three more:

James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleans your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (NASB)

1. “Draw near” is the aorist active imperative of **ἐγγίζω** (*engízō*): “to come near; to resume worship of God with positive volition toward spiritual growth.”
2. In this context, “drawing near” is the procedure the reversionistic believer must initiate. He must advance through the stages of the edification complex, which begins with the resumption of spiritual growth, with the objective of having invisible historical impact.



3. This verb is constative which in this context refers to the process of reversion recovery. The active voice refers to the believer's positive volition toward serious and consistent study of Scripture.
4. The process of drawing near includes two stages, confession alone to God alone, and consistent daily study and retention of Bible doctrine for application.
5. This is a slow process that can take months, even a year or more to fully recover. Therefore, the active voice demands daily dedication to the recovery process.
6. What happens next is critical for reversion recovery. The subject had logged a tremendous amount of time out of fellowship, missed a tremendous number of Bible classes, ignored rebound over the entire course of his being "out to lunch" for God only knows how long.
7. So, the sequence of events in this opening sentence of verse 8 is, "Come near to God." The constative aorist active imperative refers to the process of recovery that must continue in order to facilitate the process of rehabilitating doctrinal absolutes.
8. "... and He will draw near to you" is the predictive future active indicative of **ἐγγίζω (engízō)**: "He 'God,' will draw near to you." The sequence of events is thus established: Rebound must respond to the imperative mood of **engízō**, while God's response must be withheld until the believer confesses his sins as per 1 John 1:9.
9. The acquisition of the filling of the Holy Spirit through the Rebound technique, although successful in restoring fellowship with God, simply does not do a thing to stop reversionism.
10. The next two commands present the mechanics for fulfilling the recovery process. The first is the aorist active imperative of the verb, **καθαρίζω (katharízō)**: "to cleanse, in this case, the hands") and refers to Rebound: confession alone to God alone.
11. Those addressed are the reversionists referred to by the adjective, **ἁμαρτωλός (hamartōlós)**: "erring from divine law, sinful, wicked, impious." "Behavior or activity that does not measure up to standard moral or cultic expectations; sinners with focus on wrongdoing."²
12. The third imperative is the aorist active imperative of the verb, **ἀγνίζω (hagnízō)**: "to make clean, to purify, to reform."

² Walter Bauer, "ἁμαρτωλός," in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed. rev. and ed, Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 51.



13. The recovery process requires two principles: (1) Rebound and (2) the study of Scripture under the teaching ministries of the Holy Spirit and the spirit-filled pastor-teacher in a local church. These two must function simultaneously to fulfill the objective of reversion recovery.
14. The mechanics are: (1) clean your hands—"Rebound!" And (2) purify your **καρδία (kardía)** by your consistent renovation of its inventory away from cosmic imaginations over to spiritual absolutes.
15. The verse ends with a stark reminder of the reversionists' current status in this process, the plural adjective, **δίψυχος (dípsuchos)**: "double-minded, unstable, doubting, uncertain about the truth of an issue." "Divided in interest between God and the world."
16. The current double-minded Jews now have a game plan: Rebound and renovate. Confess your sins to the Father and then take up the obligation to renovate your soul by expunging human viewpoint, human good, and evil by replacing these with doctrine from the immutable Word of God.
17. This verse provides the recovery process from reversionism:

James 4:8 Come near to God [aorist active imperative of ἐγγίζω (*engízō*): "to come near" and is a command for reversion recovery beginning with Rebound] and then He will come near [predictive future active indicative of ἐγγίζω (*engízō*)] to you [masculine plural of the pronoun, σὺ (*sú*): refers to all believers in reversionism]. Wash your hands [aorist active imperative of the verb, καθαρίζω (*katharízō*): "to cleanse, in this case, the hands" and refers to Rebound], you sinners, and cleanse your kardías [aorist active imperative of the verb, ἁγνίζω (*hagnízō*): "to make clean, to purify, to reform."] from pollution, you double-souled [δίψυχος (*dípsuchos*): double-minded regarding God and *cosmos diabolicus*]. (EXT)

18. Verse 7 has two imperative moods, verse 8 has three, but verse 9 has 4: "be miserable, mourn, weep, and be turned." Verse 9 describes the believer who decides to remain in reversionism.

James 4:9 Be miserable [aorist active imperative of **ταλαιπωρέω (talaiḗō)**] and mourn [aorist active imperative of **πενθέω (penthéō)**] and weep [aorist active imperative of **κλαίω (klaíō)**]; let your laughter be turned [aorist active imperative of **μεταστρέφω (metastréphō)**] into mourning and your joy to gloom. (NASB)

1. These four aorist tenses are iterative imperfects indicating that those in context are in the throes of advanced reversionism.
2. These verbs view the believer at the beginning of his slide into reversionism. This aorist warns him about what is going to happen. Therefore, these verb's commands warn about the problem: "become miserable, become mournful, start weeping, become miserable."
3. A reversionist has surrendered his volition to the lust patterns of the sin nature so that they become mindless automatons in slavery to the flesh.
4. Consequently, reversionism is a form of slavery. The volition has surrendered his decision-making authority over to the body while the soul's free will is paralyzed.
5. **ταλαιπωρέω (talaiḗō)**: "Become miserable" is a command. It is James's demonstration of the problem. These believers have locked-in negative volition to truth and have been converted over to the dictatorial desires of the sin nature. Incidentally, **talaiḗō** is a hapax legomenon,³ it occurs only once in the New Testament. James dug it out of the Classical Greek on this occasion.
6. **πενθέω (penthéō)**: "Become mournful, to grieve, to feel sorrowful." This constative aorist active imperative describes misery accompanied by lamentations accompanied by audible cries while weeping.
7. The word "lamentation," or its plural, is used 18 times in the Old Testament. It is, "A feminine noun, **הַיְיָ (qiy nah)**: a lament; a funeral dirge. A song or poem composed to recognize and to mourn the death of a person or of the people of a nation."⁴ In this context, a person is lachrymose about himself.
8. The third constative aorist active imperative is, "weep," the verb **κλαίω (klaiō)**. It does mean to weep and wail, but also with overt examples of grief.
9. These verbs describe the end result of anticipated happiness. During the period of anticipation, the assumption is the acquisition of that happiness, but once the assumption arrives at reality everything backfires. At this point, the laughter is quenched by grief followed by weeping.
10. The word for "laughter" is the noun, **γέλος (gēlos)**: "the laughter motivated by joy or triumph." What might be expected here from the person is the verb form: **καταγελάω (katageláō)**: "to laugh at, scorn, deride, ridicule."

³ "Greek: ἄπαξ λεγόμενον, said only once; a word or phrase used but once in a book; a rare word or form" in *The Harper Dictionary of Foreign Terms*, 3d ed., rev. and ed. Eugene Ehrlich (Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside 1987), 149.

⁴ Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2003), 904 (7015).



11. But the subject is having what he considers is a grand time—*gélōs*— while in pursuit of his desired objective, but when the effort fails then his soul takes on a negative attitude.
12. This turnabout is revealed by the constative aorist *passive* imperative of the verb, **μεταστρέφω** (*metastréphō*). The prefix, *metá* “denotes a change of place or condition” and *stréphō* means, “to turn.” Therefore, to turn about from one direction to another, to turn into something else, or “to change.”
13. These four verbs have their valid translations which lead to this predictable conclusion. But note that the fourth verb, **metastréphō**, is not in the active voice, as are the first three, but the passive voice.
14. The verb, *metastréphō*, indicates a complete 180-degree turnaround so that the phrase reads, “let your jovial laughter be turned into “grief”: the noun, **πένθος** (*pénthos*): “sorrow, sadness, mourning.”
15. This conversion is the result of the verb, “to turn”: *metastréphō*, where “laughter— **gélōs** — has been turned to grief— **pénthos**.” This person started the evening with a plan to have a wonderful evening filled with laughter and good times, but as the night wore on it was ultimately converted into grief, sorrow, and mourning.
16. James does not let up. He gives this cosmic believer another critique with, “and your joy to gloom.” The word “joy” is the noun, **χαρά** (*chará*): “the experience of gladness,” that this person considered was fantastic at first but James douses it with the following shift to the noun, **κατήφεια** (*katēpheia*): “gloom, sorrow, dejection.”

In Philippians 4:4, the joy Paul describes is that joyfulness that comes when one realizes that sins are forgiven. The joy James warns about is that superficial feeling that results from an overindulgence in sin. James is not suggesting that the righteous should go about in a state of morbid depression over their sins. If such people turn to God, they discover that those activities and objects that previously gave them joy are evidence of the distance that separated them from God.⁵

17. There are a lot of terms thrown at this reversionist so an expanded translation is in order. Remember that this verse is a summary of what must follow the reversionists’ behavior in the preceding analysis:

(End JAS4-17. See JAS4-18 for the continuation of study at p. 171.)

⁵ William Varner, *James*, gen. ed. H. Wayne House (Bellingham, Wash.: Lexham Press, 2014), 434-35.

