

JUSTIFICATION ACCORDING TO JAMES: A COMPARISON WITH PAUL

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I. INTRODUCTION

As is well-known, critical scholarship commonly assumes that a stark opposition exists between James and Paul with respect to their presentations of "justification." Naturally the consensus which has been reached is not due in the first place to modern exegesis with its historical-critical methods. Already the church fathers arrived at the same result. In their case, however, there was no lack of attempts at harmonization.¹

In the tradition of Protestant theology, Martin Luther's position has had a particularly powerful influence up to the present day. He displayed a considerable distrust of James' teaching on justification.² In his general introduction to the "Septembertestament" (published on Sept. 21, 1522), he wrote: "Therefore the epistle of James is a right strawy epistle in comparison with them [i.e., John, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, and 1 Peter], since indeed it has no evangelical nature to it."³ A judgment of this sort should not be misunderstood

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We are indebted to Mark A. Seifrid for translating this piece from German into English.

¹See, e.g., F. Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief* (HTKNT; 4th ed.; Freiburg: Herder, 1981) 148-9.

²See, e.g., G. Eichholz, *Jakobus und Paulus. Ein Beitrag zum Problem des Kanons* (Theologische Exiztenzheute 39; Munich: C. Kaiser, 1953) 10-6; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 42-6. In his lectures on Romans (1515-1516) and on Galatians (1516-1517), Luther was in fact still able to harmonize them: the Apostle to the Gentiles spoke of the *opera legis* ("works of the Law") and the brother of the Lord of the *opera fidei* ("works of faith"). But especially after the Leipzig Disputation with Johannes Eck (1519), he drastically revised his understanding. On the shift of accent in the theology of the Reformer, see H. Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief. Zur Tradition, kontextuellen Verwendung und Rezeption eines belasteten Begriffes," in *Das Gesetz im Neuen Testament* (ed. K. Kertelge; QD 108; Freiburg: Herder, 1986) 191-2.

³"Darumb ist sanct Jacobs Epistel eyn rechte stroern Epistel gegen sie [nämlich im Vergleich zunächst mit Joh, Röm, Gal, Eph und 1. Petr], denn sie doch keyn Euangelisch art an yhr hat" (WA DB 6, 10). Note: Luther did not take up his viewpoint in the printings of the Bible from 1534 to 1539. See Eichholz, *Jakobus*, 11; J. Forsberg, "Lutherin raamatukäsitys ja raamatuntulkinta sekä niiden merkitys tänään," *Teologinen Aikakauskirva* 91 (1986) 231.

as an absolute rejection of James.⁴ In his preface to the letters of James and Jude, Luther expresses himself very positively right from the start:

The epistle of St. James, even though it is rejected by the ancient fathers, I praise and estimate indeed as good for this reason: it sets forth no human doctrine and drives hard the Law of God. But if I should express my opinion on the matter, while I do not wish to hurt anyone, I regard it as no apostolic writing.⁵

Luther required that an apostolic writing fulfill two criteria. He insisted that it teach justification without works through faith and that it clearly present this teaching according to the principle of "Christum predigen und treyben" ("proclaiming and driving at Christ"). James fails in both points. He teaches justification by works and is completely silent about the suffering and resurrection of Christ.⁶

Because of worthwhile content, James justifiably belongs to the canon of the "Septembertestament." Nevertheless its place was shifted from the beginning to the end of the general epistles.⁷ The reordering doubtlessly was dependent on the so-called "non-apostolic" character of the letter.

Finally, the Reformer was even left in some confusion in the face of the theological statements of James. He openly confessed at table:

Many have mightily labored to reconcile James with Paul, just as Philip (Melanchton) has done in the Apology (to the Augsburg Confession), but not with real success. These are at odds: faith justifies, faith does not justify. If there is anyone who can bring these into harmony with one another, I will set my [doctoral] biretta on him, and let him scold me as a fool.⁸

We must refrain from tracing the historical outworking of Luther's judgment concerning the letter of James. Generally the

⁴Cf. Eichholz, *Jakobus*, 16: "Man darf sein [sc. Luther's] Urteil sich offenbar nicht einfach in der Kritik erschöpfen lassen. Das wird in Predigten . . . und gelegentlichen Bemerkungen sichtbar . . ."

⁵"Die Epistel Sanct Jacobi, wie woll sie von den alten verworffen ist, lobe ich vnd halt sie doch fur gutt, darumb, das sie gar keyn menschen lere setzt vnd Gottis gesetz hart treybt, Aber das ich meyn meynung drauff stelle, doch on ydermanns nachteyl, acht ich sie fur keyns Apostel" (WA DB 7, 384). On Luther's positive statements regarding the letter of James, see also M. Karrer, "Christus der Herr und die Welt als Stätte der Prüfung. Zur Theologie des Jakobusbriefs," *KD* 35 (1989) 187, n. 117.

⁶WA DB 7, 384-7.

⁷The canonical order of the ancient church was as follows: James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude. The new order from Luther stands thus: 1 and 2 Peter, 1-3 John, James, Jude.

⁸"Multi valde sudant, ut concordent Iacobum cum Paulo, velut etiam Philippus in Apologia, sed non serio. Pugnantia sunt: Fides iustificat, fides non iustificat. Wer die zusammen reymen kan, dem wil ich mein pirreth auffsetzen und wil mich yhn einen narren lassen schelten" (WA TR 3, 253: 3292a).

pupils have surpassed the master by far in the critical implications they have drawn.⁹

The difference between James and Paul on the matter of justification therefore witnesses not merely to a pluralism characteristic of the NT period. That would be, understood in the most favorable way possible, a church-historical perspective. The very unity of the canon also is at stake: a specifically dogmatic problem.¹⁰ Do the two conflicting positions in fact in no way fit together? Does the NT constantly bear the image of a Janus? The posing of this question appears even weightier against the background of Jewish-Christian dialogue and the ecumenical discussion between Catholics and Lutherans (or other Protestants). In his commentary on the letter of James, Franz Mußner concerns himself precisely with themes of such relevance. He says there in summary:

Neither Paul nor James in and of himself represents the whole of Christianity; neither at that time nor now. The church "has placed both together [in the canon] and thereby has emphasized that one cannot hear the one without the other." But it must really hear *both*, so that the full range of Christianity can be seen and become effective. If honestly and without subtractions Paul as well as James is heard, then there can be found a way to reconcile the "separated brothers."¹¹

⁹For the history of interpretation of Jas 2:14-26 (in comparison with Pauline soteriology), see Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 177-80, 189-96; R. P. Martin, *James* (WBC; Waco, 1988) 82-4; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 149-50. Cf. E. Baasland, "Der Jakobusbrief als Neutestamentliche Weisheitsschrift," *ST* 36 (1982) 127-8. Indeed, according to M. Meinertz ("Luthers Kritik am Jakobusbriefe nach dem Urteile seiner Anhänger," *BZ* 3 [1905] 286), James was held in high regard by all Protestants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In agreement are Frankemölle ("Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 191) and Karrer ("Christus," 166, n. 2; 181, n. 84).

¹⁰Similarly Eichholz (*Jakobus*, 6): "Wir brauchen nicht erst auszusprechen, daß wir bei unserem Problem: Jakobus und Paulus—ob wir es wollen oder nicht—immer wieder in die Nähe, ja in die Mitte des *Kanonproblems* geraten werden." And p. 23: "Unsere Frage nach dem Verhältnis von Jakobus und Paulus greift über ihre *historisch faßbare* und formulierbare Beziehung zueinander *hinaus* und gilt *zuletzt dem theologischen Problem, das ihr Miteinander im Kanon aufwirft*. Das heißt *nicht*, daß die historische Problematik übersprungen und beiseitegeschoben werden konnte." See also pp. 27, 36, 50-1. Likewise P. Stuhlmacher (*Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus* [FRLANT 87; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966] 191-2): "In der Gegenwart ist er [sc. James] außerdem der Prüfstein für die Stellung der Exegeten zur Kanonfrage geworden." In his opinion "gibt es zwischen Paulus und Jakobus nur eine theologische Alternative und niemals ein Sowohl—Als auch" (p. 194). See further, T. Lorenzen, "Faith without Works does not count before God! James 2:14-26," *ExpTim* 89 (1978) 234.

¹¹"Weder Paulus noch Jak repräsentieren je für sich das ganze Christentum, weder damals noch heute. Die Kirche 'hat beide [im Kanon] nebeneinandergestellt und damit betont, daß man das eine nicht ohne das andere hören kann.' Aber es muß wirklich *beides* gehört werden, damit die Fülle des Christentums sich zeigen und wirksam werden kann. Wird ehrlich und ohne Abstriche auf beide, Paulus sowohl

In an excursus on James' conception of faith, Mußner further brings the relationship between Jews and Christians into consideration.¹² He comes to the following, significant conclusion:

The letter of James acts as a bridge, on which Christians and Jews can meet one another, but on which even Catholic and Protestant Christians can enter into dialogue with one another. The providential preservation of the Letter of James in the New Testament is clear and especially for our time.¹³

Here a new tendency becomes visible: the taking up of current questions from the perspective of the letter of James. My task in the first place is exegetical, namely to examine justification according to James. The central verses are 2:14-26.¹⁴ With these the comparison with Paul's doctrine of justification comes into the foreground. The results of the exegetical analysis may then serve church-historical¹⁵ and dogmatic interests,¹⁶ as noted above. In this respect the present

wie Jak gehört, könnte daraus auch ein Weg werden, auf dem die 'getrennten Brüder' sich finden könnten" (Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 236). Similarly, p. 108: "Jeder, Paulus sowohl wie auch Jak, treibt Christum auf seine Weise. Auf beide zu hören ist notwendig, wenn Christentum in seinem Wesen und in seiner Fülle [sic!] begriffen werden soll." On p. 149 Mußner cites M. Lackmann with approval: the early Christian synthesis of faith and love which comes from faith has been "die vollkommene, evangelische und katholische Lösung." See also F. Mußner, *Der Galaterbrief* (HTKNT; 2d ed.; Freiburg: Herder, 1974) 289-90. Similarly, Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 196. Cf. U. Luck, "Die Theologie des Jakobusbriefes," ZTK 81 (1984) 29-30.

¹²Cf. the introductory statement from Mußner's commentary: "Wir Christen sind auch Juden" (Pius XII), which is repeated on p. 135. He returns to the same thought often afterwards. So, e.g., on p. 136: James is supposed to have brought "das Beste des Judentums über seinen Brief in die Kirche." Or p. 148: James' doctrine of justification is "bestes jüdisches Erbe." In an appendix to the third edition (p. 250) there remains the statement that "gerade der Jak trotz seiner 'reduzierten' Ethik eine Brückenfunktion zwischen Christentum und Judentum ausüben könnte, die für das Gespräch der Kirche mit der Synagoge nur förderlich wäre." Against the last point, however, see Karrer, "Christus," 187.

¹³"Der Jak-Brief bildet so eine Brücke, auf der Christen und Juden einander begegnen können, auf der aber auch katholische und evangelische Christen miteinander ins Gespräch kommen können. Die providentielle Bedeutung des Jak-Briefes im NT wird sichtbar, gerade für unsere Zeit" (Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 136). Cf., further, p. 150: "Da die paulinische Sola-fide-Lehre immer noch dem theologischen (und praktischen) Mißverständnis ausgesetzt ist, bleibt die Rechtfertigungslehre des Jak-Briefes ihr unveräußerliches 'Gegengewicht,' auf das in der Kirche nicht verzichtet werden kann, soll das Christentum gesund bleiben."

¹⁴The biblical citations, when not otherwise introduced, are translated into English from the 1984 Luther Bible.

¹⁵Cf. already E. Stauffer, "Das Gesetz der Freiheit in der Ordensregel von Jericho," TLZ 77 (1952) 532: "Der Herrenbruder Jakobus hat lange im Schatten der Forschung gestanden. Er ist in neuerer Zeit wieder Gegenstand ertragreicher Kontroversen geworden, und seine singuläre kirchengeschichtliche und kirchenrechtliche Position rückt immer mehr ins Licht."

¹⁶Cf. Eichholz (*Jakobus*, 6-7) with a view to his contribution to the open contrast between James and Paul: "Es liegt entscheidend daran, daß das Gespräch zwischen Exegese und Systematik, Systematik und Exegese wieder echt in Bewegung gerät. Es darf nicht in einer Resignation angesichts der inzwischen erreichten Distanz enden,

work has a *multi-disciplinary* aim. Accordingly, a contribution to Jewish-Christian dialogue and to the Catholic-Lutheran discussion appears at the end. Since Mußner with his commentary on the letter of James has in some measure prepared the way for the work which lies ahead, a critical debate with him (where it is necessary) would appear to be pressingly needed in current study.

James presents the process of justification by means of the conceptual pair "faith-works" in the second chapter (2:14-26). In the first chapter he had already set the "hearer-only" or "non-doer" in opposition to the "doer of the Word" or the "doer of works" (1:16-25). Therefore, in order to place the second chapter in a broader framework, it is worthwhile to subject 1:16-25 to closer study.¹⁷

II. JAS 1:16-25

In these verses James introduces a fierce battle against a passive Christianity. He clearly delineates three "stages": hearing the Word; accepting it in faith; and putting it into practice.¹⁸ Despite this theoretical differentiation, the progressive development constitutes an organic process: the hearing of the Word leads (in the best case!) to believing acceptance of it, and this believing acceptance again into praiseworthy activity. The unnaturalness of a passive Christianity is displayed throughout the whole flow of the argument. The "hearer-only," or the "non-doer," so it reads, deceives himself, potentially

die so groß geworden zu sein scheint, daß jedes Fach sich dabei außerhalb der Sichtweite des anderen befindet." Similarly J. B. Soucek ("Zu den Problemen des Jakobusbriefes," *EoT* 18 [1958] 460): "Die von Martin Luther aufgerollte Frage nach dem Verhältnis der von dem Jakobusbrief vertretenen Auffassung von Glauben und Werken zu der paulinischen ist immer noch nicht zur Ruhe gekommen. Im Gegenteil, im Zusammenhang mit dem neuen Fragen nach der möglichen Bedeutung des Kanons . . . beschäftigt jene Frage die heutige theologische Besinnung mit neuer Intensität."

¹⁷W. H. Wüllner, "Der Jakobusbrief im Licht der Rhetorik und Textpragmatik," *LB* 43 (1978) 50-1. See also K. Syreeni, "Olkikirje? Näkökulmia Jaakobin kirjeen ajatusmaailmaan," *Teologinen Aikakauskiri* 99 (1994) 590; D. O. Via Jr., "The Right Strawy Epistle Reconsidered: A Study in Biblical Ethics and Hermeneutic," *JR* 49 (1969) 254-5. Similarly R. Walker, "Allein aus Werken. Zur Auslegung von Jakobus 2, 14-26," *ZTK* 61 (1964) 156. He discusses 1:22-25 and 2:10-12 together with 2:14-26. See further Soucek, "Zu den Problemen," 463, who also draws 1:2-4 into consideration. Cf. G. Braumann, "Der theologische Hintergrund des Jakobusbriefes," *TZ* 18 (1962) 403; F. O. Francis, "The Form and Function of the Opening and Closing Paragraphs of James and I John," *ZNW* 61 (1970) 118-9; R. Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen. Untersuchungen zur Bedeutung der menschlichen Taten im Frühjudentum, Neuen Testament und Frühchristentum* (WUNT 9 [2. Reihe]; Tübingen: Mohr, 1983) 28-33; R. Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft des Neuen Testaments* (HTKNT Supplementband 2: *Die urchristlichen Verkündiger*; Freiburg: Herder, 1988) 218. I, on the other hand, will consider 1:2-4 in connection with the second chapter, and 2:10-12 with the first. See below.

¹⁸Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 104. See further Eichholz, *Jakobus*, 42-3. Concerning the structure of the first chapter as a whole, see C.-B. Amphoux, "Une relecture du chapitre I de l'Épître de Jacques," *Bib* 59 (1978) 127-36.

also with respect to the salvation of his soul,¹⁹ and not only concerning the nature of true piety.²⁰

Jas 1:18 grounds the exhortation with the thought of the eschatological new creation, or correspondingly, the "new birth." God, according to his will, has caused Christians to be born through the Word of Truth, so that they might be the first fruits of his creation.²¹ The participle βουληθείς expresses (with the same sense as with Philo²²) the free and sovereign will of the creator. It underscores the independence of salvation from *human* powers.²³ Jas 2:5 forcefully stresses that God has chosen the poor in the world (i.e., Christians). Before him they lack any merit.²⁴ In agreement with this, 1:21 emphasizes that God has planted his saving Word in Christians.²⁵ Jas 1:16-17 earnestly warns against mistrust of his absolute goodness. Nothing less than "every good gift (δóσις) and every perfect gift (δóρημα)"²⁶ comes from above, from the father of

¹⁹P. H. Davids, *The Epistle of James. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 97; M. Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, with additions by H. Greeven (MeyerK 15; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984) 146.

²⁰Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 105.

²¹See most commentaries. Similarly, M. Albertz, "Die 'Erstlinge' in der Botschaft des Neuen Testaments," *EvT* 12 (1952) 153; Braumann, "Der theologische Hintergrund," 405-6; C. Burchard, "Gemeinde in der strohernen Epistel. Mutmaßungen über Jakobus," in *Kirche. Festschrift für G. Bornkamm zum 75. Geburtstag* (ed. D. Lührmann and G. Strecker; Tübingen: Mohr, 1980) 316, n. 8; L. Goppelt, *Theologie des Neuen Testament. Vol 2: Vielfalt und Einheit des apostolischen Christuszeugnisses* (ed. J. Roloff; UTB 850; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981) 533-4; Luck, "Die Theologie," 16; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 200; J. Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit.' Erwägungen zur Theologie des Jakobusbriefes," *SNT A/5* (1980) 73, n. 116. Cf. Via, "The Right Strawy Epistle," 264. C-M. Edsman ("Schöpferwille und Geburt Jac 1 18. Eine Studie zur altchristlichen Kosmologie," *ZNW* 38 [1939]) and L. E. Elliott-Binns ("James 1.18: Creation or Redemption?" *NTS* 3[1957]) relate the passage, contrary to the consensus, to the original creation. However, they then must explain the "we" with reference to the first human pair, "the Word of Truth" in the light of Gen 1:26, and "the first-fruit" entirely in a qualitative sense. Consequently, an interpretation of this sort loses plausibility. Cf. Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, ad loc.

²²Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 88; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 93. For further material in the ancient literature, in the LXX, and the church fathers, see Edsman, "Schöpferwille," 23-44.

²³Martin, *James*, 39; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 93-4, 96-7, and 147 with the significant summary: "Gott ist nach Jak die alleinige causa des Heils!" Frankemölle (*Gesetz im Jakobusbrief*, 218) also puts it well: "Gottes Sein und Handeln ermöglicht christliches Sein und Handeln."

²⁴R. Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund des Jakobusbriefes* (FB 28; Würzburg: Echter, 1977) 78-81; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 147. M. Lautenschlager ("Der Gegenstand des Glaubens im Jakobusbrief," *ZTK* 87 [1990] 172) wrongly reads the thought of "reich an den vom Glauben geforderten guten Werken" into the expression πλουσίους ἐν πίστει (vv. 2, 5).

²⁵Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 147.

²⁶The Greek text contains hexameter, and with an irregularity of the tribrachys in the second foot (H. Greeven, "Jede Gabe ist gut, Jak. 1,17," *TZ* 14 [1958] 1; W. L. Knox, "The Epistle of St. James," *JTS* 46 [1945] 14; cf. further C.-B. Amphoux, "A propos de Jacques 1, 17," *RHPR* 50 [1970] 127-8; J. Reumann, *Variety and Unity in New Testament Thought* [Oxford Bible Series; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991] 195). Greeven then construes the hexameter as a "monostichisches Paroemium ohne Kopula" (p. 8).

lights [actually: heavenly bodies]"²⁷; therefore the believing acceptance of the gospel is thereby included.²⁸

The "Word" (λόγος) here has to do in the first place with the creative Word of God at the creation of the world (Genesis 1).²⁹ Obviously primal and eschatological times stand in analogical relation to one another. As at the beginning, so also now (in the eschatological period), God creates out of his own free decision.³⁰ At the same time, the "Word" (λόγος) is related to the baptismal proclamation. The pictorial language in 1:18 with its theological sense fits that context (cf. 1 Pet 1:23: "For you have been born again, not from corruptible, but from incorruptible seed, that is from the living Word of God, which abides").³¹ In 1:21, further characteristic features of early Christian baptismal exhortation appear: 1) the typical consequential particle διό; 2) the verb ἀποτίθεσθαι ("put off"), pointing to the removal of old clothing in the act of baptism, a symbol of the vices of a pagan past; and 3) frequently, as the object of this removal, an "entirety" (πᾶς).³²

"The Word of Truth" (1:18) as well as the implanted Word (1:21) consequently may be identified with the gospel as it is concretized in baptism. Possibly James is following a common Christian usage (see 2 Cor 6:7; Eph 1:13; Col 1:5; 2 Tim 2:15; cf. the Johannine corpus). Nevertheless, he adds his own accents. Exhortation, the imperatival side of the indicative Word, also essentially belongs to the baptismal

His translation therefore takes the following form: "Jede Gabe ist gut, und jedes Geschenk ist vollkommen." In contrast, see, e.g., Amphoux, "A propos," 128.

²⁷E. Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet* (Kommentar till Nya Testamentet; Uppsala: EFS, 1992) 37; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 87; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 91; E. Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 1.-3. *Johannesbrief* (Neue Echter Bibel. Kommentar zum Neuen Testament mit der Einheitsübersetzung 17/19; Würzburg: Echter, 1988) 13; W. Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," in *Die "Katholischen" Briefe. Die Briefe des Jakobus, Petrus, Johannes und Judas* (ed. H. Balz and W. Schrage; NTD 10; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985) 20; H. Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe* (HNT 15; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1951) 9. Cf. Martin, *James*, 38; E. M. Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 31.

²⁸Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 94. Cf. Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 50; J. Marcus, "The Evil Inclination in the Epistle of James," *CBQ* 44 (1982) 621. Differently, C. Burchard, "Zu Jakobus 2 14-26," *ZNW* 71 (1980) 41, n. 65.

²⁹Martin, *James*, 40; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 94; O. J. F. Seitz, "James and the Law," *SE* 2, Part 1 (1964) 486; Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 33. Cf. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 89.

³⁰Cf. Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 38.

³¹Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 95-6. See further, Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 46-7; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 94; Karrer, "Christus," 177, n. 60; W. G. Kümmel, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Heidelberg: Quelle and Meyer, 1983) 361; Luck, "Die Theologie," 16; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 14; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 200; Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 586. Cf. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 89-90; Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 204; Martin, *James*, 40; Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 32-3.

³²Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 101. Following him, Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 94, n. 6. See further Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 46-7; Braumann, "Der theologische Hintergrund," 405; Martin, *James*, 48-9; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 22. Cf. Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 586. Otherwise, Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 93; Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 167-9.

proclamation.³³ The two aspects are bound together most closely, as may be clearly seen in 1:21-25, where “the perfect law of freedom” (1:25) abruptly replaces “the Word” (1:21-23):

Therefore lay aside all uncleanness and all evil, and accept with humility the *word*, which is implanted in you and has power to save your souls. Be doers of the *word* and not hearers alone. Otherwise you deceive yourselves. For if someone is a hearer of the *word* and not a doer, that one is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror; for after he has looked at himself, he leaves and forgets from that hour on how he appeared. The one however who gazes intently at the perfect *law* of freedom and persists in doing so, and is not a forgetful hearer, rather a doer, that one will be blessed in the doing.³⁴

Accordingly the following argument lacks persuasive power:

Already the connection of λόγος with ποιητής [1:22] allows us to recognize what λόγος James is thinking of; λόγος is clearly for him in this context—in distinction perhaps to v. 18 [and to 1:21!—before all the commandment, the expression of God’s will, his moral demand on human beings.³⁵

³³Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 102: “Näherhin kann dann damit [sc. by the word, 1:18, 21] nur die Bekanntgabe der christlichen Grundwahrheiten gemeint sein, die nicht bloß christologisch-soteriologischen, sondern auch ethischen Inhalts sind.” Similarly Goppelt, *Theologie*, 533-4; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 15; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 208-9; Schrage, “Der Jakobusbrief,” 23-4. Cf. Frankemölle, “Gesetz im Jakobusbrief,” 204-5. Walker (“Allein aus Werken,” 159) reduces the “Word of Truth” merely to the legal standard of the pious and righteous life. Following him, Lautenschlager, “Der Gegenstand,” 167. In contrast, for example, rightly Zmijewski, “Christliche Vollkommenheit,” 73, n. 116.

³⁴Goppelt, *Theologie*, 533-4. Already J. H. Ropes, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. James* (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1916) 173, 177. See further, Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 74; Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 148; Frankemölle, “Gesetz im Jakobusbrief,” 204, 219; Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 30; Luck, “Die Theologie,” 17; Martin, *James*, 45, 51; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 107; Reumann, *Variety and Unity*, 198; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 15, 21; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 208; Seitz, “James and the Law,” 485-6; Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 34-6; Zmijewski, “Christliche Vollkommenheit,” 72-4, 77. Cf. W. Gutbrod, “νόμος, κτλ.,” *TWNT* 4 (1942) 1074. Walker (“Allein aus Werken,” 157) remarks additionally that “doer of the Word” (1:23) correspondingly becomes “doer of works” (1:25). So also Frankemölle, “Gesetz im Jakobusbrief,” 204.

³⁵“Schon die Verbindung von λόγος mit ποιητής [1:22] läßt erkennen, an welchen λόγος Jak dabei denkt; λόγος ist offenbar für ihn in diesem Zusammenhang—im Unterschied etwa zu V 18 [and to 1:21!—vor allem das Gebot, der Willensausdruck Gottes, sein sittlicher Anspruch an den Menschen” (Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 104). With logical consistency, but categorically, K-G. Eckart (“Zur Terminologie des Jakobusbriefes,” *TLZ* 89 [1964] 524) expresses the following view: “Λόγος meint in diesem Zusammenhang nichts anderes als das Gesetz, wie der Schluß des Absatzes v 25 zeigt, aber eben das vollkommene Gesetz, das Gesetz der Freiheit. . . . Wir werden nun darunter nichts anderes zu verstehen haben als eben jene christlich traditionelle Doppelform des Gesetzes aus Dekalog und Liebesgebot, die es zu halten und zu tun gilt.”

The insistence upon two different senses for the same term in consecutive verses has little to commend it. More likely, λόγος summarizes the whole of the baptismal proclamation, with both indicative and imperative aspects (see above). For this very reason the believing acceptance of the Word must constantly be put into practice in the current situations of life. One may, certainly, penetrate the *ordo salutis* expressed in its Jacobean form, and theoretically differentiate between the different points. In reality, however, the differences balance out one another. The process of salvation does not divide itself up into a number of loose parts. Faith and works always belong together (see above).

The inner unity of Christian existence without doubt goes back to the new creation, or respectively new birth, which has taken place in baptism. There a profound change took place, a change which is effective for the entire existence of the individual, and not merely for the thought-life. For this reason, the free grace of God never leads to a permission to libertinism, but an enablement to fulfill God's will. The past which was determined by sin is transformed therewith into the eschatological present, which stands under the effect of the powers of salvation.

Incidentally, the parallelism between 1:23-24 (the pictorial section) and 1:25 (the topical section) vividly clarifies what has just been said. A precise correlation manifests itself:³⁶

vv. 23-24	v. 25
οὗτος ἔοικεν	
1. ἀνδρὶ κατανοοῦντι τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ	1. παρακύψας
2. ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ	2. εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας
antithetical (cf. δέ and ἀλλά)	
3. ἀπελήλυθεν καὶ εὐθέως ἐπελάθετο	3. παραμείνας, οὐκ ἀκροατῆς ἐπιλησμονῆς γινόμενος
4. οὐ ποιητῆς	4. ποιητῆς ἔργου

The picture of "viewing in a mirror" appears especially in ethical contexts in the writings of the moral philosophers. It makes the necessity of self-knowledge apparent.³⁷ James thinks similarly. He moves from the beholding of the face (1:23b) to the beholding of oneself (1:24a) and finally to the person of the one viewing (1:24b:

³⁶Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 106. With reliance on him, Martin, *James*, 50-1. Cf. Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 46; Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 203-4.

³⁷Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 105-6. Also Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 147; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 23; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 11.

ὁπίστος).³⁸ But in this case the hoped-for reaction fails to appear. The person forgot immediately "what he looked like" (1:24b).

To the "beholding in a mirror" in the pictorial half corresponds the "gazing into the perfect law of freedom" in the topical half.³⁹ Jas 1:25 has as its content the true condition of Christians. They are (*per definitionem*) no "forgetful hearers," rather "doers of works." Perhaps 1:23-25, taken as a whole, introduces an allegory, "in which the Word is represented by a looking-glass that faithfully portrays a person's God-designed 'image' [in reference to Gen 1:26-27 and 5:1]."⁴⁰ There remains, in any case, no doubt that the Word which effects creation in the present endtime reestablishes the reality of nothing less than the image of God (1:18).⁴¹ Accordingly, it is understandable why passive Christianity is equivalent to self-deception (1:22).

In the strict sense, the fulfillment of the Law derives consequently from the *being* of the Christian, who is, so to speak, "created for good works" (Eph 2:10). In this respect, James does not press upon his addressees a merely outward obedience. His strict moral doctrine has as its goal the uncovering or, respectively, the discovery of their inner created nature. Taken as a whole, the praiseworthy way of life in the end displays what God himself called into life and being. He has pleasure, namely, only in his own works of creation (cf. Gen 1:31).

The economy of salvation to which we have called attention above is expressed briefly and clearly in Jas 1:21. There he admonishes his addressees in a paradoxical manner to receive the Word once implanted in them (by God). A close conceptual connection to 1:18 has presented itself already. Accordingly, the "Word" hints at the baptismal proclamation with both its indicative as well as its imperatival aspect: the one baptized is recreated or reborn through the (indicative) Word, in order to be able to live according to the (imperative) Word.⁴² The gospel and the Law (in the light of 2:8-11, in the first place, the Decalogue, see below) therefore have a common denominator, namely ὁ λόγος. The adjective

³⁸Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 106. Also Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 23.

³⁹Against Via, "The Right Strawy Epistle," 266. He attempts to show "the incompatibility" between 1:23-24 and 1:25.

⁴⁰Martin, *James*, 46. See p. 55. Similarly Seitz, "James and the Law," 485; Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 35. In contrast, for example, Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 147-8. Cf. Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 587; Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 71.

⁴¹Perhaps the difficult expression τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως (1:23) refers back to 1:18 (see Luck, "Die Theologie," 18; cf. Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 587). Then it intimates the new creation in baptism.

⁴²Cf. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 95; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 15, 21. The problem treated by Sidebottom (*James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 34) therewith falls away, i.e., that "the idea [in 1:21] is still difficult with the word 'receive.'" Similarly already Knox, "The Epistle of St. James," 14-5. See also the discussion of J. B. Adamson (*The Epistle of James* [NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981] 98-100) and Dibelius (*Der Brief des Jakobus*, 145-6). Cf. Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 587, n. 39; Via, "The Right Strawy Epistle," 264.

ἔμφυτος therewith expresses the idea of internalization (of the Word). The fulfillment of Jer 31:31-33 therefore lies at hand:

“Behold, the time is coming,” says the Lord, “in which I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not as the covenant was, which I made with their fathers, when I took them by the hand in order to lead them out of the land of Egypt, a covenant which they did not keep, although I was their Lord,” says the Lord; “rather this shall be the covenant which I make with the house of Israel after this time,” says the Lord: “I will put my law [הַתּוֹרָה; obviously not identical with “the Law”!] into their heart and write it into their mind, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”⁴³

Further, James ascribes saving power to the eschatological Word (δυναμεινον σωσαι). He does not at all take into account the natural ability of the human being. Taken as it stands, 1:21 does not, for example, express the following condition: “For the word to exercise its saving power, it must be realized by human beings in good works. By this means is the word deprived of any saving magic or automatic mechanism of salvation.”⁴⁴ The accent which James sets is here decisively shifted. As if he had made the powerful Word of God dependent upon the good works of human beings!⁴⁵ The Christian has the Word entirely to thank for his or her new existence (1:18). Active behavior quite simply means a living of the newly-created or reborn person in current situations. There is no point of departure for any idea of human performance. The call to accept the implanted Word is directed toward the inner preparedness of the Christian, to draw practical consequences from the new being.⁴⁶ Hearing the Word without results does not in the end bear witness to a failure to *apply* one’s own potential. It much rather bears witness that the new creation or new birth has not at all taken place (cf. the warning against self-deception in 1:22). The soteriology of James revolves around a saving magic or automatic mechanism of salvation just as little as the development of the body and soul of a child may be described as “magical” or “mechanical.”⁴⁷ Besides, he

⁴³Goppelt, *Theologie*, 533-5. Following him, Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 95, n. 2; Martin, *James*, 45-6, 51. See further Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 14-5.

⁴⁴“Damit das Wort seine rettende Macht ausüben kann, muß es vom Menschen in gute Taten umgesetzt werden. Dadurch ist das Wort jeder Heilsmagie und jeglichem Heilsmechanismus entzogen” (Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 103). Following him, Martin, *James*, 49. Cf. Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 81-2.

⁴⁵Luck (“Die Theologie,” 19) is much better: “So sorgt also der Nomos als Weisheit Gottes, wenn man sich ihm ausliefert, selbst für die Verwirklichung des Wortes. Es ist das Gesetz selbst, das den Hörer zum Täter werden läßt.”

⁴⁶In tension with 1:18, Mußner (*Der Jakobusbrief*, 103) here leaves room “für die freie Entscheidung des Menschen.”

⁴⁷Cf. Ruckstuhl (*Jakobusbrief*, 22): “. . . kann man auch nicht davon reden, daß die Mahnungen zum Tun und zu den Werken des Glaubens hier als reine Forderung erscheinen. . . . Sie entsprechen vielmehr der Gabe der Gotteskindschaft und dem von

places the greatest value upon the sovereignty of the personal God (1:18: βουληθεΐς). The notion of an impersonal flow of power has no place here.

The "perfect law of freedom" (1:25) establishes the guidelines for the Christian ethos. Exact parallels to this expression appear neither in Jewish nor Hellenistic materials.⁴⁸ What sort of an estimation of it then may be gained from an overall assessment of the letter?

Outside of 1:25 the concept of "the law of freedom" appears again in 2:12. No other instances appear in the progression of the argument.⁴⁹ In the context of both verses the emphasis falls on right speaking and right acting.⁵⁰ The following sections stand out:⁵¹

1:19-21	slowness in speaking
	the laying aside of vices
1:26-27	the warning against an unmastered tongue
	pure and undefiled piety
2:12a	"So speak and so act . . ."
3:1-12	against the sins of the tongue
3:13-18	concerning the true wisdom in the doing of good

Also 2:1-7 and 2:15-16 polemicize against cool or empty words and against lazy behavior. Finally the entire letter displays an imperatival character.⁵²

Gott eingepflanzten Wort der Heilsbotschaft und sind getragen vom Glauben und der Weisheit von oben. . . ."

⁴⁸See most of the commentaries. Stauffer ("Das Gesetz," 528-32) finds the expression "law of freedom" three times in succession in the Community Rule from Qumran (1QS 10:6, 8, 11). His discovery, however, goes back to an error of translation (having to do with transcription). In all probability the νόμος τῆς ἐλευθερίας has to do with a Christian construction of words. See R. Bultmann, *Theologie des Neuen Testament* (UTB 630; Tübingen: Mohr, 1984) 514, n. 1; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 99; Eckart, "Zur Terminologie," 521; Goppelt, *Theologie*, 534-5; Karrer, "Christus," 175, n. 41; Kümmel, *Einleitung*, 361 and n. 23; E. Lohse, "Glaube und Werke. Zur Theologie des Jakobusbriefes," ZNW 48 (1957) 8, n. 27; W. Nauch, "Lex insculpta (חוק חרות) in der Sektenschrift," ZNW 46 (1955) 138-40; F. Nötscher, "'Gesetz der Freiheit' im NT und in der Mönchsgemeinde am Toten Meer," *Bib* 34 (1953) 193-4; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 213. Similarly, W. Popkes, *Adressaten, Situation und Form des Jakobusbriefes* (SBS 125/126; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1986) 68. Not incorrectly, however, Schnackenburg (*Die sittliche Botschaft*, 213-4) remarks concerning the rabbinic interpretation of Exod 32:16 (m. 'Abot 6:2): "Doch auch bei der Lesung 'eingegraben' kann eine Beziehung zur Freiheit bestehen, nämlich zur eschatologischen Freiheit, die von den Qumranfrommen erwartet wird." Cf. Martin, *James*, 45: ". . . the line of development moves by way of Qumran, whose documents may possibly contain the exact phrase 'law of freedom.'"

⁴⁹E.g., Popkes, *Adressaten*, 68; Stauffer, "Das Gesetz," 527.

⁵⁰Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 126: "Das rechte Reden und das rechte Tun sind die großen Anliegen des Jak." Cf. further E. Baasland, "Literarische Form, Thematik und geschichtliche Einordnung des Jakobusbriefes," ANRW II 25.5 (1988) 3671.

⁵¹Cf. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 118.

⁵²Eichholz, *Jakobus*, 44: "Imperativisch aber ist der ganze Brief!" This judgment is based on the famous commentary by Dibelius (*Der Brief des Jakobus*). Similarly, for example, Braumann, "Der theologische Hintergrund," 401; P. H. Davids, "The Epistle of James in Modern Discussion," ANRW II.25.5 (1988) 3627-8; B. R. Halson, "The

As a common denominator for the broad palette of admonitions of the most varied kind, 2:8 lays special emphasis on the love command. It perfectly summarizes the entire Law (naturally, cultic- and ceremonial law set aside)⁵³ briefly and simply.⁵⁴ Love of the neighbor leads to all good works: the one who loves the neighbor acts rightly (καλῶς ποιεῖτε, the present with the aspect of enduring activity). The one, however, who is guilty of partiality (προσωποληψία), commits a serious sin (2:9 and 2:1-7). Presumably

Epistle of James: 'Christian Wisdom?'" SE IV. Part I (1968) 310-1; Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 26; Karrer, "Christus," 175-6; A. Lindemann, *Paulus im ältesten Christentum. Das Bild des Apostels und die Rezeption der paulinischen Theologie in der frühchristlichen Literatur bis Marcion* (BHT 58; Tübingen: Mohr, 1979) 240. Baasland prefers to speak of the letter of James as a *hortatio* ("Der Jakobusbrief," 119-20). Wüllner ("Der Jakobusbrief," 30, 65) on the other hand understands the letter of James on the basis of rhetoric and text-pragmatics instead of paraenesis. Following him, J. H. Elliott, "The Epistle of James in Rhetorical and Social Scientific Perspective. Holiness-Wholeness and Patterns of Replication," *BTB* 23 (1993) 71. Similarly, L. Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric in James?" *NovT* 37 (1995). On the paraenetic features, see in any case G. Perdue, "Paraenesis and the Epistle of James," *ZNW* 72 (1981). According to the form-criticism of K. Berger it is nevertheless appropriate to regard the letter of James as a symboletic composition (*Formgeschichte des Neuen Testaments* [Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1984] 147). So, for example, F. Mußner, "Die ethische Motivation im Jakobusbrief," in *Neues Testament und Ethik. Für R. Schnackenburg* (ed. H. Merklein; Freiburg: Herder, 1989) 420-1; Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 579-80 (with a criticism of Wüllner's analysis).

⁵³See Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 73; Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 29; Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 202-3, 207, 216, 218; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 91-2, 128; Karrer, "Christus," 177-8; G. Kittel, "Der geschichtliche Ort des Jakobusbriefes," *ZNW* 41 (1942) 77-8; id., "Der Jakobusbrief und die Apostolischen Väter," *ZNW* 43 (1950) 56-8; G. Lüdemann, *Paulus der Heidenapostel*. Vol. 2: *Antipaulinismus im frühen Christentum* (FRLANT 130; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983) 201; Mußner, "Die ethische Motivation," 423; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 28; Seitz, "James and the Law," 481-5; Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 588; Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 157; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 16; Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 77. Cf. Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 316; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 47, 117; Gutbrod, "νόμος," 1074; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 207.

⁵⁴Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 125 (on the development of his exegetical analysis, see Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 199-200): "Vor allem wer das 'königliche Gebot' der Nächstenliebe übertritt, ist grundsätzlich ein παραβάτης νόμου geworden; er hat nicht ein Einzelgebot übertreten, sondern die sittliche Ordnung Gottes überhaupt zerstört, die im heiligen Wesen Gottes ihren Grund hat. Die Einzelgebote sind nur Ausfluß des einen, unteilbaren sittlichen Willens des göttlichen Gesetzgebers." Still clearer in the appendix to the third edition, pp. 242-3. Similarly also id., *Der Galaterbrief*, 288. See further Baasland, "Der Jakobusbrief," 123; id., *Jakobsbrevet*, 73; Eckart, "Zur Terminologie," 522-3; Gutbrod, "νόμος," 1074; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 88-90, 99, 129; Kittel, "Der geschichtliche Ort," 86; Luck, "Die Theologie," 17; Martin, *James*, 67-8; Popkes, *Adressaten*, 117-8; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 17-8; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 210-3; Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 588; Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 74-5, 77. Cf. Frankemölle "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 209, 211, 214; Sidebottom, *James, Jude*, 2 Peter, 42. Goppelt speaks rather of an overall demand of God, which "hinter den atl. Geboten steht" (*Theologie*, 536). But at the same time, he thinks: "Dieser Anspruch ist beispielhaft zusammengefaßt im Liebesgebot." Otherwise, for example, Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 29, n. 12; J. T. Sanders, *Ethics in the New Testament. Change and Development* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) 123-4; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 28.

in chap. 2 the burden of a cardinal fault is laid upon the preference for a certain person or group of persons (read: a rich person or the rich). It namely infringes in a weighty and perverted way against love, in a certain sense the "material" principle of the Law⁵⁵ (cf. the rigorous thesis in 2:10, especially when related to 2:2-3).⁵⁶

Perhaps it is not accidental that James subsequently continues with the threatening danger of transgression against the fifth commandment, μή φονεύσης (2:11).⁵⁷ In agreement with Jewish tradition (cf. the Sermon on the Mount) he seems to understand "murder" to include all behavior which rejects another (4:1-2). What a fitting description of lovelessness!⁵⁸ Additionally the text says that behind the sixth commandment μή μοιχεύσης⁵⁹ (and the remaining commandments) stands one and the same fatherly God. The innumerable instructions therefore have one and the same origin, viz. his immutable holiness (cf. 1:17 and 4:12). On the firm conviction of monotheism rests in a certain sense the "formal" principle of the Law.⁶⁰

Further, 1:19b-20 already warned against wrath, the opposite of love. It counts as the epitome of sin, since the wrathful person does

⁵⁵Burchard ("Zu Jakobus," 29-30) maintains that the Law of freedom encompasses, "nicht alles, was Christen tun sollen, in unserer Sprache Jakobus' materiale Ethik, sonst müßte er seine Paränese stärker als Gebotsauslegung entwickeln." His position does not make sense. According to 1:25, the Christian is supposed to gaze at the perfect Law of freedom, naturally in order to attain to moral perfection (1:4). According to 2:12, the Christian (sc. one's entire life) will be judged through the Law of freedom.

⁵⁶C. E. B. Cranfield, "The Message of James," in *The Bible and Christian Life. A Collection of Essays* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1985) 163; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 114-5; Gutbrod, "νόμος," 1074; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 90; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 17-8. Cf. Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 177, 179; Eckart, "Zur Terminologie," 522; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 28; Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 161.

⁵⁷The order of the commandments in James (first the sixth, then the fifth commandment) corresponds to the reading in the Septuagint (Codex B). Cf. further Luke 18:20 and Rom 13:9. See most commentaries, ad loc.

⁵⁸Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 117; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 126. Otherwise Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 93; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 29. Martin (*James*, 70) even asks himself, if "the actual killing of other people in internecine strife may be in view." Within the congregation there then would have raged a group of Zealots (ibid.). Soucek ("Zu den Problemen," 465) in contrast reckons (beyond Matt 5:22) with the bottomless difficulty of the poor in antiquity, which "das Eintreiben von Schulden im gegebenen Fall im buchstäblichen Sinn zum Mord machen könnte." Popkes (*Adressaten*, 64-6) also takes the social problems of the addressees into account.

⁵⁹Probably Mußner over-interprets the meaning of the sixth commandment in 2:11. He writes: "Und ist in den Augen des Jak das Buhlen mit den Reichen eine Art von (geistigem) 'Ehebruch,' dann hat er die Beispiele aus dem Dekalog (Ehebrechen und Töten) bewußt im Hinblick auf den 'Fall' gewählt" (*Der Jakobusbrief*, 126). Cf. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 117. Nevertheless James supposes expressly in 2:11 that, "du nun nicht die Ehe brichst" (cf. however 4:4!). See Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 93. M. H. Shepherd ("The Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew," *JBL* 75 [1956] 45) points the mention of the fifth and sixth commandments in 2:11 back to the commonalities between James and Matthew (in this case 5:21-32).

⁶⁰E. g., Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 117; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 18. Cf. Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 92-3.

not work "the righteousness of God." In other words, such a one always behaves contrary to the Law. Formulated conversely, then, the one who loves effects "the righteousness of God." In other words, such a one always acts in conformity with the Law.⁶¹ This last conclusion fits the flow of thought in 2:8-12 very well.

Every individual violation is therewith a total violation of the entire will of God with emphasis placed upon love (which stems from his very being). This interest applies especially to the treatment of the poor. The failure to satisfy their needs witnesses undeniably to a dead faith. Jas 2:13 makes Christian love equal to mercy (naturally, in relation to the poor). Inquiry will be made at the final judgment concerning it.⁶²

Additionally, throughout his paraenesis James makes use of Lev 19:11-18,⁶³ a section, which as is well-known, reaches its peak in the love command as the "royal" Law (Jas 2:18).⁶⁴ At least the following points of contact are apparent:⁶⁵

Leviticus 19	James
11 You shall not steal, nor lie, nor deal falsely with one another.	3:13-16, 4:1-2
12 You shall not swear falsely by my name and profane the name of the Lord your God. I am the Lord.	5:12
13 You shall not oppress or rob your neighbor [cf. 11]. The wage of the day-laborer shall not remain with you until morning.	5:4

⁶¹Cf. Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 79-80; Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 42, 48, 50; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 93; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 100; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 22; Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes*, 192-3.

⁶²Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 119; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 126; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 209, 218. The emphasis here does not fall on the mercy of God (so Martin, *James*, 72-3). Cf. Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 72.

⁶³Cf. Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 97: "... innehåller i 3 Mos 19 ... präglar Jakobusbrevet långt utöver själva citaten." See further Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 177.

⁶⁴Goppelt (*Theologie*, 536) in my view reads too fine a distinction into Jas 2:8. He says expressly: "Auch 2,8 setzt das 'königliche Gesetz' nicht mit dem Liebesgebot gleich, sondern erklärt: das königliche Gesetz, nach dem die Christen handeln, entspricht dem Liebesgebot der Schrift!" Similarly Cranfield, "The Message of James," 163.

⁶⁵With the following list, cf. Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 61; Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 208; Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 31; Martin, *James*, 68; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 124; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 17; Seitz, "James and the Law," 476, 485; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 15-6 (Lev 19:15 — Jas 2:9); Martin, *James*, 164 (Lev 19:16 — Jas 4:11); likewise the commentaries on Jas 2:8 (with the citation from Lev 19:18).

14 You shall not curse the dumb person, and shall not place an obstacle in the way of the blind person, for you shall fear the Lord your God. I am the Lord.	no direct reference (with cursing, cf. 3:9-10)
15 You shall not act unjustly in judgment: you shall not show preference to the lesser, nor shall you favor the great, rather you shall judge your neighbor with justice.	2:9 (in connection with 2:2-3)
16 You shall not go about as a slanderer among your people. You shall not appear as a witness against the life of your neighbor [cf. 17]. I am the Lord.	4:11
17 You shall not hate your brother in your heart, rather you shall admonish your neighbor, so that you do not bring guilt upon yourself on his account.	1:19-20; cf. 2:11; 5:19-20
18 You shall not take vengeance for yourself, nor keep anger against the children of your people [cf. 17]. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.	2:8

In his ethical instruction, James concentrates on love toward the neighbor. He accords no less important a place to the love of God (see 1:12; 2:5).⁶⁶ Paul argues in an entirely similar way. With a paraenetic goal, he insists upon love to the neighbor (Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14), without losing sight of love for God (for example, Rom 8:28). Cf. Lev 19:11-18, above. Probably James as well as Paul understands Christian faith as the epitome of love toward God. In addition to it remains only the task of governing relations among human beings. In reality the general demand to love the neighbor covers all areas of life. It summarizes the whole claim of God upon the Christian. The adjective τέλειος (1:25) provides a pregnant expression of this very thought in connection with the Law of freedom.⁶⁷

⁶⁶Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 210-3; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 89; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 210; Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 588.

⁶⁷Goppelt, *Theologie*, 535. With a similar, but wider-reaching emphasis Martin, *James*, 46: "Hence the law is 'perfect' in that it represents God's perfect will. Yet more than that, it conveys his strength to enable those who observe it to attain its end, and become 'perfect and mature.'" Cf. also Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 209. Mußner (*Der Jakobusbrief*, 109) understands the attribute τέλειος "heilsgeschichtlich."

From the background of the special emphasis of James upon the love command, it is possible to agree with Mußner, who draws the following conclusion: "As can be seen from the context, for James the 'freedom' of the νόμος τέλειος, consists in the loving turn toward the neighbor away from all seeking of one's own interests."⁶⁸ This citation lacks, indeed, the eschatological perspective of Jer 31:31-34,⁶⁹ which demonstrably serves as an indispensable precondition for the Christian ethos (see above). In a material sense, however, Mußner arrives at the same point of view when he afterwards continues:

So according to James, even the νόμος τέλειος leads to freedom for the one who pursues it. By this is not meant freedom from sins, against which the "complete law" of human beings warns, but—so shows v. 25b: ποιητῆς ἔργου—one's "release" and enablement to do the true will of God, especially in works of love for the neighbor.⁷⁰

Herewith an articulation of the difficult concept "the Law of freedom" (1:25; 2:12) has finally emerged. It signifies the entire claim of Lev 19:18 in the field of effects of the NT age.⁷¹

At the same time, the Law of freedom (1:25; 2:12) is not one and the same as the royal Law (2:8).⁷² Between the two a fine shift of accent takes place. The latter points to the love command as the "highest" commandment⁷³ or the commandment of the "Most

It points to "das durch Jesus vollendete Gesetz (Mt 5, 17!), das als νόμος τέλειος seine Befolger zur Freiheit führen kann." Cf. again Martin, *James*, 51. Otherwise, Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 169.

⁶⁸"Für Jak besteht die 'Freiheit' des νόμος τέλειος, so geht aus dem Kontext hervor, in der liebenden Hinwendung zum Nächsten sich verwirklichenden Befreiung von aller Ichsucht" (Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 108).

⁶⁹Similarly, e.g., with Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 54 (cf. however p. 73) and Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 75. Cf. Ropes, *James*, 173.

⁷⁰"So führt auch nach Jak der νόμος τέλειος seinen Befolger zur Freiheit. Dabei ist nicht an die Freiheit von Sünde gedacht, vor der das 'vollkommene Gesetz' den Menschen bewahren will, sondern—das zeigt V 25b: ποιητῆς ἔργου!—seine 'Entlassung' und Befähigung zum wirklichen Tun des Willens Gottes, besonders in den Werken der Nächstenliebe" (Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 108). Cf. further p. 109. Following him Martin, *James*, 51, with an express reference to Jer 31:31 ff. Cf. further Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 213-4; Via, "The Right Strawy Epistle," 261.

⁷¹Cf. Karrer, "Christus," 177: "Das Gesetz des Jak ist damit von vornherein christlich einzuordnen. Es ist, pointiert gesagt, 'nicht mehr das jüdische.'"

⁷²Otherwise Martin, *James*, 67: "There is nothing in our passage to speak against taking the 'law of freedom' to be the 'supreme law.'" Similarly already Gutbrod, "νόμος," 1074 and later still Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 15, 17. Cf. Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 87-9, 94. The citation seems to be rather unclear. See below. Mußner (*Der Jakobusbrief*, 107) expresses himself much better: "Den Wesensinhalt des 'vollkommenen Gesetzes der Freiheit' sieht Jak sicher ausgesprochen in dem 'königlichen Gesetz gemäß der Schrift: Du sollst deinen Nächsten lieben wie dich selbst' (vgl. 2, 8)."

⁷³Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 59, 68-9; Gutbrod, "νόμος," 1074; Kittel, "Der geschichtliche Ort," 86; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 124; Reumann, *Variety and Unity*, 197; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 17. Cf. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 114; Dibelius, *Der Brief*

High.⁷⁴ The former, on the other hand, plays upon that which is to be brought to fulfillment from within, obedience in the truest sense of the OT ideal. Accordingly, 1:25 and 2:12 do not merely present a norm of behavior or of judgment.⁷⁵ They bear at the same time an account of the changed situation of the new covenant: the Christian can and should fulfill the law of freedom, because the Word (the Torah, with a view to Jer 31:33) is "implanted" within (Jas 1:21).⁷⁶ Through this the imperatival expression νόμος τῆς ἐλευθερίας receives an underlying indicative tone.⁷⁷

Finally, 1:25 states that ποιητῆς ἔργου "will be blessed (μακάριος) in his doing." The preposition ἐν should not be understood here in the sense of διὰ + the accusative. In the first place, it replaces the instrumental dative.⁷⁸ In agreement, the macarism lends no aid to the emergence of a notion of the necessity of compensation or the thought of merit. According to 1:21 the saving power belongs to the Word alone. It effects the new birth or the new creation (1:18).⁷⁹ Consequent conduct then naturally grows

des Jakobus, 177-8; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 211-2; Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 42; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 15. In agreement Popkes, *Adressaten*, 117: "Was immer in Jak 2,8 das Adjektiv 'königlich' besagt, auf jeden Fall unterstreicht es die hervorragende Stellung dieses Gesetzes."

⁷⁴Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 114; Cranfield, "The Message of James," 163; Goppelt, *Theologie*, 536; Martin, *James*, 67; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 28; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 15. Cf. Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 212; Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 42; Via, "The Right Strawy Epistle," 261. Somewhat differently, Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 88: "... βασιλικός νόμος bedeutet nicht in erster Linie, daß das Gesetz vom βασιλεύς gegeben ist. . . . Diskutabel erscheint aber möglicherweise, wenn βασιλικός und βασιλεία [VV.5.8] in einem sachlichen Zusammenhang stehen, die Hypothese, daß der Mensch durch die Erfüllung des βασιλικό[=δ]ς νόμος Anteil an der βασιλεία erhält. . . ." Similarly, Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 114; Karrer, "Christus," 174; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 17. Cf. Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 210. Windisch (*Die Katholischen Briefe*, 15) adds, that the royal Law "königl. Würde verleiht und über die äußerlichen Standesunterschiede hinaushebt."

⁷⁵Against Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 107. He writes in reference to the perfect Law of freedom in 1:25 the following: "Zweifelloos geht es für Jak um eine Norm des Handelns."

⁷⁶Consequently against Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 29: "Das Gesetz der Freiheit ist eine Instanz unabhängig vom Glauben."

⁷⁷Goppelt, *Theologie*, 533-5, 537-8. Against Eckart, "Zur Terminologie," 522: "νόμος ἐλευθερίας ist hier also nicht pointierter Terminus, sondern eher eine einfach geglückte Formulierung, die nichts anderes bezeichnet, als νόμος allein auch." Cf. already Luther in his preface to the Johannine epistles: "Er [sc. John] thut aber das selb [demands good works] nicht mit treyben auffß gesetz, wie Jacobs Epistel thut, tsondern mit reytßen, das wyr auch lieben sollen, wie Got uns geliebt hat" (WA DB 7, 326).

⁷⁸Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 110, n. 5. Actually the ἐν describes "den begleitenden Umstand" (Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 153).

⁷⁹Against Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 103. He thinks about 2:21 as follows: "Für das Gesamturteil über die Theologie des Jak ist es von größner Bedeutung, hier zu ersehen, daß er nicht bloß den 'Werken,' sondern dem 'Wort' rettende Kraft zuschreibt." Following him Martin, *James*, 49. Even if works are necessary according to the theology of James, he nowhere ascribes saving power to them. See further my

forth from the inward transformation. The Christian loves, therefore, not in order to acquire a fullness of accomplishments, and through them to win salvation at the final judgment. Much rather, love flows uncompelled from the heart. Jas 1:25b brings to consequent expression the idea that the process of salvation completes itself as planned (cf. 1:12). Stress falls upon not the mere acceptance of the Word, but the constant acting according to the Word. The unconditional obedience to the Law of freedom shows that the Christian is not subject to self-deception (1:22, 26). Precisely for this reason the Christian is blessed in the doing.⁸⁰

As has been demonstrated, natural ability or human capacity counts for absolutely nothing in the "soteriology" of James.⁸¹ On the contrary, he leads Christian existence back to the new birth or the new creation.⁸² The free intervention of God herewith clearly comes into prominence. His absolute sovereignty and his effective Word are written with large letters (1:18, 21). Thereby a distinctive difference with common Jewish thinking comes into view, according to which it is always incumbent on the human being to fulfill the Law out of his own strength.⁸³

On the basis of this background, we shall investigate 2:14-26 in the following section.

argumentation in the following section. Rightly, Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 201-2.

⁸⁰Cf. Goppelt, *Theologie*, 541.

⁸¹Similarly, Marcus, "The Evil Inclination," 621. He speaks of "James' unwillingness to ascribe to human beings an inherent inclination to good."

⁸²Cf. Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 10: Jas 1:18 points to "die Bekehrung durch das Wort in der Geschichte, die die Natur des Menschen vollendet oder wiederherstellt und damit wirklich den Anfang der kosmischen Palingeneisie darstellt."

⁸³T. Laato, *Paul and Judaism. An Anthropological Approach* (South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 115; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995) 83-94. Cf. Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 77; Luck, "Die Theologie," 16. Against Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 173 and 182 with a reference to Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 162.

III. JAS 2:14-26

The paraenesis of chap. 1 proceeds in chap. 2, and with slightly different terminology. "Faith without works" now corresponds to the mere reception of the Word, and "faith with works" to the constant doing according to the Word. In any case, James has the same inclination. He intends with utter conviction to portray true Christianity.⁸⁴

Even if James draws a theoretical distinction between faith and works in chap. 2, it clearly proceeds from his theological reflection, that the two entities are deeply bound to one another (similarly already in chap. 1).⁸⁵ At least the following arguments may be discerned:⁸⁶

- 1) Faith without works is entirely dead (2:17⁸⁷ and 26 with the difficult anthropological comparison: body without soul = faith without works⁸⁸).
- 2) Faith itself (not merely the believer!) has (ἐξ᾿η) works (2:17).⁸⁹

⁸⁴Braumann, "Der theologische Hintergrund," 403; Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 27; Eichholz, *Jakobus*, 40, 42-3; Francis, "The Form and Function," 118-9; Martin, *James*, 79; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 127; Soucek, "Zu den Problemen," 463; Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 590; Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 156. See still Via, "The Right Strawy Epistle," 254-5, even if he thinks he finds a hair-splitting contradiction between 1:18-24 and 2:14-26 (pp. 265-6). Similarly Reumann, *Variety and Unity*, 201: "The one-sided stress in 2:14-26 on works is also different from the picture in 1:18-24 of Christians being begotten and brought forth by the word of truth through the implanted word." Cf. however my argumentation above and below.

⁸⁵So most of the commentaries. Cf. Burchard, *Theologie*, 326, n. 75: "Die meisten Exegeten finden, daß sich Jakobus' Glaube in den Werken verwirklicht, verlebendigt, verleiblicht o. ä." Against Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 31-2, 42; Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 174ff.; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 31-4, 36; Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 163ff. Cf. Via, "The Right Strawy Epistle," 256, 264-5. Rightly, for example, Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 33, n. 23; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbreief*, 246; and Zmijewski, "Christliche Vollkommenheit," 65, n. 82, 67, n. 95, 68, n. 97. Dibelius (*Der Brief des Jakobus*, 220) wrongly divides faith and works into "zwei verschiedene Größen." See also p. 204. Rightly, Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 146, n. 1. Cf. Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 129; Baasland, "Literarische Form," 3669-70.

⁸⁶Compare my argumentation in general with Cranfield, "The Message of James," 168-9.

⁸⁷See especially Martin, *James*, 85-6. The Greek expression καθ' ἑαυτήν in 2:17 signifies either "in itself" or "for itself alone." See the commentaries. At bottom, the two translations amount to the same sense (so W. Marxsen, "Allein aus Glauben [Jak. 2,14-16]," in *Der Frühkatholizismus" im Neuen Testament* [BibS(N) 21; Neukirchen: Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1958] 27). In the same way, Cranfield, "The Message of James," 166, n. 1.

⁸⁸Cf. Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 206: "Was verglichen wird, ist selbstverständlich nur der Todeszustand; zahlreiche vergebliche Auslegungsversuche beweisen nur die Unmöglichkeit einer im einzelnen durchgeführten Gleichsetzung." Similarly Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 134. Cf. Martin, *James*, 98; Zmijewski, "Christliche Vollkommenheit," 67, n. 95. Otherwise, Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 187.

⁸⁹Cf. already Ropes, *James*, 207.

- 3) More broadly, faith without works works nothing (2:20: ἀργή = α-εργος).⁹⁰
- 4) The faith of Abraham worked together with his works (2:22). συνήργει,⁹¹ (the only imperfect in the entire letter),⁹² witnesses powerfully to the endurance of the believing impulse to activity.⁹³
- 5) The faith of Abraham was completed by (ἐκ) works (2:22). The verb ἐτελειώθη certainly contains no thought of supplementation. It rather brings to expression the coming to maturity of a certain quality of character.⁹⁴ The conclusion lies at hand, then, that works in a certain sense realize the essence of faith.⁹⁵

⁹⁰Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 76; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 126; Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 212; Martin, *James*, 90; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 140 and n. 4. Adamson (*The Epistle of James*, 127, n. 203) derives the adjective ἀργή from ἀεργός.

⁹¹The verb means here "work together," not something like "help," or "support." See most of the commentaries. W. Bauer (*Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur* [ed. K. and B. Aland; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988] s.v.) translates 2:22a wrongly, "du siehst, daß der Glaube seinen Werken (nur) hilfreich zur Seite trat." See also Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 200-1; Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 177-81. Rightly, for example, Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 115: "Würde dem Verf. in der Diskussion immer wieder die Möglichkeit eines Nebeneinanders von Glaube und Werken vorgetragen, so will er hier doch wohl in erster Linie, wie auch das συνήργει anzeigt, die Zusammengehörigkeit von Glaube und Werk betonen. Von einer Hilfsfunktion des Glaubens für die Werke war bisher ja nie die Rede. Wenn unsere Schrift aber betonen will, daß der recht verstandene Glaube mit seinen Werken zusammenwirkt, so ist doch wohl der Glaube den Werken vorgeordnet und das Primäre." Likewise Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 22, n. 330.

⁹²W. Bieder, "Christliche Existenz nach dem Zeugnis des Jakobusbriefes," *TZ* 5 (1949) 103. See further J. G. Lodge, "James and Paul at Cross Purposes? James 2,22," *Bib* 62 (1981) 199.

⁹³Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 130; Martin, *James*, 93; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 142; Zmijewski, "Christliche Vollkommenheit," 64, n. 81.

⁹⁴Bieder, "Christliche Existenz," 102. He draws a nice comparison with pregnancy: "Wie die Frau, wenn sie Mutter wird, eine Vollendung als Frau erfährt, so erfährt der Glaube, wenn er Werke hat, seine Vollendung als Glaube." See also Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 130; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 128; Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 40; Marxsen, "Allein aus Glauben," 34. Cf. Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 19.

⁹⁵Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 142. Similarly, Marxsen, "Allein aus Glauben," 31: "Der Glaube wird nicht durch die Werke Glaube. Das ist er vorher. Aber durch die Werke kommt er ans Ziel." Already Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 19.

To make his own position clear, James describes in 2:14-17 a warning (fictitious?)⁹⁶ example of "work-less" (that is, dead) faith.⁹⁷ He searches after the decisive proof for the uselessness of pious ways of speaking without any deeds of mercy. In general, the commentators read a bald opposition out of the case which is presented: a certain one (2:16, τις) says various things, but does nothing.⁹⁸ Perhaps the report allows a finer distinction: the brother (2:14, ἀδελφοί) might render some service to the poor (cf. the invitation to "warm yourself" and the encouragement to "be filled"). Yet he doesn't satisfy *all* their needs (for example in a generous feeding of the hungry and a provision of sufficient clothing for the naked). Rhetorically James inquires about the goal and intent of such beneficence (2:14, 16). In the light of 2:8-11, a ninety-nine percent obedience over against the individual commands appears to James insufficient, much more than a half-hearted friendliness in dealings with the suffering. True love constantly brings forth a complete work (1:4) as a fulfillment of the perfect Law (1:25). It does not stop with the doing of that which is good as long as a lack remains. Consequently, the plural ἔργα encompasses an undetermined number of steps taken to make provision, with the most important background idea that no (possible) performance of aid should remain neglected. From this very perspective 2:14-16 smoothly fits the most extremely rigorous paraenesis of the letter.

Beyond this, the demanding moral teaching also has a basis stamped by eschatology. The formula known through the diatribe τὶ τὸ ὄφελος (2:14a) reaches back to 2:13. Especially with a view to the final judgment, James denies the value of mere faith. Accordingly, he continues the same content with another question: μὴ δύναται ἡ

⁹⁶Most exegetes hold the case in 2:14-17 to be purely imaginary discourse, which belongs to the style of the diatribe. See, for example, Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 85; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 120-1; Dibelius, "The Epistle of James," 188-9; Halson, "The Epistle of James," 310; Lohse, "Glaube und Werke," 4, 7; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 129-32; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 19; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 34; R. B. Ward, "The Works of Abraham. James 2:14-26," *HTR* 61 (1968) 283-4; Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 56-7. Cf. W. Pratscher, *Der Herrenbruder Jakobus und die Jakobustradition* (FRLANT 139; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987) 214. Otherwise, Martin, *James*, 80: "As in 2:2-4, the use of the subjunctive need not imply a hypothetical illustration but can indicate a real situation in James' church." See also pp. 84-5. Similarly, Braumann, "Der theologische Hintergrund," 406: "Vielmehr legen die Leidenschaft der Abwehr und das Entgegensetzen einer eigenen Position es nahe, daß es sich um eine wirkliche Polemik handelt." See further Soucek, "Zu den Problemen," 466. For reservation concerning the potential use of the diatribe by James in 2:14-26, see A. Wifstrand, "Stylistic Problems in the Epistles of James and Peter," *ST* 1 (1948) 177-8.

⁹⁷Otherwise, however, Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 174-5!

⁹⁸See the commentaries. Similarly, also Bieder, "Christliche Existenz," 99-100; Burchard, "Gemeinde," 325; Eckart, "Zur Terminologie," 523; Goppelt, *Theologie*, 539; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 100-1; Lindemann, *Paulus*, 244-5. Unfortunately, I am not able to follow the argument of Burchard ("Zu Jakobus," 32-5: 3.2-3.3). He here looks for an answer to the question: "Was für ein Jemand ist das?" (p. 32).

πίστις σωσαι αὐτόν (2:14b).⁹⁹ The response which is hinted at is clearly negative.¹⁰⁰ Salvation belongs only to living faith.¹⁰¹

The polemical tone increases in the famous pericope concerning justification (2:20-26). James addresses his opponent with the word of reproach, "you foolish person!" He further puts forward a great number of trivial statements (nevertheless, or precisely therefore most confusing expressions for the later history of doctrine!), in order to obtain an easy victory over his opponent. Among these are three concepts which are clearly of great importance, namely, faith, works, and justification. In the following we give attention to these, especially to their involvement in the process of salvation. The exegesis presented above is thereby broadened.

The entire course of the argument, with its emphasis upon the three clearly circumscribed concepts, points most likely to a disagreement *among Christians* (cf. the constant repetition of ἀδελφοί and ἀδελφοί μου in 1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9-10, 12, 19).¹⁰² In this regard, the conversation partners agree in the monotheistic confession of faith (2:19). In continuation, James basically does not set believers in opposition to unbelievers. He distinguishes rather between those who rightly and those who wrongly believe, between a living and dead faith (2:20-26 and already 2:14-17).¹⁰³ The central concern of the text has to do then not with world missions, but with the reformation of the church.

The pressing admonitions to good deeds have the same goal. The Pauline polemic against "the works of the Law" is lacking. The relevant expression itself is lacking.¹⁰⁴ James does not at all go into a

⁹⁹ Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 120; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 100; Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 174; Lindemann, *Paulus*, 244; Lorenzen, "Faith without Works," 231; Martin, *James*, 79-80; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 129; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 18; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 30-1; Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 165; Zmijewski, "Christliche Vollkommenheit," 56. Cf., however, Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 34: "Die Frage läßt auch an den Nutzen für den Nächsten denken. Sachlich besteht keine Alternative, denn das Gericht fragt ja gerade auch nach dem Verhalten gegenüber dem Mitmenschen." See also Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 80.

¹⁰⁰ E. Bornemann and E. Risch, *Griechische Grammatik* (Frankfurt am Main: Maritz Diesterweg, 1978) § 266, 2c. See the commentaries. Cf. Eichholz, *Jakobus*, 47: "Der 'positive' Satz zu 2,14b steht in 1,21b und in 4,12! Von daher ist die negative Fassung und Abgrenzung in 2,14b zu 'verstehen'—und zu bejahen."

¹⁰¹ In private correspondence, Mark Seifrid (4/24/95) with partial reliance on Lautenschlager ("Der Gegenstand") pointed to James' orientation toward the salvation which is yet to come.

¹⁰² Goppelt, *Theologie*, 540.

¹⁰³ Dibelius (*Der Brief des Jakobus*, 188) creates unnecessary confusion, in that he characterizes faith without works as Christian faith. Cf. Via's critique ("The Right Strawy Epistle," 255).

¹⁰⁴ Baasland, "Der Jakobusbrief," 133; id., "Literarische Form," 3669-70; id., *Jakobsbrevet*, 73, 82-3, 91, 98; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 122, 124, 131; Eichholz, *Jakobus*, 38-41; Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 202, 216; Goppelt, *Theologie*, 540-1; Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 50, n. 113; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 114; Lindemann, *Paulus*, 247; Martin, *James*, 81, 95; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 132; Reumann, *Variety and Unity*, 200; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 20; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 216; Zmijewski, "Christliche Vollkommenheit," 77, n. 141. Cf.

discussion of the conditions for the salvation of Gentiles (cf. Acts 15!). He is interested exclusively in the right conduct of Christians.¹⁰⁵ The special Jewish customs are not at all taken into account. James sets his own accent. He reduces the Law applicable to the congregation to the love command (2:8-11). Besides, he always makes the Law precise through some kind of narrower designation (1:25: perfect, of freedom; 2:8: royal; 2:12: of freedom), perhaps with the intent of avoiding its identification with the Torah.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, in 2:21-25 Abraham and Rahab have been consciously selected as models.¹⁰⁷ Both of them lived before the Law, or respectively, without the Law, and consequently did not do a single work of the Law.¹⁰⁸ The reforming activity of James therefore is not driven by Judaizing tendencies. It is called forth by his concern for true Christianity.

Sorrowful over the lukewarm stance of his addressees, James discusses at length not least justification. He draws his use of language from the OT. There the usage of צדק encompasses two aspects:

- 1) the covenantal just action of God: he has promised to redeem his people, or respectively the Jews (or also to punish their sins).
- 2) the covenantal being-in-the right of the Jews: they attempt to fulfill the Law according to the best of their ability. They must wipe away their sins through the means of atonement.¹⁰⁹

James lays weight clearly upon acting according to the law of freedom (cf. the second aspect above). He expressly stresses

Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 122, 129. According to Lüdemann (*Paulus*, 199) James is no longer familiar with "the function of the concept of Law in Pauline theology" ("die Funktion des Gesetzesbegriffs in der paulinischen Theologie").

¹⁰⁵Goppelt, *Theologie*, 540; Martin, *James*, 95. See further Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 73; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 148-50.

¹⁰⁶Gutbrod, "νόμος," 1073-4; Martin, *James*, 67, 71. Cf. Reumann, *Variety and Unity*, 199.

¹⁰⁷On the traditions about Abraham and Rahab, see the commentaries ad loc. as well as F. Hahn, "Genesis 15,6 im Neuen Testament," in *Probleme biblischer Theologie. G. von Rad zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. H. W. Wolff; Munich: C. Kaiser, 1971) 94-6; E. Jacob, "Abraham et sa signification pour la foi chrétienne," *RHPR* 42 (1962) 148-56; I. Jacobs, "The Midrashic Background for James II.21-3," *NTS* 22 (1976) 457-64; (cf. further A. C. Swindell, "Abraham and Isaac: An Essay in Biblical Appropriation," *ExpTim* 87 [1975] 50-3) with respect to the former, and A. T. Hanson ("Rahab the Harlot in Early Christian Tradition," *JNT* 1 [1978] 53-60); and F. W. Young, ("The Relation of I Clement to the Epistle of James," *JBL* 67 [1948] 339-45) with respect to the latter.

¹⁰⁸Cf. Eckart, "Zur Terminologie," 524.

¹⁰⁹For example, B. Johnson, "צדק," *TWAT* 6 (1989) 919-22. Cf. Bieder, "Christliche Existenz," 104. He distinguishes in James between the "Ja Gottes zum verlorenen Menschen" and the "Ja Gottes zum gehorsamen Menschen." With the expression צדק the OT further includes the idea of the action of God and the human being in accord with creation. Cf. Johnson, "צדק," 920: "Gott zeigt seine Gerechtigkeit, indem er den Bund und letztlich die ganze Schöpfung erhält."

justification ἐξ ἔργων (2:20-26).¹¹⁰ From another perspective, he in agreement with this thinks that the wrath of the human being does not effect δικαιοσύνην θεοῦ (1:20).¹¹¹ Demands of this kind doubtlessly serve to awaken the one who is Christian by name. That one should know that orthodoxy without orthopraxis is in reality worthless.

Strictly speaking, the Jacobean concentration on works-righteousness in a paradoxical manner brings faith to a decisive breakthrough. It provides no encouragement to a self-righteous need for recognition. The Christian need not obtain salvation, for the Christian does not do good works out of his or her own strength. Obedience to the constantly valid love command doesn't have to do with natural ability. Selfless obedience arises out of faith, which again has its origin solely in the sovereign will of God the Creator (see chap. 1).

Correspondingly, a sharp difference emerges over against Judaism, which generally insists on the freedom of the will.¹¹² According to this understanding, faith is due to the individual's capacity for decision. Furthermore, here and there it degenerates into one work among many others.¹¹³ In general moral conduct belongs as a whole to the overarching concept of human powers of disposition.¹¹⁴ How distant James is from this! He does not place faith and works in equal worth alongside one another. Faith (n.b.: called into life by God) is primary. To works comes certainly a very great importance, but not one of the first order.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰For example Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 89-90. The translation "auf Grund von Werken," "on the basis of works" (Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 40, 43; Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 213; Lohse, "Glaube und Werke," 5; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 19; Ward, "The Works of Abraham," 288-9; cf. further Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 33) shifts the stress in the direction of human merits or performance. Cf. my argumentation below. Rightly, for example, Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 86-7.

¹¹¹Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 42, 48, 50; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 100; Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes*, 192-3; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 11. On the nuances of meaning associated with δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ see Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 93; Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 142; Martin, *James*, 47-8. Also Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 22. Sidebottom (*James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 33) understands δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ "in the sense of beneficence and benevolence." Adamson on the other hand regards it as "tempting to see here a reference to 'the justice of God'" (*The Epistle of James*, 79). He nevertheless gives preference to the conventional term "righteousness" (pp. 79-80). Similarly, Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 93.

¹¹²Laato, *Paul*, 83-94. Cf. Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 108-10.

¹¹³Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 128-9, 132; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 129; Goppelt, *Theologie*, 541; Hahn, "Genesis 15,6," 96; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 111-2; Lohse, "Glaube und Werke," 5; Marxsen, "Allein aus Glauben," 31-2; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 145; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 33-5; Via, "The Right Strawy Epistle," 256-7. See further the two excursuses in Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 206-21 (passim).

¹¹⁴Laato, *Paul*, 83-94.

¹¹⁵See above. So also most of the commentaries. Similarly, Bieder, "Christliche Existenz," 98-103; Cranfield, "The Message of James," 169; Eichholz, *Jakobus*, passim; Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 211-2, 219-20; Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 33-41; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 114-5; Lodge, "James and Paul," 199-200;

The scriptural argumentation of James for his position reaches its high point in 2:23. There he expressly appeals to Gen 15:6 with the well-known saying that God reckoned Abraham's faith as righteousness.¹¹⁶ The expression *δικαιοσύνη* does not directly intimate works here. The weight much more falls upon the salvation-bringing intervention of the Father of all in the hopeless situation of the father of the race (cf. the first aspect above.)¹¹⁷

The citation in 2:23 further stands out through the very noteworthy introductory formula. Especially with a view back to the offering of Isaac it says that Gen 15:6 was fulfilled like a prophecy (*ἐπληρώθη*).¹¹⁸ In such a way James skillfully uses the force of proof from the OT in the service of his prior goal.¹¹⁹ From the context it is clear that he strives toward the conclusion that God reckoned *living*

Marxsen, "Allein aus Glauben," 29-32; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 220-2; Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 56-68, 77-8. Cf. Braumann, "Der theologische Hintergrund," 404. Adamson (following Hort) remarks appropriately that "the writer [James] is not pleading 'for faith plus works . . . but for faith at work'" (*The Epistle of James*, 130). Against Lohse, "Glaube und Werke," 5: "Galten aber dem Spätjudentum die *ἔργα* als der Oberbegriff, zu denen dann als eine unter anderen guten Taten die *πίστις* gerechnet wird, so stehen in der Beweisführung des Jac *πίστις* und *ἔργα* gleichwertig nebeneinander" (emphasis mine). Dibelius (*Der Brief des Jakobus*, 201) goes still further: "Allerdings empfinden wir es . . . als erstaunlich, daß der Glaube hier scheinbar mit gleichem Recht neben die Werke tritt, denen er doch in seiner Wirkung so beträchtlich unterlegen ist" (emphasis mine). Rightly Mußner (*Der Jakobusbrief*, 142) on 2:22, summarizing, says that the principle of performance "hat im Denken des Jak keinen Platz" (p. 146). In a certain tension with his summary, Mußner nevertheless stresses that Abraham because of or respectively on the basis of faith is pronounced righteous (pp. 144, 146). With a similar setting of the accent, Hahn, "Genesis 15,6," 94. Cf. Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 220.

¹¹⁶Perhaps James presupposes Gen 15:6 already in 2:21. For such a thought see Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 94: "Det står ingenting om rättfärdighet i 1 Mos 22. Jakobsbrevet har alltså föregripit 1 Mos 15 redan i inledningen, v 21." Cf. Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 131.

¹¹⁷Dibelius (*Der Brief des Jakobus*, 203) forces works into 2:23. He supposes, "in dem zweiten Glied des Spruches, in *ἐλογίσθη*, muß ein Hinweis auf die Werke liegen." As a basis for this, he says: "Nur dann hat der Verf. ein Recht, sich auf den Spruch zu berufen, nur dann fugt sich das dritte Glied zwanglos an: dem Glauben und den Werken verdankt Abraham seine Ehrenstellung also Freund Gottes." See further the excursus on pp. 206-14. Dibelius even succeeded in persuading some of his colleagues. Cf. Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 131; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 129-30; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 116-7; Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 65-6.

¹¹⁸From the commentaries see, for example, Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 143. However, Dibelius surprisingly relates the verb *ἐπληρώθη* to the utterance of God fulfilled by Abraham through the deed (*Der Brief des Jakobus*, 246). In contrast, rightly, Lindemann, *Paulus*, 246.

¹¹⁹Most clearly Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 129: ". . . it would be incorrect to see *ἐπληρώθη* simply functioning in the form of prophecy-fulfillment . . . , but rather in the sense that the scripture in Gn. 15:6 says the same thing that James has been arguing." Likewise Lindemann thinks that, "der Vf [sc. James] das Wort aus Gen 15,6 im Sinne seiner Rechtfertigungslehre aufgefaßt hat" (*Paulus*, 246).

faith as righteousness to Abraham.¹²⁰ Good works subsequently brought into effect the living nature of faith.¹²¹

The broadening of the OT citation through καὶ φίλος θεοῦ ἐκλήθη (2:23) points to the decided attempt of James to employ the expressive power of Gen 15:6 for his polemical purpose.¹²² Faith according to this does not merely have justification as its goal. It also leads to friendship with God.¹²³ The same verbal form ἐλογίσθη—ἐκλήθη in the same sense of a divine passive—binds the final καί-statements in 2:23 together.¹²⁴ According to 4:4, friendship with the world means enmity toward God.¹²⁵ Conversely, friendship with God then means enmity toward the world. In the light of the letter, it encompasses the readiness to turn away from evil works and toward good works.¹²⁶ The one who through faith is the friend of God does not submit to passivity in reliance upon her own special position. She lives rather according to high moral demands in the constant fulfillment of the love command.

James consequently has worked both main aspects of the traditional expression פָּצַח into his understanding of Christian existence.¹²⁷ The reckoning of (living) faith as righteousness has to do with the just action of God: he brings the salvation of those who belong to him to completion. The attainment of righteousness

¹²⁰Cf. Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 93-4. Already earlier he expresses himself in the following way: "Durch seine Bereitschaft, Isaak zu opfern, zeigte Abraham, . . . dass sein Glauben kein falscher sei" ("Der Jakobusbrief," 133). In a similar way Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 39: "Die bereits verheißene Anrechnung des Glaubens zur Gerechtigkeit ging mit der als Werk verstandenen Bewährung des Glaubens durch die Versuchung in Erfüllung. Damit hat Jakobus das Ziel des Schriftbeweises erreicht: Glaube und Werk sind wie Verheißung und Erfüllung unlösbar aufeinander bezogen." Precisely for this reason James does not regard the reckoning of faith as righteousness as a secondary factor in the process of justification. Against Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 43. See also below.

¹²¹Cf. Beider, "Christliche Existenz," 101-2; Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 45 (already p. 43: faith and works "go together like the obverse and reverse of a coin"). Likewise Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 81-4. Also in the view of Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 41, James "meint . . . mit den ἔργα immer nur die Werke, die als Bestandteil des Glaubens wie Zeichen nach außen treten." Further Mußner (*Der Jakobusbrief*, 146) expresses himself briefly and well: "Die Werke resultieren für Jak notwendig aus einem lebendigen Glauben."

¹²²Dibelius (*Der Brief des Jakobus*, 202) supposes that "die Worte vom Freund Gottes schon von der Tradition zu der Bibelstelle hinzugefügt waren." The designation φίλος θεοῦ in relation to Abraham is encountered for the first time in Isaiah (41:8). Cf. 2 Chron 20:7. See Jacob, "Abraham," 153.

¹²³From the perspective of the OT, justification basically contains the idea of a personal relation between God and the human being. See G. von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments. Vol. 1: Die Theologie der geschichtlichen Überlieferung Israels* (Munich: Kaiser, 1987) 382-95.

¹²⁴Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 202; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 143-4.

¹²⁵E.g., Martin, *James*, 94.

¹²⁶Cf. Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 94. See further Elliott, "The Epistle of James," 78.

¹²⁷Against J. Jeremias ("Paul and James," *ExpTim* 66 [1954/55] 371) who understands the Jacobean conception of "righteousness" exclusively as the acquittal at the final judgment.

through good works depends in contrast on the just being of the human being: he puts into effect the will of his Lord.¹²⁸

Therefore it is not appropriate in the strict sense to say that God reckoned to Abraham as righteousness "that faith, which demonstrated itself as real faith in works."¹²⁹ Jas 2:23 says nothing at all about a faith which *already* has works, it rather speaks of a living faith, which *only subsequently* (but nevertheless inevitably) will yield fruit. Further, it makes much less sense to say that the works of love are supposed to turn "faith into a saving *fides viva*."¹³⁰ Just the opposite: proper faith necessarily brings forth works. Here we may recall that works and faith belong quite closely together (see above).¹³¹

In support of the preceding course of argumentation, the parallelism between 1:3-4 and 2:21-23 comes into consideration. The following common elements stand out:

1. faith and works belong together;
2. the preservation under trial for which it is worth striving and the exemplary preservation of Abraham in his trial;
3. the perfection attained in the doing of the good.¹³²

The structure of 1:3-4 (faith-trial-patience-work) clearly shows the movement from faith to work. The entire course of the argument is dependent on faith alone, a *fides viva*, which then expresses itself in the *oboedientia nova*.¹³³ Acting according to the law of freedom implies neither an activating factor, nor an additive extra. Rather, it brings into force what is constantly present in the essence of faith.

¹²⁸Under these circumstances it is unnecessary to ask if, "a mainly demonstrative sense lies behind δικαιούν" (Martin, *James*, 91) or if δικαιούν "has the sense 'being proved right'" (Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 45). Cf. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 51. See further Mußner, *Der Galaterbrief*, 199, n. 2.

¹²⁹Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 144: ". . . jenen Glauben, der sich in Werken als wirklicher Glaube erwiesen hat." See further Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 66.

¹³⁰Against Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 151: "Die Werke der Liebe machen nach Jak den Glauben zur rettenden *fides viva*!" Following him expressly, Martin, *James*, 94 and Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 68. Later Martin gives precision to his view in a surprising way: "What that statement [sc. Mußner's] entails is best expressed by Cranfield, 'The Message,' 340: 'Had there been no works, Abraham would not have been justified; but that would have been because the absence of works would have meant that he had no real faith'" (ibid.). As if the two citations could be brought under a common denominator! Burchard ("Zu Jakobus," 42) goes still further. He entirely underestimates faith, saying: "Der Glaube wurde also nicht durch von ihm bewirkte Werke oder in deren Gestalt zu (mindestens mit-) rechtfertigender Größe gesteigert, sondern die Werke machten ihn erst zu vollendetem Glauben."

¹³¹Appropriately Braumann, "Der theologische Hintergrund," 404: "Auf keinen Fall denkt der Brief daran, zur Tat ohne den Glauben aufzuerufen (2,22)." Cf. further K. Berger, "Abraham 11: Im Frühjudentum und Neuen Testament," *TRE* 1 (1977) 374.

¹³²Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 116. See further pp. 117-8.

¹³³Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 28-9; Luck, "Die Theologie," 12-3 (cf. further, id., "Weisheit und Leiden. Zum Problem Paulus und Jakobus," *TLZ* 92 [1967] 253-5). Otherwise Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 173, n. 51.

The appeal to the readiness of the believing Abraham to unconditional obedience in 2:21-23¹³⁴ confirms in retrospect the theological contour of the letter.¹³⁵

Accordingly, James, in agreement with the OT, regards justification as an indivisible whole.¹³⁶ Obviously he places the accent on faith, but does not thereby eliminate works. Jas 2:24 briefly and precisely summarizes the direction of thought in a binding doctrinal statement, that "a person is justified through works, not through faith alone." Despite the pointed formulation, which bears a special interest in works, the priority of faith which we have previously mentioned should not be forgotten.¹³⁷ To state the matter once more: good works derive solely from Christian faith. Since besides this, it is God, who out of a sovereign decision grants faith, it is he who in reality is the acting subject in the process of justification.¹³⁸

Does a fissure then open up between the Jacobean and Pauline conceptions of justification? And if so, what kind of a fissure? With these sorts of questions in mind, we will investigate more closely in what follows the three most relevant concepts—faith, works, and righteousness.¹³⁹ As a means of comparison, the perspective of the Apostle to the Gentiles now comes into the foreground.

A. Faith

In contrast to James, Paul does not at least *expressis verbis* distinguish between dead and living faith. He begins generally only with one type of faith.¹⁴⁰ Accordingly, a clear alternative is offered:

¹³⁴For a midrashic background for the verse, see Jacobs, "The Midrashic Background."

¹³⁵Eichholz, *Jakobus*, 14-5, n. 2; Luck, "Die Theologie," 13.

¹³⁶Cf. Jacob, "Abraham," 155: "... la justice d'Abraham, qui fut la sanction de sa foi, n'est pas indépendante des oeuvres, car la justice, étant dans la pensée hébraïque un concept de relation, est toujours un acte, et la foi est une marche qui s'exprime au dehors d'une manière très concrète."

¹³⁷Against the consensus, however, Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 43-4; Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 181; Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 183, 191.

¹³⁸Cf. Lodge ("James and Paul," 212) with his stress upon wisdom theology: "His [Abraham's] works were the works of wisdom and, ultimately, the works of the Lord." Against Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 43. He develops his argument *ad absurdum*: "Bedeutung kann v. 24 nach allem bisherigen nur, daß jeder Mensch nur [!] auf Grund von Werken als gerecht anerkannt wird. 'Und nicht aus Glauben allein' besagt dasselbe, negativ formuliert, und meint nicht, daß Glaube auch Gerechtigkeit schafft, bloß nicht allein."

¹³⁹Cf. already W. Beyschlag, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (MeyerK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897) 147. Later Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 99; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 50-1.

¹⁴⁰E.g., Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 85. On the concept of faith in James, see above. With a view to his presentation of dead faith, cf. further Cranfield, "The Message of James," 165: "The clue to the understanding of the section is the fact (very often ignored) that in v. 14 . . . the author has not said, 'if a man have faith,' but 'if a man say he hath faith.' This fact should be allowed to control our interpretation of the whole paragraph. The second 'faith' in the verse is to be taken as in inverted commas.

either one has faith or one does not have faith. *Tertium non datur*.¹⁴¹ Meanwhile, Paul also strongly emphasizes that faith has to lead to new obedience. He strives toward this ideal not least by means of his manifold paraenesis. Additionally, a series of individual verses serves the same goal. Rom 1:5, for example, speaks expressly of the "obedience of faith,"¹⁴² while on the other side, 1 Thess 1:3 speaks of "the work of faith." Gal 5:6 ascribes to faith a drive toward action through love.¹⁴³ Again, 1 Cor 13:2 devalues a spectacular "super-faith," which, to be sure, possesses a wonder-working power, but lacks love. That pointed statement directed against "enthusiasts" in Corinth is actually very close to the Jacobean attack upon faith without works.¹⁴⁴

In a noteworthy manner, Paul, in agreement with Jas 1:18, derives the origin of faith from the sovereign will of God the creator. He draws an important parallel in 2 Cor 4:6 between the primal and the eschatological age: "For God, who said: 'Let light shine out of darkness' [Gen 1:3], has given in our hearts a bright shining of light, that through us [namely, through the gospel, 2:5] might arise an illumination unto the knowledge of the glory of God in the countenance of Jesus Christ."¹⁴⁵ Christians therefore need not force

By 'that faith' (ἡ πίστις) the writer means that thing which the man in question wrongly calls 'faith'; he does not imply that he himself regards it as faith." Similarly Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 85; and also Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 120. Otherwise Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 187.

¹⁴¹Goppelt (*Theologie*, 541) maintains that Paul in sharp contrast to James, "würde nicht fordern, daß zum Glauben das Werk hinzugefügt werde, sondern daß der Glaube lebendig werde." The difference consequently is "nicht nur ein terminologischer." However, James does not require that works should be added to faith. He stresses likewise that living faith without exception excites works (see above). It does have to do then, after all, with a mere terminological difference between Paul and James!

¹⁴²The contested expression εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως (on the many variations of exegesis, see C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1 [ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975] 66) signifies a complete submission to the gospel in the act of faith. So, e.g., Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.66; E. Käsemann, *An die Römer* (HNT 8a; Tübingen: Mohr) 12; J. Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1 (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 13-4; H. Schlier, *Der Römerbrief* (HTKNT; Freiburg: Herder, 1977) 29; U. Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*. Vol. 1: *Röm. 1-5* (EKKNT 6; Cologne: Benziger, 1978) 66. At the same time, we may maintain that "true faith by its very nature includes in itself the sincere desire and will to obey God in all things" (Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.67). Similarly Schlier, *Der Römerbrief*, 29 n. 48. See further P. Althaus, *Der Brief an die Römer* (NTD; 1st ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) ad. loc. O. Michel reads out of the Greek expression directly a "Gegesatz zum Gehorsam gegenüber dem Gesetz" (*Der Brief an die Römer* [MeyerK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978] 76).

¹⁴³E.g., Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 83, 99; Goppelt, *Theologie*, 540; Lodge, "James and Paul," 213; Lorenzen, "Faith without Works," 233; Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 219; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 35. Cf. Lüdemann, *Paulus*, 199.

¹⁴⁴So already W. Beyschlag, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (MeyerK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897) 149. See further Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes*, 194.

¹⁴⁵Goppelt, *Theologie*, 541.

faith out of themselves. Their existence rests upon the authoritative Word of the Almighty.¹⁴⁶

Further, 2 Thess 2:13-14 comes into relation with Jas 1:18 (and its context) on account of the following commonalities:

- 1) the addressees are designated "brothers beloved by the Lord" or "my beloved brothers" (Jas 2:13);
- 2) the acting subject is God or the (heavenly) Father (Jas 1:17);
- 3) the stress lies upon the electing act of God or his sovereign will;
- 4) God has at his disposal, as a means for his acting, the truth, or respectively, the gospel or the Word of Truth;
- 5) Christians are described as ἀπαρχή;¹⁴⁷
- 6) the goal of the saving acts of God is conceived in an εἰς-clause;
- 7) there is further equivalent vocabulary:
δόξης τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (2 Thess 2:14)
τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης (Jas 2:2)]¹⁴⁸

These enumerated points strengthen the claim that a close relation exists between the Pauline and Jacobean conceptions of the origin of faith.

A thorough discussion of the passion and resurrection of Christ characterizes the Pauline conception of faith (*passim*). With the Jacobean conception of faith it is different. Such themes are not at all treated, scarcely mentioned.¹⁴⁹ The imperatival character of the letter surely contributes to this surprising fact. The brother of the Lord places value on the gospel proclaimed by Jesus himself. The numerous (direct and indirect) reminiscences of the synoptic tradition have for a long time been the common property of the commentaries.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, a few indicators of the Christology of the author appear, without offering the hope of a meaningful synthesis of our insufficient knowledge.¹⁵¹ According to

¹⁴⁶Laato, *Paul*, 190-4.

¹⁴⁷Nestle-Aland 27th edition reads ἀπαρχὴν instead of ἀπ' ἀρχῆς (2 Thess 2:13). Similarly the Luther-Bibel and Einheitsübersetzung. Among the commentaries see, e.g., F. F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (WBC; Waco: Word, 1982) 189-90; P-E. Ragnarsson, *Thessalonikerbrevet* (Kommentar till Nya testamentet; Stockholm: EFS, 1983) 177. Otherwise, W. Trilling, *Der zweite Brief an die Thessalonicher* (EKKNT; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1980) 120-1.

¹⁴⁸Commentators have not been especially interested in a comparison between Jas 1:18 and 2 Thess 2:13-14.

¹⁴⁹See already Luther's critique. Following him, for example, Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 166. Today especially Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 592-6.

¹⁵⁰See especially Mußner, *Jakobusbrief*, 47-52; and further, e.g., Reumann, *Variety and Unity*, 191-2.

¹⁵¹See especially Mußner's important discussion (*Der Jakobusbrief*, 250-4). He finds in 2:1, 2:7, and 5:14 allusions to the (atoning death) and resurrection of Jesus (pp. 251-2). With respect to 5:6 he rightly asks: "Sollte Jak wirklich dabei nicht an das Vorbild Jesu gedacht haben, des Gerechten schlechtin?" (p. 252). Cf. Karrer, "Christus," 186, n. 114. Luck ("Weisheit und Leiden," 255) explains the expression κύριος τῆς δόξης (2:1) in the light of 1 Cor 2:8 with the same Christological title and

all appearances, the Word of Truth (1:18), an expression familiar to the addressees since their baptismal instruction,¹⁵² in any case includes sayings concerning the passion and resurrection of Christ.¹⁵³ Consequently James then regards baptism (together with catechetical teaching) as the basis of Christian existence.¹⁵⁴ Here he repeats the *opinio communis* of contemporary Christianity.¹⁵⁵

In this measure Luther is right, that James is silent regarding the suffering and resurrection of Christ.¹⁵⁶ In reference to his canonical judgment, he demands too much in my view from a fragmentary letter with a strongly paraenetical orientation.¹⁵⁷

B. Works

In his vehement debate with Jewish soteriology, Paul persistently criticizes "the works of the Law." As is well-known, he brings his sharpest polemic to bear against the attempt to win salvation through such works.¹⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Paul does not fall from one extreme into another. He in no way displaces good works, which his very conception of faith requires (see above). These display without deception the moral condition in the congregations. Actually Paul speaks frequently of a "good work" in a collective sense (e.g., Rom 2:7; 1 Cor 3:13-15; Gal 6:4; 1 Thess 1:3; 5:13). The singular in his usage presumably is intended to make clear the unity

background in wisdom theology. He says in conclusion: "Für Jak. ist Christus der, der durch Leiden zur Vollkommenheit, zur δόξα gekommen ist" (ibid.). The same Christology appears then also in Hebrews (p. 256). See further Luck, "Die Theologie," 22-3. Lautenschlager in contrast explains the title of honor κύριος τῆς δόξης especially on the basis of the Enoch Apocalypse (1 Enoch) as "the coming judge" ("Der Gegenstand," 170-1). A. Bischoff ("Τὸ τέλος κυρίου," ZNW 7[1906] 274-9) relates τὸ τέλος κυρίου (Jas 5:11) to the end of Jesus' life. However, most commentators reject his interpretation, which has actually been represented since Augustine. R. P. Gordon ("ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΤΕΛΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΕΙΔΕΤΕ [Jas. V. 11]," JTS 26 [1975] 91-5), on the other hand, detects in 5:11 "a reference to the Parousia" (p. 94). On the Christology of the letter of James, see further Karrer, "Christus," 168-73. Cf. Reumann, *Variety and Unity*, 197.

¹⁵²See above, section 2.

¹⁵³Syreeni ("Olkikirje?" 594) remarks with complete justice that the "Christ event" and the "theology of the Word" in the NT do not stand in opposition to one another. To name his examples: 1 Peter appeals to redemption "by the precious blood of Christ" (1:18-19) and on the other side to the rebirth "by the living Word of God" (1:23). Similarly the letter to the Hebrews calls attention at the same time to redemption through Christ (passim) and the power of the Word of God (4:12). Also John identifies Christ and the Word (*Logos*, 1:1-14).

¹⁵⁴See above, section 2.

¹⁵⁵Cf. e.g., Goppelt, *Theologie*, 330-4.

¹⁵⁶Karrer, "Christus," 186; Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 166. Cf. Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 197-8. See further section 1 above.

¹⁵⁷For a debate with Luther see the concluding section below. Cf. further in this connection Halson, "The Epistle of James," 312: "it [James] presupposes the kerygma rather than proclaims it."

¹⁵⁸See, e.g., Laato, *Paul*, 212-65.

of the Christian ethic (in love?) in contrast to the mass of individual requirements of Judaism.¹⁵⁹

James' flow of thought runs in the same direction. He speaks, indeed, of good works in the plural, but demonstrably understands by this expression the Christian works of faith, not, for example, the Jewish works of the Law.¹⁶⁰

Further the "fruit of the Spirit" often appear in place of a good work (sic!) in Paul's letters.¹⁶¹ To these correspond perhaps in James' letter the "works of wisdom."¹⁶² The following comparison easily awakens the impression of a common origin:

Jas 3:17	Gal 5:22-23a
ἡ δὲ ἀνωθεν σοφία (which stands in contrast to earthly wisdom)	ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος (which stands in contrast to the works of the flesh)
ἀγνή	ἀγνεία (v.l.)
εἰρηνικὴ	εἰρήνη
ἐπιεικῆς	χρηστότης
(3:13: ἐν πραύτητι σοφίας)	πραύτης
εὐπειθής	πίστις
μεστὴ ἐλέους	μακροθυμία
μεστὴ καρπῶν ἀγαθῶν	ἀγαθωσύνη
ἀδιάκριτος	—
ἀνυπόκριτος	—
—	ἀγάπη
—	χαρά

Admittedly, there is no clear correlation of terms here. Yet there is a material correspondance,¹⁶³ which probably has its beginnings in the wisdom tradition of Judaism.¹⁶⁴

James and Paul agree with one another also in their estimation of the eschatological character of the Christian pattern of life. Both

¹⁵⁹L. Mattern, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus* (ATANT; Zürich: Zwingli, 1966) 141-51. In Rom 2:6 Paul speaks indeed of a judgment according to works (sic!). Yet here he cites a verse from the OT.

¹⁶⁰Clearly Goppelt, *Theologie*, 541. See further above.

¹⁶¹*Ibid.*, 540.

¹⁶²Cf. already Windisch's thesis that perhaps "σοφία für Jac eben das πνεῦμα selbst ist" (*Die Katholischen Briefe*, 26). See further, e.g. Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 21-2.

¹⁶³Bieder, "Christliche Existenz," 112, n. 23; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 54; Lodge, "James and Paul," 213. Similarly, J. A. Kirk, "The Meaning of Wisdom in James: Examination of a Hypothesis," *NTS* 16 (1970) 26-8, with an end result worth reading: "The point at issue in demonstrating the similarity of context and thought in these two passages is not whether one has borrowed from the other or whether there may be some common source or community of ideas, but whether there is sufficient equality of meaning and terminology to make probable an identical use of Wisdom in James with Spirit in Paul" (p. 28). Also Baasland, "Literarische Form," 3644-5. Cf. Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 54, n. 1 and 62, n. 7.

¹⁶⁴Cf. Luck, "Die Theologie," esp. 23-9.

teach namely that a judgment according to works shall take place. Thereby a central idea stands out, that gross sins cause even the loss of salvation.¹⁶⁵

C. Righteousness

It is apparent that neither James nor Paul in his contemporary polemic with opponents avoids or underestimates the contested or unusual verse, Gen 15:6. Through appeal to this verse, both give support to the thesis of righteousness through faith (Jas 2:23; Rom 4:3).¹⁶⁶ James, indeed, holds to a living faith, which inevitably produces good works. In complete agreement with the OT he speaks then too of a (Christian!) works-righteousness. In fact Paul stresses just as strongly the living character of faith for the purpose of justification. Especially in Romans 4 he draws a series of far-reaching conclusions from the history of "our father according to the flesh" (4:1). He says, e.g., that Abraham believed in God, "who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist" (4:17). Abraham, "believed in hope, where there was no hope, that he would be the father of many nations" (4:18). He "did not become weak in faith, as he considered his own body, which was already dead, . . . and the body of Sarah, which was dead" (4:19). He "did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief, rather he became strong in faith and gave God the glory" (4:20). He "was fully persuaded: that what God had promised, that he is also able to do" (4:21). "Therefore it was 'reckoned to him as righteousness'" (4:22).¹⁶⁷ Nevertheless, Paul never relates works-righteousness to Christians (cf. however, Rom 2:13; 6:13-20),¹⁶⁸ presumably to avoid a Jewish misunderstanding. Although in his view good works necessarily arise from faith, another sort of terminology with its own stamp (as, for example, "the fruit of the Spirit," "living according to the Spirit," "love as the fulfillment of the Law," "the fulfilling of the Law of Christ") replaces the traditional usage.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵On the Pauline statements of recompense with references to the recent literature, see Laato, *Paul*, 200. Concerning the Jacobean position, see above.

¹⁶⁶Cranfield, "The Message of James," 168: "For James, no less than for Paul, the words of Gen 15,6 quoted in v, 23 are decisive. It was by his faith that Abraham was justified."

¹⁶⁷Cf. Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 215; Lodge, "James and Paul," 213.

¹⁶⁸Interestingly, Baasland ("Der Jakobusbrief," 129-33) has called attention to many elements which Romans 2 and James have in common.

¹⁶⁹Lohse does not succeed in working through a "fundamental" contradiction between James and Paul. He thinks: "Ganz anders als im Jac wird von Paulus das Beispiel Abrahams ausgelegt: Gen 15 6 wird als Schriftbeweis für die Gerechtigkeit aus Glauben—ohne Werke des Gesetzes—angezogen (Rm 4 3 Gal 3 6). Abraham glaubte an den Gott, der den Gottlosen gerecht spricht (Rm 4 5), παρ' ἐλπίδα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι glaubte er an den, der die Toten lebendig macht und dem Nichtseienden ruft, daß es sei (Rm 4 17f). Dieser Glaube, der mit Werken des Gesetzes, denen geschuldeter Lohn gezahlt werden muß, schlechterdings nichts zu tun hat, wurde ihm zur Gerechtigkeit angerechnet" ("Glaube und Werke," 6). In reality, the Christian faith of James has nothing to do with the works of the *Law*! See above.

Taken as a whole, the process of justification as developed by James and Paul runs along the following common lines:

- 1) the human being is not capable of bringing himself or herself to faith;
- 2) God gives the human being faith through his creative Word;
- 3) Faith (naturally, not a dead faith) is reckoned as righteousness in agreement with Gen 15:6.

Unity rules also in their common stance of denying the works of *the Law* in the process of justification. These no longer play any role. Paul gives direct expression to his negative position, while James expresses his critical opinion between the lines. A shift of perspective takes place with regard to the place of *good* works in the process of justification. James employs the OT usage, with its emphasis on works-righteousness, while Paul replaces the traditional concept with various alternative expressions, without thereby refraining from the basic minimal requirement of the new life. The human need for validation gives way in both cases to the sovereignty of God and the priority of faith.

As a final result it therewith stands established, that James and Paul differ from one another terminologically, but not theologically.¹⁷⁰ Their agreement at the Apostolic Council according to the witness of Acts 15 (cf. Gal 2:1ff) appears to be reliable from the historical perspective.¹⁷¹ The formal differences are due first and foremost to Paul. His innovative theology witnesses to a creative spirit, which does not fit the linguistic background of the OT.

A comparison of Jas 2:24 with Rom 3:28, each with its respective concluding statement regarding justification, serves to make visible the consensus between the two at which we have arrived:

¹⁷⁰Bieder ("Christliche Existenz," 104) comes to a similar conclusion: "Jakobus kennt zwar die paulinische Formulierung nicht, daß Gott den Gottlosen gerechspricht. Aber wenn er das Wunderwerk der Christwerdung mit den Worten beschreibt: 'Nach seinem Willen hat er uns gezeugt durch das Wahrheitswort, daß wir seien Erstlinge seiner Geschöpfe' (1,18), so ist das sachlich nichts anderes als das Ja Gottes zum verlorenen Menschen." In f.n. 19 he says further, "bei der formellen Verschiedenheit, ja Gegensätzlichkeit von Jakobus und Paulus die sachliche Uebereinstimmung beider" nevertheless remains. Similarly already, Beyschlag, *Der Brief*, 153: "so haben auch Jacobus und Paulus in verschiedenen Denk- und Sprachformen ein und dasselbe Evangelium der unzerstrenlichen Begnadigung und Heiligung geglaubt und gelehrt." Likewise Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 51: "At the least the two [James and Paul] agree in substance if not in terminology." See also Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 224. Otherwise, e.g., J. D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity* (London: SCM, 1977) 251-2; G. Klein, "Bibel und Heilsgeschichte. Die Fragwürdigkeit einer Idee," *ZNW* 62 (1971) 17-8; Kümmel, *Einleitung*, 366; Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 182-3; Lindemann, *Paulus*, 248-51; Lohse, "Glaube und Werke," 21-2; Sanders, *Ethics*, 119-22; Via, "The Right Strawy Epistle," 257, 267. In contrast, again Mußner, *Der Galaterbrief*, 289-90, n. 44; id., *Der Jakobusbrief*, 245.

¹⁷¹Even when Lohse wishes to evaluate "die harmonisierenden Berichte der Apostelgeschichte" ("Glaube und Werke," 18) "mit der erforderlichen Kritik" (p. 18, n. 57), he does not call into question James' recognition of the Law-free proclamation to the Gentiles at the Apostolic Council.

Jas 2:24	Rom 3:28
<p>ὁρᾶτε ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος καὶ οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως μόνον</p>	<p>λογιζόμεθα γὰρ δικαιοῦσθαι πίστει ἄνθρωπον χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου</p>
<p>James regards faith as the primary factor (οὐκ . . . μόνον), which unconditionally produces good works (not to be confused with the works of the Law). In this sense he moves easily from the righteousness by faith (Gen 15:6) to works-righteousness (the quintessence of the OT)</p>	<p>Paul rejects the works of the Law in every sense. He ascribes justification to faith alone. Paradoxically, the Law is thereby established (3:31), since faith inevitably produces good works.</p>

With the parallel presentation, the comparison of James and Paul is brought to a conclusion.

Up to this point we have passed over the problematic verses 2:18-19. They undoubtedly belong to the "most difficult of all the New Testament passages."¹⁷² There truly is no lack of attempt at interpretation.¹⁷³ It would serve no purpose to go into all of them in detail. In the following, our main interest will be directed to the question as to whether an analysis of the context (see above) might open up a new perspective on 2:18-19. In the best case, then, the preceding exegesis and this discussion strengthen one another.

It is clear, in my view, that the classical formula of objection ἀλλ' ἐρεῖ τις (2:18a) introduces a new (imaginary?) opponent (cf. the diatribe style).¹⁷⁴ This one accordingly is neither an ally of James nor

¹⁷²Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 190, esp. on 2:18. Otherwise Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 123!

¹⁷³On the innumerable alternatives, see Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 124-7, 135-7; Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 75-6, 86-7; Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 35-9; Cranfield, "The Message of James," 166-8; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 123-6; Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 190-7; C. E. Donker, "Der Verfasser des Jak und sein Gegner. Zum Problem des Einwandes in Jak 2 18-19," *ZNW* 72 (1981) 227-40; Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 35-8; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 101-6; Karrer, "Christus," 170, n. 18; Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 175-8; Lorenzen, "Faith without Works," 232; Martin, *James*, 86-90; Marxsen, "Allein aus Glauben," 28-30; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 136-9; H. Neitzel, "Eine alte crux interpretum im Jakobusbrief 2 18," *ZNW* 73 (1982) 286-93; R. Obermüller, "Hermeneutische Themen im Jakobusbrief," *Bib* 53 (1972) 238-9; Popkes, *Adressaten*, 64-6; Ropes, *James*, 208-16; Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 19; Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 32; Sidebottom, *James, Jude, 2 Peter*, 44; Syreeni, "Olkikirje?" 593, n. 51; Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 171-4; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 17-8; Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 58-63.

¹⁷⁴Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 123-5, 130; Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 185-6; Donker, "Der Verfasser des Jak," 227-9; Halson, "The Epistle of James," 310; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 100; Kittel, "Der geschichtliche Ort," 94; Marxsen, "Allein aus Glauben," 28-9; Neitzel, "Eine alte crux interpretum," 288; Wüllner, "Der

a representative of his opinion (against the so-called “*Sekundanten*” hypothesis¹⁷⁵). Further, the Greek text of Nestle-Aland requires here no conjectures, varied punctuation, transpositions, omissions, expansions, or any other changes. The present version reproduces the original content (at least in sufficient measure). How is one to interpret 2:18-19 then?

The address $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}$ in 2:18 is related naturally to the $\tau\iota\varsigma \epsilon\grave{\xi} \upsilon\mu\acute{\omega}\nu$ (2:16), namely to those who have “faith only” (2:14-17).¹⁷⁶ It is apparent to the reader that “someone among you” is “you.”¹⁷⁷ In contrast one bumps against considerable difficulties on account of unattainable precision (out of the lack of guiding indications from the original text), exactly when the objection of the opponent comes to an end. The limitation to a short (and in itself entirely banal) sentence $\sigma\acute{\upsilon} \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\upsilon \epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma, \kappa\acute{\alpha}\gamma\omega \epsilon\rho\gamma\alpha \epsilon\chi\omega$ is improbable.¹⁷⁸ The continuing exhortation is joined organically to the progress of thought, with the same vocabulary: $\delta\epsilon\iota\lambda\acute{\iota}\xi\omicron\nu \mu\omicron\iota \tau\eta\nu \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\upsilon \sigma\omicron\upsilon \chi\omega\rho\iota\varsigma \tau\acute{\omega}\nu \epsilon\rho\gamma\omega\nu, \kappa\acute{\alpha}\gamma\omega \sigma\omicron\iota \delta\epsilon\iota\lambda\acute{\iota}\xi\omega \acute{\epsilon}\kappa \tau\acute{\omega}\nu \epsilon\rho\gamma\omega\nu \mu\omicron\upsilon \tau\eta\nu \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\upsilon.$ ¹⁷⁹ The admonition to show faith without works does not strictly speaking point away to pure impossibility. According to 2:19 the demons (in connection with exorcism)¹⁸⁰ confess the oneness of God

Jakobusbrief,” 63 (following H. F. Plett); Zmijewski, “Christliche ‘Vollkommenheit,’” 56-7. Cf. Pratscher, *Der Herrenbruder Jakobus*, 214.

¹⁷⁵E.g., Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 125; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 137-8. Rightly Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 86; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 124; Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 185-6; Donker, “Der Verfasser des Jak,” 227-39; Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 100-3; Martin, *James*, 86; Neitzel, “Eine alte crux interpretum,” 288; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 17; Zmijewski, “Christliche ‘Vollkommenheit,’” 58-60.

¹⁷⁶Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 125. Further, the statement $\sigma\acute{\upsilon} \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\upsilon \epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ in 2:18 clearly takes up the $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\upsilon \epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\nu$ from 2:14. See Donker, “Der Verfasser des Jak,” 237; Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 137; Zmijewski, “Christliche ‘Vollkommenheit,’” 59. Against Lautenschlager, “Der Gegenstand,” 175: “Mit V. 18a meldet sich der Gegner von V. 14 wieder zu Wort.” Otherwise Zmijewski, “Christliche ‘Vollkommenheit,’” 59-60. According to his view 2:18 is directed *against* the position in 2:14-17. See, however, my arguments below.

¹⁷⁷“You” therefore is not James. Against Donker, “Der Verfasser des Jak,” and Neitzel, “Eine alte crux interpretum,” among others. The pronouns “I” and “you” are also not to be understood as unemphatic in the sense “the one—the other.” Against, e.g., Cranfield, “The Message of James,” 166; Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 192-3; Lautenschlager, “Der Gegenstand,” 175; Lorenzen, “Faith without Works,” 232; Schrage, “Der Jakobusbrief,” 32. Their hypothesis practically comes close to a solution drawn from embarrassment (“Verlegenheitslösung,” Neitzel, “Eine alte crux interpretum,” 288, n. 15), for “jeder weiß daß $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega$ und $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}$ nur bei besonderer Betonung gesetzt werden” (p. 288). Similarly Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, 136-7; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 17; Zmijewski, “Christliche ‘Vollkommenheit,’” 56, n. 56, and 60, n. 60. Cf. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 123-4.

¹⁷⁸Cf. Martin, *James*, 86: “Furthermore, if the words of the objector are simply $\sigma\acute{\upsilon} \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\upsilon \epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma, \kappa\acute{\alpha}\gamma\omega \epsilon\rho\gamma\alpha \epsilon\chi\omega$, then we are left to explain why the opponent of James would take up this position.” Similarly Donker, “Der Verfasser des Jak,” 228.

¹⁷⁹Donker, “Der Verfasser des Jak,” 233. For a further basis see Zmijewski, “Christliche ‘Vollkommenheit,’” 60.

¹⁸⁰See the commentaries ad loc. See further Luck, “Die Theologie,” 28. Otherwise Baasland, *Jakobsbrevet*, 87; Lautenschlager, “Der Gegenstand,” 177.

with trembling and without works.¹⁸¹ To this extent the interlocutor here rather provides a basis for his objection (see below).¹⁸² The reply begins then first in 2:20.¹⁸³ The following points further speak in favor of this conclusion:

- 1) the particle δέ signals, as it often does in Greek, a turn in the argumentation;¹⁸⁴
- 2) the word of reproach ὡ ἄνθρωπε κενέ marks the return to the refutation on the part of the author;¹⁸⁵
- 3) James appears to reserve the pronoun σύ for the description of the one who has "faith alone," although he himself continues in the second person singular.¹⁸⁶

Therefore no ironic tone sounds in 2:18-19.¹⁸⁷ The interlocutor is not being ironic when he calls for the demonstration of faith without works (2:18b), or encourages the one who possesses a monotheistic faith (2:19a: καλῶς ποιεῖς), or mentions the forced confession of monotheism in the exorcism of demons (2:19b). All in all, there is not the least attempt to demonstrate the uselessness of faith without works. A close relation between faith and works (a conception of the author) may not be read into 2:18-19.¹⁸⁸

Accordingly, it results that the interlocutor ascribes no small significance to mere faith. Nevertheless, he also has good works. His

¹⁸¹Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 176: "Und Jakobus weiß sehr wohl, daß sich auch der werklose Glaube wenn nicht sichtbar, so doch hör- und damit wahrnehmbar äußert im Bekenntnis seines Inhaltes." Cf. Martin, *James*, 88: "The opponent might be tempted to fall back on the argument that simple profession is a visible proof of faith sufficient for salvation (such as Abraham's turning from idolatry). But if so, James anticipates such a thought and will soon dismiss that belief with the aid of two examples par excellence (i.e., Abraham and Rahab) of faith-with-works."

¹⁸²The formulation οὐ πιστεύεις (2:19) naturally refers back to οὐ πίστιν ἔχεις (2:18a). See Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 61.

¹⁸³Martin, *James*, 89. Similarly Donker, "Der Verfasser des Jak," 234-5. His reconstruction of the concentric symmetry (pp. 236-7) admittedly doesn't persuade me.

¹⁸⁴Burchard, "Zu Jakobus," 40; Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 126; Martin, *James*, 90. Cf. now Mußner (a representative of the *Sekundanten* hypothesis): "Eher würde man die Partikel οὐν erwarten" (*Der Jakobusbrief*, 139). He then continues with the questionable argument: "Aber die Verwendung der Partikel δέ läßt erkennen, daß der V 20 eher den folgenden Hinweis auf Abraham [!] schon vorbereiten soll" (pp. 139-40).

¹⁸⁵Donker ("Der Verfasser des Jak," 235): "Das Scheltwort in v. 20 ist eine deutliche Anweisung, daß der Verfasser mindestens hier wieder spricht." See further Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 126.

¹⁸⁶Zmijewski ("Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 58-63) attempts to extend the objection of the opponent even to 2:21 (likewise Ruckstuhl, *Jakobusbrief*, 19). However, he brings his own exegesis into question. First, James is supposed abruptly to intervene in 2:22 with the word βλέπεις (pp. 63-4). Second, he would clothe the example which he introduces of the works-righteousness of Rahab (2:25) in the same way as the main example of his opponent, that of the works-righteousness of Abraham (2:21; see p. 66).

¹⁸⁷Against the *opinio communis*.

¹⁸⁸Cf. Zmijewski, "Christliche 'Vollkommenheit,'" 60-1.

objection therefore carries great weight. It does not arise of necessity from a brittle morality. Clearly the works in 2:18 may not be understood as works of faith (i.e., those which have grown from faith). Nevertheless they bear witness to faith (as a mere attitude). The separation between faith and works justifies the conclusion that the latter must in some way be added to the former.¹⁸⁹

Taken as a whole, 2:18-19 do not constitute a foreign body within the passage, but fully fit the context. From 2:20 on, James polemicizes against the common misunderstanding of his opponents. He expressly emphasizes that faith necessarily brings good works with it, for a dead faith without any works (2:14-17) and a purely rational faith supplemented by works (2:18-19) in reality do not exist.

In brief the flow of thought runs as follows:

- 2:14-17: the author's distanciation from faith without works, with reference to its uselessness;
- 2:18-19: an advocacy of faith without works on the part of the interlocutor, with reference to the clearly powerful effect of the monotheistic statement of faith in the exorcism of demons;
a new objection against the author with the sharpened point about a separation of faith from works;
- 2:20-26: the final demonstration by the author that faith and works belong together.

Finally, again a new interpretation of the notorious passage, 2:18-19, has developed here. It may be accorded considerable persuasive force, in view of the unforced resolution of difficulties which it brings. And the entire course of argument above thereby profits.

In this section a harmonic picture of 2:14-26 has emerged. Especially the relation between the Jacobean and Pauline conceptions of justification have been set in a new light. Out of practical concerns, we shall develop a more precise summary first in the following section.

¹⁸⁹Cf. especially Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 192: "In v. 18a ist also—nach der Replik in v. 18b zu schließen—nicht die *Verteilung* von Glauben und Werke[n] auf du und ich die Hauptsache, sondern die *Teilung* von Glauben und Werken überhaupt." See also p. 219. Similarly Pratscher, *Der Herrenbruder Jakobus*, 214: "Der Gegner des Jak hingegen trennt Glaube und Werke und stellt sie additiv nebeneinander." See also p. 215. Likewise Walker, "Allein aus Werken," 192: "Jakobus aber kennt kein *Gegeneinander* von Glauben und Werken des Gesetzes, sondern ein *Auseinander!*" In agreement, Hoppe, *Der theologische Hintergrund*, 102-4.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

My task has been to investigate justification according to James in 2:14-26. Our attention at the start was directed to 1:16-25, a closely related text, with a similar interest in the relation between faith and works. We here recall in conclusion the course of the argument in its general framework.

According to the first chapter, God unleashes the new creation or, respectively, the new birth, in that he, out of a free determination, calls forth faith through his mighty Word (1:18). The re-created person (or the reborn person) lives then naturally in agreement with his or her being, since that one transposes faith into works. Chap. 2 continues: with appeal to Gen 15:6 James brings into force righteousness by faith (2:23). However, he points clearly to a *living* faith, which inevitably brings forth good works. Consequently, works-righteousness (which is not identical to Jewish righteousness from the Law) plays a central role, in agreement with the OT, nevertheless with an emphasis on faith.

Basically Paul agrees, despite his vigorous rejection of the concept of "works-righteousness." He reckons likewise with a living faith, which unceasingly yields good works. Faith on the other hand does not lie within the capacity of the human being, but has its source solely in the omnipotence of God.

There arises, accordingly, setting aside the terminological differences, a theological agreement between James and Paul. It rests expressly upon the sovereignty of God and the primacy of faith (in contrast to human cooperation and capacity). The common undertone finally explains why the church could allow two so apparently different doctrines of salvation to remain within its canon.¹⁹⁰

For the present Jewish-Christian dialogue, James indeed opens an interesting perspective. He directs attention to the common basis of both discussion partners. The issue at stake has to do with the proper understanding of the OT. At the center of the discussion stands the question concerning the righteousness which counts before God. James maneuvers skillfully. He understands the doctrine of salvation of the old covenant in the spirit of the new covenant. Accordingly, the Christian finds no foreign element in the OT expressions, with their emphasis on works-righteousness, but detects behind them, on the contrary, the supporting foundational thought of the righteousness of faith. Similarly, the Jew (as, for

¹⁹⁰Against Lohse, "Glaube und Werke," 21: "Damit tritt nun aber letztlich ein schwieriges Problem in unseren Gesichtskreis, mit dessen Aufweis unsere Überlegungen geschlossen seien: Neben den paulinischen Briefen gehört auch der Jac zum Kanon der neutestamentlichen Schriften, von der alten Kirche mit apostolischer Dignität ausgezeichnet. Die zwischen beiden bestehenden Spannungen werden wir weder verbergen noch ausgleichen können."

example, James) confesses nothing false with the NT witness to the righteousness by faith, but thereby rather grasps the essence of works-righteousness. Therefore the tensions of the continuing dialogue may to some extent be evened out. Both sides move closer to one another in reference to the usage of terminology, and also, it is to be hoped, in their ranges of thought.

Additionally, the polarization between the Old and New Testaments, which from the perspective of the church has often been a disturbing factor in the course of the dialogue, noticeably diminishes, especially since the Christian with his insistence on the NT guiding principle of righteousness by faith need not feel that the OT (not identical with the Jewish?) striving after works-righteousness is alien to his own ideal of piety. He succeeds precisely in combining the two into a meaningful synthesis without compromise. A unified understanding of the harmony of the biblical message of salvation certainly gives impetus to a revolution in the history of theology. Especially James has cleared the way for innovation. He has therefore made an irreplaceable contribution to the cardinal question of the church, namely the problem of the two Testaments, with their own theological contours.¹⁹¹

Yet even with a euphoria over accomplishments at the discussion table, we may not forget that James strikes against the optimism of Judaism.¹⁹² Therefore the danger still threatens, that he might preach the necessity of the new birth through faith to deaf ears.¹⁹³ Besides, Paul raises exactly the same accusation against Judaism. He attacks trusting in one's own strength and the renouncing of Christian faith, as is well-known.¹⁹⁴

The waves of differing views of anthropology also rise and beat high in ecumenical discussion. At least at the time of the Reformation, Catholics reckoned with a (partial) freedom of the human being, while the Lutherans insisted on the (absolute) corruption of the human being in the course of the process of salvation. Clearly James holds the latter position. His conviction of the monergism of the Creator in the origin of faith, excludes all speculations concerning the cooperation of the creature. Even Catholic exegetes (as, for example, Mußner) today seem to arrive at the same conclusion.

Furthermore, the barometer of the ecumenical mood points to a miserable atmosphere in the tangled doctrinal discussions, on account of the usual placing of James and Paul in opposing

¹⁹¹Naturally this circle of problems closely belongs (at least since Marcion) to the question of the canon (cf. above).

¹⁹²Consequently it is not appropriate to say that James represents a "limited" ("entschränktes") or "Christianized" Diaspora Judaism. Against Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 40, 42, 64; Lohse, "Glaube und Werke," 21; Windisch, *Die Katholischen Briefe*, 36.

¹⁹³Cf. Luck, "Die Theologie," 16.

¹⁹⁴See Laato, *Paul*.

positions.¹⁹⁵ The polarization between them, which in the meanwhile has been driven to extremes, makes difficult the efforts at reconciliation of a Christianity which has been broken apart. In the worst case, each may choose according to his own taste.¹⁹⁶ On the one side, the Catholics often emphasize James' doctrine of justification, in order to suppress that of Paul.¹⁹⁷ On the other side, Lutherans or Protestants directly reject James' doctrine, in order to preserve that of Paul.¹⁹⁸ In reality neither alternative is appropriate. There is no basis for the diametrical contrast. The differences between James and Paul are merely terminological. Materially they offer the same theology.

Taken in their entirety, it is possible to reconcile ("zusammenreimen," see Luther's statement above) James' and Paul's conceptions of justification without eliminating their special characteristics. Luther would therefore have difficulty defending his rash statement uttered at the table (cited at the beginning).¹⁹⁹ Actually, he has given me the right to reproach him as a "fool" and to take up his doctoral biretta ("Pirreth").²⁰⁰ What a noteworthy challenge! Yet it seems questionable to scold the prominent Reformer, especially since he (with the help of the Pauline letters) once and for all established the doctrine of justification for the universal church. On the contrary, Luther should have an enduring place of honor among the heroes of faith of the Christian church. How much more from this perspective, arises for me the desire for his doctoral hat!

¹⁹⁵Cf. Frankemölle, "Gesetz im Jakobusbrief," 177: "Doch scheiden sich am Jak gerade in Deutschland bislang die ökumenischen Geister seit Luthers Stellungnahme zum Jak . . . , auch wenn sich auch hier die ökumenischen Fronten immer stärker verwischen."

¹⁹⁶Cf. E. Käsemann, "Begründet der neutestamentliche Kanon die Einheit der Kirche?" *EvT* 11 (1951) 13, 19. Similarly Marxsen, "Allein aus Glauben," 36, nevertheless with the important denial: "Aber das wäre ein Kurzschluß."

¹⁹⁷So actually already the Confutatio 1530 and the Council of Trent 1547. See Lautenschlager, "Der Gegenstand," 163. Cf. Lohse, *Paulus*, 2: "Eben dieses Urteil des Reformators ist heute erneut umstritten, Jakobus wird vielfach mit Paulus konfrontiert und die an Paulus orientierte Theologie der Reformatoren von Jakobus her kritischer Beurteilung unterzogen." Likewise Luck, "Die Theologie," 7: "Das Verhältnis [of James] zu Paulus spielt für die katholische Theologie eine nicht minder große Rolle als für die evangelische Forschung. Dabei wird dann natürlich die Einseitigkeit der evangelischen Theologie moniert, die in ihrer Fixierung auf Paulus nicht das ganze Neue Testament zur Geltung brächte."

¹⁹⁸Schrage, "Der Jakobusbrief," 37: "Hier scheiden sich die Geister, und evangelische Theologie und Verkündigung wird sich bei diesen Entweder-Oder auf die Seite des Paulus stellen." Cf. Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes*, 194; and id., "Die Mitte der Schrift—biblisch-theologisch betrachtet," in *Wissenschaft und Kirche. Festschrift für E. Lohse* (ed. K. Aland and S. Meurer; Bielefeld: Luther, 1989) 45-6.

¹⁹⁹In reality: "Die Rehabilitierung des Jakobusbriefs ist in vollem Gang" (Mußner, "Die ethische Motivation," 423). Cf. also Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, 193: "Inzwischen hat sich das Urteil auch auf prot. Seite gewandelt."

²⁰⁰See above, section 1.



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