

18. The system under which this royal family functions is the divine power system and utilization of the ten problem-solving devices. When spiritual growth enlarges each category the believer's soul, it is fortified with the artillery of thought.
19. The underlying policy of God toward the royal family is grace and is sustained by the unfailing love of God. During the course of one's earthly life, the love of God provides every logistical asset while blessing those who advance:

Ephesians 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us. (NASB)

20. Now let's illustrate how "far more abundantly beyond all that we ask of think" the gifts of God are in our lives. To do so we borrow from the lives of British royalty.
21. Two television series of last year presented the coronation of two of England's queens, *Victoria* on Amazon and Elizabeth II's *The Crown* on Netflix. Each was removed from the life of a young lady when suddenly elevated to the title, Queen of England.
22. Victoria was only four weeks past her eighteenth birthday when she ascended to the throne on June 20, 1837; Elizabeth II was only six weeks short of her twenty-sixth birthday when she did so on February 6, 1952.
23. In each drama, these two women had to learn the rules of royal deportment on the fly and each series spent time documenting the learning of this process. In each case, these women's husbands also had to learn the do's and don'ts of how to honor their wives' royal status.
24. When boys are to the royal manner born, they are educated from childhood how to present themselves in well-mannered society.
25. They do not earn or deserve any of their privileges. They are born to privilege by membership in the royal family.

(End JAS1-34. See JAS1-35 for continuation of study at p. 341.)

26. In eighteenth-century England, a young duke had a valet assigned to him, a male servant performing personal services. Among his duties was to assist the duke in getting dressed beginning with silk stockings and pants and a powdered wig.
27. He also wore a waistcoat, a garment worn under an outer garment called a doublet or coat or jacket:
The earliest waistcoats were extremely elaborate and costly. They were sometimes provided with sleeves and appear to have reached to or below the hips.¹
28. He had momentous income from vast estates and owned palaces he had never seen. He would be in his teens, but when he appeared in public everyone bowed.
29. Beginning at age 12 he entered into training to become a gentleman. He learned how to walk, how to stand, how to bow.
30. He was taught good manners including how to sniff snuff like a gentleman. He was trained in how to eat, which forks and spoons to use, how to engage in conversation all in the fashion of a gentleman.
31. He was superior to almost everyone in the house. Did he deserve all these accoutrements, the adoration, wealth, or privilege? No. He was born into it. He had not earned any of his possessions yet they were all his.
32. When did he come into the possession of the money, the land, the estates, the clothing, the training, the standing of an aristocrat? When he was born.
33. Same is true for those who believe in Jesus Christ for salvation. When did you come into possession of forty things? When did you begin to receive logistical grace support for a lifetime? When did you receive the assets necessary to grow in grace? When did you receive your spiritual gift? When did your destiny include escrow blessings? When did you possess eternal life? When were you conscripted as a soldier for Christ? When you were born again!

¹ *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1971), s.v. “waistcoat.”

34. Let's take a look at David. When did David enter the chart pedigree of Jesus Christ? When Jacob chose Judah to continue the line of Christ. David was not yet born.
35. When David became king, he did not know he was in the direct line of Christ. This news did not come to him until Nathan the prophet revealed it to him.
36. Was David more qualified than others to be in the line of Christ? No. He was born into it.
37. Was David's life always compatible with the plan of God? No. He had many failures, some of them so egregious that the Father had to punish him in installments.
38. The first installment was the result of David's rape of Bathsheba. When her pregnancy was revealed to him, David ordered Joab to place her husband, Uriah, in a vulnerable position on the battlefield so he may become a casualty of war. The punishment was the death of the adulterine. (See 2 Samuel 11:14–27 cp. 12:15–23.)
39. The second installment was caused by David's rape of Bathsheba while her husband, Uriah, was at war with the Ammonites. The punishment was the rape of David's daughter Tamar by the crown prince Amnon. She was the sister of Absalom and David did nothing to punish Amnon. (See 2 Samuel 11:1–5 cp. 13:1–22.)
40. The third installment was caused by David's miscarriage of justice. Although angry, David did not prosecute or impeach Amnon. The punishment was the assassination of Amnon by Absalom and the other royal princes at Baal-Hazor. (See 2 Samuel 13:21 cp. 13:23–36.)
41. The fourth installment was caused by David's poor leadership while functioning in the arrogance complex of Cosmic 1. The punishment was the Absalom–Ahithophel Rebellion. Under the guidance of Ahithophel, Absalom led a palace coup against David which failed. He was killed in battle by Joab. (See 2 Samuel 18:31–33; Psalm 32; 38; 51 cp. 2 Samuel 15:13–18:15.)
42. Whether David was in reversionism and involved in serious failures of leadership, he recovered and became the reference point for future leaders of the Davidic line.

44. With these biblical examples in mind, consider this: whether a person is a queen, duke, or king of Israel, the blessings they inherit have nothing to do with them personally. They are born into them.
45. Likewise, when any person responds positively to the gospel of Jesus Christ, they immediately inherit all the blessings, provisions, and status that accrue to them by being instant members of the royal family of God.
46. We did not earn these things nor do we deserve them but we have them provided by the matchless grace of God and His unfailing love.

James 1:17 Every good-of-intrinsic-value act of giving and every completed gift keeps on being from above, coming down from the ultimate source of the Father of lights ...

47. The closing prepositional phrase begins with the negative conjunction **οὐκ (ouk)**: the expression of full negation: “no.” What God does not do comes next with the verb **ἔστι (ésti)**: “there is,” followed by another hapax legomenon, the noun **παραλλαγή (parallagḗ)**: “change or alteration.”
48. Taken together it reads, “with Whom there is no change or alteration.” This is followed by yet two more hapax legomena, **τροπή (tropḗ)**: “the process of turning,” and the final word of the verse, the noun **ἄποσκίασμα (aposkíasma)**: “a shadow cast by variation of position by heavenly bodies,” i.e. eclipses.
49. These hapax legomena are used by James to draw attention to the immutability of God in contrast to the movement of heavenly bodies that He created and put in motion.” The first of them is *tropḗ*:

“The process of turning.” The context suggests imagery based on association of *tropḗ* with astral phenomena, such as the ‘solstice’ or more generally of the ‘movements’ of heavenly bodies from one place in the heavens or from one constellation to another. *Aposkíasma* means darkening that has its basis in change. That God, in contrast to all else, is unchangeable, was a truth often expressed in Hellenistic theology.²

² Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1016.

50. The use of these words indicates that it is quite possible James was familiar with the writings of Plato, Homer, and other classical writers.
51. These illustrations use the universe and its structure to teach continuity within the system, yet even though the universe and its objects function as a unit they constantly change positions and cast shadows.
52. Although they make up the environment we depend upon to sustain us in time, the Creator's immutable essence consistently provides for us our logistical provisions, his unfailing love, and His immutable Word.

James 1:17 Every good-of-intrinsic-value act of giving and every completed gift keeps on being from above, coming down from the ultimate source of the Father of lights, with Whom there is no change or alteration or the occurrence of an eclipse. (EXT)

PRINCIPLES:

1. These celestial illustrations refer to the character of God. On the one hand, He has created the environment in which we are designed to function.
2. On the other hand, He is the only reliable constant upon Whom we may rely upon with absolute trust. He does not change, nor does His Word go into eclipse.
3. His gifts are available to every person from Adam to the end of the universe, the first being salvation of the soul. Afterward, we have "completed gifts" available to serve Him by submitting to a serious study of His word.
4. The Christian way of life is based on grace. When a believer orients totally on this principle, then the unfailing love of God will supply him with all his needs:

Ephesians 3:19 To know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

v. 20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us. (NASB)