

James 2:8 If [protasis of a 1st-class condition] you apply the Royal Law according to the Scripture, “You shall unconditionally love from personal integrity those you encounter,” [apodosis] honorably, you must keep on doing this. (EXT)

James 2:9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (NASB)

1. Our discussion of the Royal Law in verse 8 began with the protasis of a first-class condition, “If you apply the Royal Law.” It is defined by a quote from Leviticus 19:18 in this expanded translation from the Greek, “You shall unconditionally love from personal integrity those you encounter.”
2. The apodosis is one word, the present active indicative of the verb **ποιέω** (**poiéō**): “honorably.” The futuristic present tense indicates a behavior pattern that is to begin immediately and to continue thereafter.
3. A smoother translation of this could read this way, “... you must continue doing this from the character trait of personal honor.”
4. Verse 9 begins with the adversative conjunction **δέ** (**dé**): “But.” It introduces the circumstance that occurs if the believer does not apply the Royal Law.
5. This refusal results in a second first class condition introduced by the conditional particle **εἰ** (**ei**): “if on the other hand.” The other hand is indicated by a repeat of the present active indicative of the verb **προσωποληπτέω** (**prosōpolēptéō**): “you keep on showing partiality.”
6. This word takes us back to James 2:1, “do not exhibit the mental attitude of partiality.” This attitude toward others exposes a person who is functioning in the advanced stages of reversionism.
7. So far, the verse reads, “But if on the other hand you keep on showing partiality from the soul status of reversionism.”
8. The three subjects we are studying in this chapter include Mr. Chazzan who is functioning in reversionism, Mr. Golden Fingers who is rich but takes advantage of Mr. Chazzan’s favoritism, and Mr. Poor Beggar who has arrived for Bible study and is not interested where he sits as long as he can hear James’s message.
9. The fact Mr. Chazzan has assigned him to sit on the floor reveals that he is focused on the beggar’s social standing rather than his authentic interest in studying the Word of God.



10. This attitude followed by his actions means Chazzan is “committing sin,” indicated by the present active indicative of the verb ἐργάζομαι (*ergázomai*): “to engage in an activity that involves effort.”
11. This activity is what goes on in the soul of Mr. Chazzan. He is out of fellowship and as a result his decision-making is influenced by his trend of partiality toward Golden Fingers and haughtiness toward Poor Beggar.
12. The present tense of *ergázomai* is aoristic, or instantaneous. The action was begun and completed at that moment. Partiality was a behavior pattern of the Chazzan’s, he pulled the volitional trigger to commit that sin toward Golden Fingers and then showed impartiality toward the Poor Beggar by telling him to sit on the floor.
13. What results from the action of this verb is “sin,” the noun ἁμαρτία (*hamartía*), the direct object of *ergázomai*. The sequence here begins with a mental attitude: divorcement from the guidance of the Holy Spirit in status quo carnality.
14. This is accompanied by a sequence of circumstances that has placed Mr. Chazzan in a negative relationship with Golden Fingers. This caused Mr. Chazzan to show him partiality in the seating arrangement of the synagogue while then being impartial toward the Poor Beggar’s seating.
15. This results in sin. And the sin of partiality is referenced back to the Royal Law that was amplified in the previous verse, “You shall unconditionally love from personal integrity those you encounter.”
16. The Royal Law is James’s term for what Moses wrote in Leviticus 19:18, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” No other writers in the Tanakh refer to this law beyond Moses.
17. We have noted that the Royal Law is mentioned in the New Testament twenty times by six authors within 10 books including three Gospels and seven Epistles.
18. James continues by driving home the point that those who violate the Royal Law stand “convicted,” an excellent translation of the verb, ἐλέγχω (*elénchō*).
19. The Messianic Jews are familiar with the Mosaic Law and the commandment referenced in Leviticus. James now brings it into the theology of the New Testament.
20. These Jews understand the reference, its application, and its obvious continuance into the Church Age, a doctrinal fact confirmed nineteen more times within the New Testament canon.



21. In this case, what convicts them is the law, the noun **νόμος (nómos)**. The Mosaic Law, specifically Leviticus 19:18, is now applicable to the Church Age.
22. The obvious conclusion one is forced to accept is that those who violate the Royal Law are guilty of being “transgressors,” the plural noun, **παράβτης (parabátēs)**. It indicates that those who transgress the law deviate from the truth.
23. Here is an expanded translation of the verse:

James 2:9 If, on the other hand, you keep on showing partiality within the advanced stages of reversionism, you are committing sin and in doing so stand convicted by the authority of the Royal Law as transgressors of it. (EXT)

Principles:

1. In Matthew 22:35, Jesus Christ was asked by a heathen lawyer, “Which is the great commandment in the Law?” The Lord responded by saying to him:

Matthew 22:37 “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’

v. 38 “This is the great and foremost commandment.

v. 39 “The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

v. 40 “On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the prophets.”

2. This exchange was made between the Lord and the lawyer and included by Matthew in his Gospel circa A.D. 50, several years after James wrote his epistle.
3. The failure to apply this “second great and foremost commandment” is said by James to be “committing sin and in doing so stand convicted by the authority of the Royal Law as transgressors of it.”
4. The sin that James uses to dramatize one’s failure to apply the Royal Law is showing partiality to one person while not doing so with another. In other words, you cannot keep the Royal Law by being inconsistent in its application.



5. In fact, the plural noun, *parabátēs*, translated “transgressors,” refers to those who do so as being violators of the whole law:

The man who is guilty of this sin is shown to be a transgressor by the Law, which establishes deviation from the valid norm. Παράβατης knows no degrees. The man who is one is so totally.²

6. Turns out that an insightful evaluation of the numerous times the Royal Law is cited in Scripture and the prominence the Lord places on that principle as second only to our love for God, means that we as Christians must give serious attention to whether we are consistently applying it.
7. Every believer is always in some sort of relationship with the Lord. He is in fellowship or out. He is short on his knowledge of the Word or advancing. He is a hearer and a doer of the Word or not. He is consistently applying the doctrine he knows or going with human viewpoint.
8. Every believer is responsible before the Lord regarding his status before the Supreme Court of Heaven. God knows all things. We can only be aware of a precious minimum.
9. We do not know the exigencies, difficulties, or advantages with which another person must deal until we have walked in his shoes. We on the other hand must concentrate on walking in our own shoes.
10. Judging others is a dangerous proposition. Some people you criticize, or mistrust may be so advanced in doctrine their discernment of your personality may warn them to walk a wide circle around you.
11. However, if every believer practiced the Royal Law, there would be far more fellowship among believers. This word “fellowship” is the noun **κοινωνία (*koinōnía*)** and it denotes participation in a thing shared.
12. Among Christians, it is the Word of God that develops this participation so that diverse personalities may bond from a common inventory of ideas.

The Doctrine of Fellowship

A. True Fellowship

1. True fellowship among believers is difficult if not impossible to attain until each develops personal love for God and occupation with Christ.

² Johannes Schneider, “παράβατης,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, eds. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 5:741, 741n7.

