

11. What is presented by James to illustrate what can be caused by the erroneous use of the tongue is noun, ὕλη (*húlē*): “forest.” And not just any forest but a “great” forest: ἡλίκος (*hēlíkos*). This is not a brush fire. This is the conflagration of thousands of acres of timber.
12. The verb, *horáō*, “see,” is imperative mood #24. This is an interrogative command. The parishioners are ordered to consider the illustration’s example in light of the magnitude of damage the tongue can cause.
13. In the example, a single flame is used to illustrate how one comment by the tongue can ravage a congregation when one tongue speaks it can cause the entire congregation to become embroiled in controversy.
14. A forest can be set “aflake” by one flame. The Greek text uses two words for this event, the first is ὀλίγος (*olígos*): “little,” plus the noun, πῦρ (*púr*): “flame.”
15. This is followed by the verb, ἀνάπτω (*anáptō*): “kindles.” One flame, and a massive forest is consumed. One sinful use of the tongue and an entire congregation is placed in combat.
16. **Principle:** When someone uses the tongue to express an idea that ignites controversy, James has already provided the problem-solving device. Apply James 2:8 and give the Lord room to carry out His corrective procedures.

James 3:5 So in this way the tongue is a small organ in the much larger human body, yet it keeps on arrogantly boasting exceedingly about great things. See how a great forest is kindled by a single flame! (EXT)

James 3:6 And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. (NASB)

1. This verse begins with the statement, “the tongue is a fire” confirming the meaning of the previous verses which demonstrate that small objects have the power to control larger objects—horses’ bits, ships’ rudders, and forests’ fires.
2. In the population of a family, a community, or a country, there are small objects including tongues that influence the destinies of men and nations.
3. Verse 6 begins with a summary statement of verses 1–5, “The tongue is a fire.” What about the bit and the rudder? The three-part sequence illustrates the increasing influence the tongue has when a reversionist sinks deeper and deeper into cosmic system.



4. The bit controls a much larger horse, but the rudder directs an even larger ship, and finally the fire consumes and even larger forest.
5. The sinful use of the tongue has to start somewhere. Its initial act is to engage in gossip, judgment, criticism, accusation, argument, enmity, and division.
6. This division includes subscription to at least two points of view that accumulate increasing numbers of adherents who are verbally at odds.
7. One group is going to achieve dominance while the other will choose to vacate the premises. This is illustrated by the forest fire.
8. James's point is that sins of the tongue can figuratively burn down a congregation while the church edifice remains as a shell of what it used to be.
9. Of all the mental attitude sins that populate the soul of a believer, it is the tongue's participation in conveying its inventory of rebellion by means of the spoken word.
10. Therefore, it is not hyperbolic for James to refer to the tongue as, "the very world of iniquity": **ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας (*ho kósmos tés adikías*)**. The noun, *adikías*, "iniquity," spawns chaos since it refers to "injustice, deceitfulness, wrongdoing, wickedness and is capable of inflicting each one with a vengeance.
9. The cosmic system that guides and directs this process is reverse process reversionism which is defined as: "The total influence of evil and divorcement from reality. What was previously considered right is now considered to be wrong. It is status quo of unrestrained and perpetual sinfulness, fragmentation, and excessive cosmic involvement. The believer is brainwashed by satanic propaganda."
10. This mindset causes the suppression of all seven categories of the Edification Complex of the Soul. Where spiritual advance in the soul was once functional, it is now suppressed; what was once subscribed to is now nonfunctional.
11. The Edification Complex once contained, at most, the following categories of spiritual sophistication: **(1)** Operation Z, **(2)** Dispensations, **(3)** 10 Problem-Solving Devices, **(4)** Spiritual Self-Esteem and Personal and Unconditional Love, **(5)** the Copacetic Spiritual Life, **(6)** Occupation with Christ, and **(7)** Invisible Historical Impact.
12. But not anymore. In its place is an unruly tongue that is at the mercy of the believer's Law of Freedom. He is free to conjure whatever thought he entertains and to apply it verbally for all to hear.



13. The tongue is simply an organ that has capabilities for taste and speech. It has no mind of its own. The ability to enunciate is multifaceted in that the larynx and tongue in concert may be trained to communicate thought in any language.
14. So, if the tongue is one of the means of verbally expressing thought then we need to take the time to analyze this phenomenon that is unique to the human being.
15. This effort will be to aggrandize the English language which is the “tongue” of the British Isles, its possessions such as Canada and Australia, and the United States.
16. First of all, we must define terms for the execution of speech before we observe the act of speaking:

enunciate: to make a definite or systematic statement; announce, proclaim; to utter articulate sounds.

larynx: the modified upper part of the trachea that contains the vocal cords.

tongue: a fleshly movable muscular process of the floor of the mouths of most vertebrates and functions especially in humans as a speech organ. The power of communication through speech.⁶

17. I now want to quote from a book written by American journalist, Bill Bryson, in 1990. Its title is *The Mother Tongue: English & How It Got That Way*. Why? Because we speak English.
18. Our ability to understand the Bible requires us to acquire within our streams of consciousness the accurate translation of Hebrew and Koiné Greek manuscripts in English.
18. These excerpts below will give background on how we use our native language to understand the transformation of two foreign languages into our souls and then apply their truths by means of language.
19. Whatever is in that inventory is the totality of what we know and think and ultimately what we decide to say. That portfolio contains human viewpoint and divine viewpoint. With the Law of Freedom, we may choose to communicate these ideas from either of these working objects.

(End JAS3-75. See JAS3-76 for continuation of study at p. 211.)

⁶ Ibid., s.vv. “enunciate,” “larynx,” “tongue.”

