

9. James calls out these men early in the fifth chapter's first verse by classifying them as being "rich," the vocative masculine plural of the adjective, **πλούσιος (ploúsios)**: "rich men."
10. There is a situation that causes many rich people to fall into reversionism. Their wealth motivates them to do things they assume will bring them happiness, but instead it brings them misery. James refers to this decline with two verbs noted above and repeated here:
11. The ingressive aorist active imperative of **κλαίω (klaiō)**: "to weep." The ingressive is used to stress the beginning of an action or the entrance into that state.
12. The force of the aorist tense stresses the beginning of new behavior in discourse. Therefore, what follows is the intensification of this process, indicated by the present active participle of **ὀλολύζω (ololúzō)**: "to cry aloud in complaint with shrieks and howls."
13. The reason for this disruption is because of their "miseries," expressed by the noun, **ταλαιπωρία (talaiḗōria)**: "Affliction, distress, misery."
14. Why are these rich men in a state of misery? Because even though they are rich they are also miserable because their volitions are in a consistent state of reversionism.
15. They are wealthy. They have a lot of money. They can do things with their money that others are unable to do. So, although rich, instead of being happy, they are instead weeping and howling in a mental-attitude state of misery.
16. The verb, **κλαίω** is an ingressive aorist active imperative which indicates that these man's mental states are in the throes of reversionism to the point of physically weeping.
17. Their mental state is described by the noun, **ταλαιπωρία**: "affliction, distress, misery."
18. Here we find believers who are in the state of mental misery, although wealthy, but are now overcome by the present middle participle of:
ἐπέρχομαι (epérchomai): "to come upon in a hostile sense; evils, calamities. To befall; coming on, impending."
19. These men find themselves under discipline not because they have material prosperity, but rather because of the underhanded ways they acquired their wealth.
20. Their business practices were not grace oriented but designed to use others to increase their profits at other expense.



21. The money involved is not the issue. How the money was acquired is the issue. Free enterprise is a system by which goods and services are exchanged for the advantage of both the buyer and the seller.
22. The underlying principle of having money is one's capacity for it. This word "capacity" in the phrase "capacity for money," needs to be defined and here are a few statements on this subject:

Capacity: The power of receiving and holding knowledge. Ability; as, or *capacity to pay*.⁵

Capacity: the mind; the power of receiving ideas or knowledge; mental ability; as, instruction should be adapted to the *capacity* of the pupil.⁶

Capacity: Mental or intellectual receiving power; ability to grasp or take in impressions, ideas, knowledge. Active power or force of mind; mental ability, talent.⁷

Capacity: An individual's mental or physical ability: aptitude, skill. The faculty or potential for treating, experiencing, or appreciating. The faculty or power to produce, perform, or deploy.⁸

Capacity: The ability to receive, hold, or absorb something; the maximum amount that can be contained. The power to learn or retain knowledge; mental ability. The ability to do, make, or accomplish something; capability.⁹

Capability: ability, capacity. power, potential; competence, proficiency, adeptness, aptitude, faculty, wherewithal, experience, skill, skillfulness, talent, flair; know-how.¹⁰

23. Here is the expanded translation of the opening verse of James, Chapter 5:

(End JAS5-01. See JAS5-02 for continuation of study at p. 11.)

⁵ *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield: G. & C. Merriam Co., Publisher, 1953), s.v. "capacity."

⁶ *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary: Unabridged*, 2d ed. Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1962), s.v. "capacity."

⁷ *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), s.v. "capacity."

⁸ *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, eleventh ed. (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2014), "capacity."

⁹ *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, fifth ed. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016), "capacity."

¹⁰ *Oxford American Writer's Thesaurus*, third ed. comp. Christine A. Lindberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).



James 5:1 Aw, come on now [present active imperative of the verb, ἄγω (*ágō*), plus the adverb, νῦν (*nún*): a command to respond at once], you rich [the plural masculine of address of the noun, πλούσιος (*plouísios*)]: wealthy men, weep and cry aloud in complaint with shrieks and howls because of your impending miseries coming upon you. (EXT)

24. The circumstances these men face and endure are because of their own evil decisions. They aggrandize their profits by purposefully withholding the wages for those who mowed and harvested the fields (see James 5:3).
25. The result of these men’s failure to pay their workers leaves them in a mental state of misery which is the subject of the next verse:

James 5:2 Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. (NASB)

1. Note in James 5:1 that the men are described as being rich and wealthy. The verse then goes on to also reveal that they “weep and cry aloud with shrieks and howls because of the impending miseries coming upon them.”
2. These men are rich. They have lots of money. Yet, their riches have rotted and their garments have become motheaten (see **Matthew 6:19**).
3. These are not happy campers. They have lots of money and lots of misery, an apparent oxymoron which is something that is made up of contradictory or incongruous elements.
4. These men have monetary wealth, yet they are personally miserable. There are numerous reasons for this mental condition but it boils down to a lack of capacity.
5. These men had the ability to acquire wealth, but having acquired it, they do not have the capacity for it. In context, they acquired some of their wealth illegally.
6. In James 4:2, James addresses the problems associated with lust which is again a problem with these rich men. Here is a review of:

James’ Overview of the Sin Nature’s Lust Patterns:

1. Definition. Lust is the overwhelming desire for something. It can be a passion: the state of being acted on by external agents or sources. The soul and the body are separate, but the entity that coordinates the two is an individual’s free will.

2. Categories. (1) The area of weakness, which is the temptation to sin, (2) the area of strength, which is the source of human good and dead works done out of fellowship, and (3) the trends of legalism and antinomianism.¹
3. Lust. There are ten ägents prōvocateúrs² by which the sin nature tempts volition to allow them into the soul:

- (1) The **lust for power** is the desire to control or dominate others, which is manifested by the inordinate desire to be recognized and aggrandized.

This lust pattern is found to exist in the soul of Absalom when he sought to usurp David’s power as king in:

2 Samuel 15:4 Then Absalom would say, “Who will appoint me [Qal active imperfect of שׁוּם (*sum*): appoint, call, consider] judge [שָׁפַט (*shaphat*): governor] in the land of Israel, that every man who has a cause [מִשְׁפָּט (*mishpat*): a legal case, claim] could come to me and I would do him justice [שֶׁתִּצְדַּק (*sethaqah*)]. (EXT)

- (2) The **lust for pleasure** divorces a believer from the integrity provided by divine guidance from the Word of God. This is mentioned by Paul in **2 Timothy 3:4** where he writes that men will be “... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.”

The lust for pleasure diminishes and destroys the honor and virtue associated with one’s biblical integrity. There are many sources of pleasure that do not involve sinful activities.

- (3) The **lust for sex** reveals the loss or absence of honor in the soul of a believer. This lust pattern is the source of multiple sins practiced by vast numbers of U.S. citizens. Some include the following: fornication, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, phallicism, rape, incest, pederasty, and pornography. Several of these are discussed by Paul in **Romans 1:18–32**.

- (4) The **lust for social standing** has to do with developing status from associates. This is nicely summarized by *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., s.v. “social”:

¹ “One who rejects a socially established morality” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2014), s.v. “antinomianism”).

² “One employed to associate with suspected persons and by pretending sympathy with their aims to incite them to some incriminating action.” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, eleventh ed, s.v. “agents provocateurs.”)

