

James, chapter five, verse twelve, continues our study of verbal reversionism. In verses one through six, we had a study of monetary reversionism. Verses seven and eight, the solution to it. Verses nine through twelve, verbal reversionism. Beginning in verse thirteen we will see the solutions. Before going there, we must wrap up the analysis of James Chapter 5, verse 12:

James 5:12a) **But** [continuative conjunction closing the parenthesis: **δέ (dé)**] **most importantly before all things**, members of the family of God, **stop lying** [present active imperative #47 of the verb **ὄμνυμι (ómnumi)**], or making promises with a **solemn oath** [Operation Subterfuge[!]], **neither by heaven**—using God as a front, **neither by earth**, using something regarded as sacred or honest, or respectable, **neither a solemn oath**, which is perjury when this is violated; ... (EXT)

1. The word, “but,” which **begins verse twelve**, is a continuative conjunction intended to resume a discourse from verse 9. This particle actually closes the parenthesis. In verse nine, we began verbal reversionism with the principle of criticizing. In verses ten and eleven, we have the completion of a dissertation on studying adversity for blessing.
2. Then, in verse twelve, we resume with verbal reversionism. Verse nine emphasizes the slander, criticism, maligning, and judging of others, especially the pastor-teacher. Now, verse twelve indicates Operation Subterfuge. The particle **δέ (dé)**: “But,” is used to resume the discourse; and, in effect, closes the parenthesis. **Δέ** is the particle, used here in the Greek. It indicates that verses ten and eleven are a slight interruption. The purpose for that interruption was to take a discourse on the fact that there is suffering for blessing. That doesn't happen to be the type of suffering in this passage; but, there is suffering for blessing.
3. The translation is, “before all things.” The discourse started out indicating the fact that, in verse nine, verbal reversionism results in suffering for discipline. Just because a person may be a verbal reversionist and suffer from it, there are other types of suffering, which are designed for blessing.
4. Now, back on verbal reversionism, and suffering for discipline. James 5:9 reads:

James 5:9 **Stop criticizing** [present active imperative mood #45 of prohibition of the verb, **μή στενάζω (mē stenázō)**] **members of the royal family of God, against others, fellow believers, so that you yourselves will not be judged. See, the Judge keeps standing in the past with the result that He keeps standing before the doors.** {Opens the parenthesis at verse 10}

[!] Philip Babcock Gove, ed. in chief, “Subterfuge: A deception by artifice or stratagem to conceal, escape, avoid, or evade; deception,” in *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* (Springfield: Merriam-Webster’s, Inc., 2002), 2281.



5. Now, in verse twelve, we resume the discourse with another negative. Again, we're going to have the present active imperative with the phrase, "do not swear," the present active imperative mood #47 of prohibition of the verb,

James 5:12] [**close parenthesis following v. 11**] But above all [**The preposition δέ (dé)**], **my brethren, do not swear** [**μὴ (mḗ) ὅμνυμι (ómnumi)**], **either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.**

6. Ὅμνυμι (ómnumi) is the way it looks in the Greek. *Ómnumi* means to "promise with an oath," to cover a lie by making an oath in the name of something that will act as a "front" for Operation Subterfuge. *Ómnumi* indicates that the content of what is said, is a lie. In order to make it appear as the truth, is to make some kind of a solemn oath with it. A typical solemn oath is, "As God is my witness, 'thus and thus' is true," when it is not true at all. This is using God to "front" for a lie. This is called, Operation Subterfuge.
7. This subterfuge is addressed to fellow believers indicated by the term, "my brethren." The slick-tongued rascal is lying to those with whom he associates in the local church: members of the royal family of God.
8. The negative [**μὴ (mḗ)**] with the imperative mood indicates that the believers to whom this was originally addressed were doing it. In fact, they were actually believers involved in verbal reversionism. The present tense is a present tense of duration, which is called "retroactive linear aktionsart" and indicates these believers have been doing this since they got into verbal reversionism.
9. The active voice: the reversionistic believer uses a front for his lies to try to make them appear as the truth. Again, Operation Subterfuge. So, the passage begins:

James 5:12a] But above all [**The preposition δέ (dé)**], **my brethren, do not swear** [**μὴ (mḗ) + present active imperative mood #47 of the verb, ὅμνυμι (ómnumi)**], **either by heaven or by earth or "with any other oath"** [**ἄλλος (állos) ὄρκος (hórkos)**] ; ... [**prohibition of engaging in Operation Subterfuge**]

1. We have already introduced the technique of including a "front" to back up the Subterfuge with an oath of which James provides examples: (1) "by heaven," (2) "by earth," or (3) "with any other oath."
2. These "fronts" in the context of verse 12 are being used to attack a pastor-teacher by using one or more of these "fronts." However, anyone may be the victim but in this passage the issue is an attack on the authority of the pastor-teacher and this has led to the loss of his authority over the congregation.
3. In the function of Operation Subterfuge, we have here the reversionist, who is doing it, and his victim; just as in verse nine.



4. “Grudge not” means, “stop judging, stop criticizing, stop maligning.” The victim of verse nine is the pastor-teacher. The victim in verse twelve is the pastor-teacher, again. The victim can be anyone in verbal reversionism. But, in this context, it is the pastor-teacher.
5. The authority of the pastor-teacher has been rejected. Since his authority is rejected, he has become the object and the target for criticism in verse nine. In verse twelve, he has become the object of “Operation Subterfuges”.
6. This is using something, ordinarily associated with the truth, to cover up for a lie. This indicates both instability and dishonesty in verbal reversionism.
7. What is used as a “front”? Our first phrase says: “Neither by heaven.” This refers to using God as a “front.” “As God is my witness”, some will say to cover up a lie. God is used as the “front.” God is associated with truth; and, therefore, if you want to make a lie more impressive, then mention the fact that God is the Witness that you are telling the truth.
8. Another offshoot of this is to stand up in a congregational meeting and say, "It's God's will that we do it this way." That is merely an opinion. When an opinion is expressed as an absolute, it becomes a lie. To use God to “front” for the lie is, again, Operation Subterfuge, using something associated with truth in order to “front” for either an opinion set up as an absolute, or a lie set up as the truth.
9. Under Operation Subterfuge you take something verbally, like a lie, and say, in effect, “It is truth!” Or you take an opinion and make it an absolute. Doctrine *is* absolute. In either case you must have a “front” for acceptability. The phrase, “neither by heaven” refers to God, setting up God as the “front”.
10. Now, there are other ways, also, of covering a lie by setting up something that appears true, “neither by the earth!” This refers to a person using another person to cover for his lies. In this example, someone who is usually recognized as being truthful.
11. Therefore, the next phrase: “or with any other oath! These oaths vary: “I swear on my mother's grave.” “I swear on a stack of Bibles.” “I cross my heart and hope to die.” I don't know who's impressed by this; because, obviously, the individual involved who has used it, has no concept of death at all. All of these are fabrications. All of these are designed to function as “fronts.”
12. Now, what this verse does not mean and what it appears to mean because of a poor translation, has to do with profanity. This verse does not refer to profanity. This verse does not refer to taking the Lord's name in vain, except as it applies to using the Lord as a “front” for a lie.
13. This verse has nothing to do with using expletives, or even profanity. It does refer to honesty of soul expressed in human language.

