deed that was spoken of. It is not sins  
of *omission* that men are here convicted  
of, as so often mistakenly supposed: bat.  
the doing *evil,* as in the case of the speech  
above supposed, where *good* is easy and  
obvious), **it is sin to him** (i. e. reckoned to  
him as sin).

**CHAP. V.]**

**1–6.]** *Denunciation of woe  
on the rich in this world.* These verses  
need not necessarily be addressed (as  
Huther) to the same persons as ch. iv. 13  
ff. Indeed the **go to now** repeated seems to  
indicate a fresh beginning. Commentators  
have differed as to whether this denunciation has for its object, or not, exhortation  
to repentance. I believe the right answer  
to be, much as De Wette, that in the outward form indeed the words contain no  
such exhortation: but that we are bound  
to believe all such triumphant denunciation to have but one ultimate view, that  
of grace and mercy to those addressed.  
That such does not here appear, is owing  
chiefly to the close proximity of judgment,  
which the writer has before him. Calvin  
then is in the main right,—when he says,  
“They are wrong who imagine that James  
is here exhorting rich men to repentance:  
it seems to me rather to be a simple denunciation of the judgment of God, with  
which he wished to alarm them *without  
hope of pardon,*”—except in those four  
last rather characteristic words.

**1.] Go  
to now** (see above, ch. iv. 13), **ye rich, go  
weep** (the *tense* in the original gives the  
command a concentrated force, as that  
which ought to be done at once and  
without delay), **howling** (it is a word in  
the Old Test. confined to the prophets,  
and used, as here, with reference to the  
near approach of God’s judgments. See  
Isa. xiii. 6) **over your miseries which are  
coming on** (no supply of the word “*you*”  
is required after the verb. These miseries  
are not to be thought of as the natural  
and determined end of all worldly riches,  
but are the judgments connected with the  
coming of the Lord: see ver. 8. It may  
be that this prospect was as yet intimately  
bound up with the approaching destruction  
of the Jewish city and polity: for it must  
be remembered that they are Jews who are  
here addressed).

**2.]** *The effect of the  
coming judgment is depicted as already  
present*, and its material as already stored  
up against them. What is meant by  
the figure used, we learn in ver. 4. **Your  
riches are corrupted** (see Job xxxiii. 21;  
xl. 7. The expression is figurative, and  
to be understood of *all* riches;—‘your  
possessions’), **and your garments** (the  
general term **riches** is now split into its  
component parts, clothing and treasure)  
**are become moth-eaten** (ref.: see also Isa.  
li. 8; Acts xii. 23. The reference to  
Matt. vi. 19, 20 is obvious):

**3.]** **your  
gold and your silver is rusted through**  
(the language is popular, seeing that gold  
does not contract rust. In the Epistle  
of Jeremiah, xii. 24, the same terms  
are used of golden and silver images  
of idols. Rust, happening generally to  
metals, is predicated of gold and silver  
without care for exact precision. So that  
there is no need to seek for some interpretation which may make the expression  
true of gold, as that [Bretschneider] copper vessels plated with gold are intended.  
The stern and vivid depiction of prophetic  
denunciation does not take such trifles  
into account), **and the rust of them shall  
be for a testimony to you** (not, as A. V.,  
“*against you,*” i. e., the rust which you  
have allowed to accumulate on them by  
want of use, shall testify against you in  
judgment,—but, as Wiesinger and Huther  
rightly, seeing that the rust is the effect of  
judgment begun, not of want of use,—the  
rust of them is a token what shall happen  
to yourselves: in the consuming of your  
wealth, you see depicted your own), **and  
shall eat your flesh as fire** (i. e. as fire