

Studies from the Epistle of James

James 5 (New American Standard Bible)

5: 1-6 Judgment of the unscrupulous rich

5: 7-11 Patience until Christ's return

5: 12 Oaths

5: 13-18 Prayer

5: 19-20 Reclaiming the sinning brother

Misuse of Riches

¹Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you.

²Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. ³Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!

⁴Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

⁵You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned and put to death the righteous man; he does not resist you.

Exhortation

⁷Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. ⁸You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

⁹Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. ¹⁰As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

¹²But above all, my brethren, do not swear, 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.

¹³Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises. ¹⁴Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; ¹⁵and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. ¹⁶Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. ¹⁷Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. ¹⁸Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

¹⁹My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, ²⁰let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Questions:

Misuse of Riches

¹Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. ²Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. ³Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! ⁴Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

- Why are miseries coming upon the rich?
- Specifically, what are these miseries?
- Rotting riches? Moth eaten garments?
- Why would rusting gold and silver be a witness against the rich?
- How does this witness consume the flesh of the rich like fire?
- What is James looking toward in his statement about last days?
- What is James pointing toward when he writes about not paying laborers and their cries reaching the ears of the Lord?

⁵You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned and put to death the righteous man; he does not resist you.

- Does James mean anything specifically when he writes of the rich living luxuriously on the earth?
- What is the significance of fattening a heart on the day of slaughter?
- Is it wrong to condemn and put to death the righteous man?

Exhortation

⁷Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. ⁸You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. ¹⁰As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

- Why do we need to be patient for the coming of the Lord?
- How does the example of the patient farmer and the early and late rains relate to our lives?
- How do patience and strong hearts relate to the coming of the Lord?
- Why should we not complain against each other?
- Is the Judge standing right at the door?
- How was James similar to the prophets?
- How did God treat Job? With Compassion? Merciful?

¹²But above all, my brethren, do not swear, 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.

- Why should we not swear by heaven or by earth or by other oath?
- What is the significance of a yes being a yes and a no being a no?

¹³Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises. ¹⁴Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; ¹⁵and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up,

- Why should we pray when we are suffering?
- What should we pray then?

- Why do we need to sing praises when we are cheerful?
- What happens when we call for the elders to pray and anoint us in the name of the Lord?
- What is the significance of prayer offered in faith?

and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. ¹⁶Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. ¹⁷Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. ¹⁸Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

- Why do we confess our sins to one another?
- Why does the effective prayer of a righteous man accomplish much?
- What is effective prayer?

¹⁹My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, ²⁰let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

- Why is it important to try to turn someone back who strays from the truth?
- Why is it important to help a sinner stop sinning?