

James 5 - Listen to Live, Listen to Pray.

v1-6 JUDGMENT WILL COME ON THE RICH

James 5:1-6 is expanding on **2:6-7**. It is similar to the OT prophets who deal with Israel's faults, then harshly condemn the nations around them, returning to speak words of encouragement to His people. James is not writing for the benefit of wealthy Jews but to the oppressed believers as comfort. Although James is writing to scattered Jews, he uses the example of rich unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem to illustrate his point. James writes of these rich, unbelieving Jews in a similar way that Jesus spoke to the Scribes and Pharisees in **Matt 23**. **v1 Rich men:** Follows on from **4:13**. Riches are fleeting: **Prov 23:4-5; Eccl 5:13-14; Jer 17:11**.

The Bible is full of warnings about trusting in riches: **Psa 17:14; 49:6-20; Prov 11:4,28; Mt 19:24; 1 Tim 6:9-10**. Judgment on the rich was coming in AD70: **Mk 12:9**. These were similar days to our own. **Miseries:** Lit. "Miseries are coming upon you". Judgment on Jerusalem was so imminent that he speaks as if it is already happening. **v2** Similar language is used for those who persecuted Christ: **Isa 50:9; 51:6-8**. These Jews became the target of attack due to their wealth: **Mt 16:26**.

Money and fashion clothing are a significant part of our modern society, cp **2:2**. **v3 Witness:** Stored wealth could have been used for those in need: **2:15-16**. Their wealth was a witness against them as in **Mal 3:5**. **Fire:** Judgment: **Psa 21:9; Mal 3:2; 4:1; 2 Thess 1:8**. Literal fire swept through Jerusalem in AD70. **Treasures in the last days: Ironic statement!** The last days of Judah's Commonwealth, leading up to AD70: **Heb 1:1-2; Jude 18; 1 Cor 10:11; 1 Pet 1:20**. Consider **Psalm 73 - very relevant!**

v4 Fraud: Condemned by the Law and the prophets: **Lev 19:13; Jer 22:13; Mal 3:5**. **Cries:** God's ears are always open to the cry of his people: **Jn 9:31**. There is an allusion here to the death of Abel: **Gen 4:10-11; Heb 11:4**. Yahweh also heard the cries of Israel in Egypt: **Ex 2:23; 3:7-9**. Also in the wilderness: **Ex 22:22-24,27**. **Lord of Sabaoth:** God's militant title, ie. *Yahweh of Armies*. Only used elsewhere in NT in **Rom 9:29**. See also **Mal 3:5**. The Saints will be *Yahweh Sabaoth* when they come in Judgment at Christ's return: **Psa 149:5-9; Zech 14:5; Rev 19:11-15**.

v5 Lived in pleasure: If we live after the flesh we are as good as dead: **Rom 8:13; 1 Tim 5:6; Rev 3:1**. **Wanton:** Riotously. Instead of helping those in need, they spent their wealth on their own excesses: **Isa 5:1-12; 56:12; Amos 6:1,4-6**. **Slaughter:** They were fattening themselves up like sheep to the slaughter for AD70: **Jer 12:1-3**. **v6 Just:** Gk. "the righteous one" as in **Acts 22:14**. Christ was given up to be crucified by Jews: **Acts 3:13-15; 7:52**.

Colour code: Blue (God & Jesus); Red (sin/devil/judgment of wicked); Green (Kingdom); Orange (important words & phrases); Purple (return of Jews to the land); Yellow (practical exhortation). Prepared for Study Week 2012 - Listen to Live. For a PDF file, go to www.studyweek.net or email acdangierfield@webshield.net.au. Much assistance has been obtained from notes by John Martin & Des Partridge, NZ youth conference notes and talks by Carl Parry, John Martin and David Bailey.

CHAPTER 5.
2 Wicked rich men are to fear God's vengeance.
3 Of patience under affliction. 13 We ought to pray in adversity, 16 to acknowledge mutually our several faults, and to pray one for another.
4 **G**O to now, ye 'rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.
5 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.
6 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. 8 Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

v6 Not resist: Though killed, Christ is now alive. Judgment was delayed so the gospel could be preached: **2 Pet 3:7-13**. Likewise we are not to resist: **Mt 5:39**. Stephen followed in Christ's footsteps: **Acts 7:59-60**. Smyrna ecclesia also: **Rev 2:8-11**.

v7-11 REWARD FOR PATIENCE

v7 Be patient: See notes on **1:4**. **Coming:** Some expositors refer to a symbolic coming in the 1st century with judgment on Jerusalem in AD 70: **Mt 24:27**. Ultimately however, the coming is referring to Christ's return in judgment at Armageddon: **Mt 24:37,39; 1 Thess 2:19; 4:15; 2 Thess 2:8; 1 Jn 2:28**. There are many similarities with previous last days scenarios and our days.

Early and latter rain: Different to winter rains. **Early** rain is at the end of Summer, assisting in the break up of the soil. **Latter** rain is at the beginning of Spring, giving extra quality to the grain just before harvest. The **latter** rain is used as a symbol of Christ's return in **Joel 2:23-32** when the Holy Spirit is poured out: **Psa 72:1,6**. Armageddon is a harvest: **Joel 3:13-14; Rev 14:15**.

v8 Draw nigh: Same in Gk. as "the Kingdom of God is at hand": **Mt 3:2; 4:17; Mk 1:15; 1 Pet 4:7**. Even though Christ's return to them was a long way off, our lives are short with the next waking moment with Christ. See also **Mal 3:1; 4:1-2**. **v9 Grudge:** Grievances against our brethren - set ourselves up as judges of others whilst our judge is at our door: **Jn 10:2-3; Rev 3:20**. **Condemned:** as in **Jas 4:11-12**. **v10 Name of the Lord:** **Malachi** means *my messenger*.

As such his words were in the *name of the Lord*. There many parallels with **Malachi** in **James**, and the conclusions of each book are very similar. **Suffering:** Many of the prophets suffered and were persecuted by God's people: **Heb 11:33-39**. They trusted in Yahweh: **Jer 1:17-19**.

v11 Patience of Job: A specifically chosen example and wonderful type of the **Lord Jesus Christ**. The book of Job contains many words from Job's friends. The conclusion of the book however is extremely brief. God speaks in **Job 38-41**. Then Job responds with some brief words, including **Job 42:5** "I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you". Job suffered, not merely for himself, but for his friends. His experiences reveal the purpose of his suffering, as well as being an outstanding example of patience.

4 Behold, ^bthe hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and ^cthe cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of ^dsabaoth.

5 ^eYe have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in ^fa day of slaughter.

6 ^gYe have condemned and ^hkilled the just; and he doth not resist you.

7 ⁱBe patient therefore, brethren, unto ^jthe coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive ^kthe early and latter rain.

8 Be ye also patient; ^lestablish your hearts: for ^mthe coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9 ⁿGrudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, ^othe judge standeth ^pbefore the door.

10 Take, my brethren, ^qthe prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, ^rwe count them happy ^swhich endure. Ye have heard of ^tthe patience of Job, and have seen ^uthe end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

12 But above all things, my brethren, ^vswear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

14 Is any sick among you? let him call for ^wthe elders of the church; and let them pray over

"Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." **Galatians 6:1-2 ESV**

The story of Job is ultimately about the Lord Jesus Christ. The **solutions to the problems** presented in this epistle are overcome when we appreciate the life of Job. No hatred or arrogance. No strife. No trust in riches. No condemning others for their weaknesses. Just a faithful man whose prayers for failing sinners restores and saves them.

Here are **5 lessons from Job's life** which relate to the 5 ch's in **James**:
Endurance of trial: **1:2-4**. How to care for those in need: **2:16-17**. Control of the tongue: **3:6-8**. Humility: **4:7-10**. Praying for those in need: **5:13-18**.

Job was a man of **great wealth** (**Job 1:3**), but in a moment, like a **vapour**, these were taken away (**Job 1:13-19**). As a result of such a **severe trial**, he was **humbled** (**Job 1:20-21**). Despite the **temptation** put in front of him by his wife (**Job 2:9**) he refused to curse God and instead showed incredible **control of the tongue**, insofar as he "sinned not with his lips" (**Job 2:10**). His 3 friends come to comfort him, but instead they spend the best part of the next 33 chapters **lashing Job with their tongues** (**Job 11:1-3**). Job describes them as "**overwhelming the fatherless and digging a pit for your friend**" (**Job 6:27**). Despite this contradiction of sinners against him, Job ends up **praying for his friends** (**Job 42:7-10**). His prayer saves them. After such a show of **faithful endurance**, God blesses Job at his latter end more than his beginning **and he (eventually) has his reward** (**Job 42:12-17**).

The end of the Lord: Indicates the end of a process. God shaped the character of Job and his friends through personal experience. Like Elijah, Job was brought as low as one can go but remained faithful. The reference is to **Job 42:12**: "The latter end of Job". Only he who endures to the end will be saved: **Matt 10:22**. The sufferings of the present cannot be compared to future glory: **Rom 8:18-39**. **Pitiful:** Extremely compassionate. **Tender mercy:** **Isa 63:7-9; Lk 1:77-79**. God's character: **Ex 34:6-7**.

v12-15 SICKNESS AND HEALING: **v12 Swear not:** **Matt 5:33-37**. Oaths made rashly due to stress and impatience. **v13 Afflicted/pray:** A simple answer! **Merry/Psalms:** Music an expression of thankfulness: **Eph 5:19-20; Col 3:16**. **v14 Sick:** Physical and spiritual: **Phil 2:26-27; Rom 4:19;5:6**. **Elders:** **1 Tim 3:5; Tit 1:5-7**. **Oil:** For healing: **Mk 6:13; 10:34**.

him, ^xanointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And the prayer of faith shall ^ysave the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and ^zif he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. ^{aa}The effectual ^{ab} fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

17 Elias was a man ^{ac}subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed ^{ad}earnestly that it might not rain: and ^{ae}it rained not on the earth by the space of ^{af}three years and six months.

18 And ^{ag}he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

19 Brethren, if any of you do ^{ah}err from the truth, and ^{ai}one convert him;

20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way ^{aj}shall save ^{ak} a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

v16-20 FORGIVENESS OF SINS

v16 Confess faults: Acknowledging failings assists others because we realise we need each other's help: **Psa 32:5; Mt 18:15-17; Lk 23:42; 1Jn 1:8-9**. **Key verses:** **Gal 6:1-2; Col 3:12-14**.

v17 Elijah: **Mal 4:4-6**. See *Background and Overview*. Elijah prayed for others: **1 Kgs 18:37; Lk 1:17**. **Three years and 6 months:** 1260 days of apostasy. Prophetic of the Lord's ministry and also saints in the dark ages under RC Church: **Rev 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5**.

v19-20 David's prayer in Psa 51:1-2,13. We also must be aware of our need for **forgiveness**. If we do, we will not fall into the trap of the sins warned of by James. We will seek to save others not destroy. Elijah's future work is to **turn the hearts** of Jewry and **cover a multitude of sins**. That's **Psa 51:13**. Elijah is ideal for this work because **he learnt**. The still small voice of gentle persuasion changed him. **Has it changed us?**