

James Lesson 5

James Chapter 5

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Memory verses for this week: *Mark 10:45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

Introduction: In chapter 4, we studied how the lust of the flesh causes strife in the life of the Christian. Friendship of the world is against the Lord, and we are commanded to not love this present world, but to strive for the perfection found in our Savior Jesus Christ. At the end of the chapter, we discussed how we need to put God in all our plans, as we never know what tomorrow may bring. We begin this weeks study on James this week as we begin with a warning to the rich.

I. A Warning to the Rich who are Ungodly

James 5:1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

We know in our current world society, nothing seems to bring greater stature than to be rich. But we know that riches are uncertain, and can be taken away very quickly. In Ecclesiastes, it says that money answers all things, but no man can be certain it will abide.

Ecc 10:19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.

Ecc 10:20 Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.

Money can not buy salvation, although there is no possible way to put a price on its value. Salvation is a free gift from the Lord.

Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Eph 2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

A day is coming when those who trust in their riches will weep and howl in misery.

Prov 11:4 Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.

Prov 11:5 The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall

by his own wickedness.

Jer 17:11 As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.

In Luke we have a record of the rich man who laid up much wealth but it did not do him any good in that day.

Luke 12:16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

Luke 12:17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

Luke 12:18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

Luke 12:21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Job knew that he would not take his wealth with him when his time to die came.

Job 1:21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

Job 1:22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

James deals with the arrogance and sin of rich brethren. As in 4:13, James uses the phrase, "go to now," which essentially has the sense of 'come now,' or 'come on.' In addressing the rich, the question remains, to whom does he is mean as rich? Was it the rich of the world in general or that of the Jewish assemblies?

It does not seem to be consistent with the New Testament epistles to address the world at large. They rarely pay heed to the Word of God in any event. The epistle was explicitly addressed to "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" and specifically to believing Jewish brethren of the diaspora. It would seem that James is confronting affluent Jewish believers in the early eastern churches.

He had already touched upon the problems of affluence in the churches in Chapter 1:10-11 and 2:2-6. It may be that he is addressing the injustices of the wealthy in general. His injunction to "weep and howl" for the miseries awaiting them parallels his

directive in 4:9 to “be afflicted, and mourn, and weep.” The idea was of repentance. That likely is the thought here as well.

James is not indicting affluence as such. Rather, he is touching upon the evil attitude of affluent brethren in the early church. Some have suggested that the miseries to come upon them to be God’s impending judgment. However, there is no other place in the Bible where God warns of judgment solely for affluence.

In the greater context of the day, James may well be warning them of the gathering storm clouds of persecution. Those who were affluent believers had a serious attitude problem. They apparently were arrogant and in some cases had obtained their wealth through less than righteous means.

James 5:2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

James 5:3 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. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

James tells the rich men that the rust of their treasures would one day be a witness against them. They had heaped treasures together for the last days, but they were not worth anything in that day. We are warned to put our treasures in heaven where nothing can harm them.

Mat 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

Mat 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

Mat 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Mark 8:34 And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Mark 8:35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

Mark 8:36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Mark 8:37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

The reality is that there is nothing more important than to obtain salvation. As I said earlier, if it could be bought, people would flock to God to pay. But it is a gift that has the greatest value of any possession we could obtain.

James confronts them with the following. "Your riches are corrupted, and your garments

are moth- eaten. 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. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.”

The verb tenses of the words corrupted, are, and is cankered are all perfect tense which implies already completed action. Yet, the context clearly is of impending tribulation. James apparently views their current prosperity as judged already and is warning affluent brethren of the shaky status of their wealth. As far as James was concerned, it already was doomed. It just had not quite happened as yet.

He then states, “Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.” The mention of the last days likely is not primarily eschatological in nature, though that may be in view. Rather, the following context seems to focus upon impending trouble as persecution further developed.

James 5:4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

James 5:5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

James 5:6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

James warns the rich men that the cry of their employees had reached into the ear of God. He charges these with living in pleasure here on earth, and condemning and killing the just. God is one who is concerned for all men and women, boys and girls, and his concern surpasses class, race, nationality, or creed. Every person, and every soul is precious in the sight of the Lord.

1 Tim 2:4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

1 Tim 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

1 Tim 2:6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

When Israel was under bondage in Egypt, God heard the cries of the slaves when they were treated evil by their taskmasters. And not only did God hear, but raised up Moses to lead them out of the land.

Exo 3:1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

Exo 3:2 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

Exo 3:3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

Exo 3:4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

Exo 3:5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

Exo 3:6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

Exo 3:7 And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

Exo 3:8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Exo 3:9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Exo 3:10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

James now touches upon the unseemly fashion in which some affluent brethren had accumulated their wealth. Clearly, some had defrauded the hired help employed to work and harvest their fields. Some of these well-to-do brethren had feathered their nests on the backs of those who worked for them.

They evidently had underpaid them either by direct low wages or by more subtle means. It was dishonest, plain and simple. They had defrauded their employees of their just and agreed-to compensation. James warns that the distress of their cheated workers had reached the ears of the Lord.

The word sabaoth was a colloquial reference to the Lord of hosts. In short, James warned that the fraudulent practices of these affluent believing brethren had certainly been noticed by God.

In verse 5, on top of the oppression of their employees, these had arrogantly lived in luxury and self-indulgence. They continued to live affluently as on a feast day when additional animals were slaughtered for sacrifice and Jewish people in general would eat more sumptuously than normal. The thought is that these affluent brethren indulged themselves regularly, notwithstanding their employees were deprived by their own dishonesty.

James clearly confronts these men of the early church in verse 6. He likely refers to how some arrogant Jewish businessmen had heartlessly drawn those who owed them money before magistrates. The courts in turn condemned these otherwise just men and garnished their assets, leaving them impoverished to the point they could not sustain their family.

Some no doubt had died as a result. It was such cruel, heartless, arrogant attitudes in some Jewish brethren that James takes to task. He ends this section with the warning, "and he doth not resist you." The idea is that notwithstanding their wicked dealings, God has not resisted them yet. Implied is that judgment was forthcoming.

The greater principle in all of this is of God's impending judgment against the arrogance and unseemly practices of wealthy businessmen toward others less fortunate. Though James may be referring to the excesses of the affluent in general, the greater context of the book seems to lean toward the sin of some, prosperous, Christian brethren in the early, Jewish churches. To that degree, James touches upon social justice amongst Christian brethren.

II. The Answer to our Problems (the Coming of our Lord)

James 5:7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

James 5:8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

James reminds us that the coming of the Lord is drawing nigh. When we become discouraged, we need to always remember that we have a promise that Jesus is returning for us, and that day is not far off. If it was considered near in James' day, we are on the brink of his coming today. Not until the Lord takes over the reins of government will conditions ever be right in this world. In verse 7, we are told to be patient, and uses a parable to show Christ as a Man of Patience while He sits on the Father's Throne and waits for the fruit from the earth. As our Lord is patient, we as believers need to learn to be patient also.

The perspective now shifts to the other side of the spectrum and that of ordinary Christian brethren. Some may have even been on the receiving end of the injustices and arrogance of the wealthy described above. He exhorts them to "be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord."

As the context will make clear, the Lord's return is near. Therefore, persevere in the meantime despite injustices and troubles in the Christian life. James now seemingly turns the tables. Though not using the word husbandmen in his condemnation of wealthy land owners above, that apparently is what they were.

He now refers to the Lord as a husbandman. Though using the analogy of a husbandman (i.e., farmer), the greater reference is to Christ. Nevertheless, a farmer will

patiently wait for the valuable harvest until it receives both the early and latter rain. In the Middle East, crops often would be planted in November after the autumn rains (the early rain). Then, after rain in the spring (the latter rain), the crops would come to maturity, ready to be harvested. The analogy James is making is that typical middle-eastern farmers (husbandmen) patiently waited for the early and latter rains to bring their valuable crop to harvest.

The Lord will do the same. In His perfect time, He will return for the harvest of His people. The modern Pentecostal and Charismatic movements have sought to make application of the 'latter rain' concept to their purported end-time outpourings of the Holy Spirit. They claim that the first of the latter rains was the Azusa Street revival at the beginning of the twentieth century. Then the subsequent Charismatic renewal of the 1960s and the third wave 'revivals' of the late twentieth century allegedly were the final latter rains of God's Spirit prior to the return of Christ. The problem with all of this is that there is absolutely no contextual evidence whatsoever to these claims or to the counterfeit, modern, Charismatic and Pentecostal movements themselves.

In verse 8, The direct application of the analogy of the husbandman (farmer) above is this.

“Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

The plain thought is of the imminency of Christ's return. This clearly hints at a Pre Tribulation Rapture position. If the church must endure the first half of the Tribulation or even worse, Christ's return is not imminent.

All the initial events of the Tribulation must take place first. But, James clearly advances the thought that the Lord's return is at hand. We must patiently persevere troubles and even unscrupulous brethren in waiting for His return.

J. Vernon McGee said this about verse 7.

The Word of God has a great deal to say about the fact that when Christ comes and sets up His kingdom, the poor are going to get a good deal, a right and honest deal, for the first time in the history of the world. This is something that all of the prophets mentioned and which they emphasized. In Isaiah 11:4 we read, “But with righteousness shall he judge the poor...” Believe me, the poor have not had a good deal yet. If you think that by changing a political party you will somehow get a good deal for the poor, you are wrong. I don't mean to be a pessimist, my friend, but you simply cannot look to mankind, to men who are grasping for power and money, and expect them to act righteously. It does not matter what they promise, they are *not* going to take care of the poor. Our only hope is in Jesus Christ. If there is any group of people who ought to be interested in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is the poor people of this world, because He is going to give them the right kind of deal when He establishes His kingdom here upon earth.

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.” This is a tremendous statement. The coming of Christ will correct the wrongs of the world. We can read this again and again in Scripture. Not only do the prophets mention it, but Christ Himself made it clear in the

Sermon on the Mount (which will be the law of His kingdom) that He intends to give the poor a square deal under His reign (see Matt. 6:19–24).

“Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.” In other words, when the farmer plants his grain, he doesn’t go out the next morning to see if it is time to harvest it. James says, *“Be patient. The harvest is coming.”*

James 5:9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

James 5:10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

It is not for us to judge one another as we mentioned in last week’s lesson, but we are to look to Christ who comes back the second time as a Righteous Judge. When evil is done to us here on earth, we are not to repay evil back. As the Righteous Judge, Jesus stands at the door waiting for the appointed time when He will deal with all who defy the divine law of love. Verse 10 says for us to look at all the examples of the prophets of the past. There are so many examples of men like Job, Joseph, Daniel, and David who endured great hardship with patience. And everyone that had faith and stayed with it came out greater on the other side of the trial. The prophets are an outstanding example of suffering, afflictions, and patience.

Before moving on to even greater things, James pauses to give advice to his beleaguered brethren. "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door."

The fact is, the Judge is about to enter His courtroom.’ The point James is making is that we ought to be careful in fighting and feuding with other brethren. Once again, the imminency of our Lord’s return is clearly set forth.

James used the simple yet eloquent analogy of Jesus being on the other side of a door, about to open it and walk through. Therefore, we need to abstain from all such foolish disagreements.

In verse 10, James urges them to “take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.”

He calls to mind the various Old Testament prophets who often suffered for their godly stand. James urged his beleaguered brethren to use them for an example. Many of them certainly suffered affliction, yet they patiently persevered.

Remember Jeremiah and Daniel. They patiently endured, notwithstanding great opposition. James points out, “Behold we count them happy which endure. “

Those who in the past endured great hardship yet persevered are blessed to this day. People to this day name their sons Paul. No one names their son Demas, who did not

endure.

III. Endurance and Patience

James 5:11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

James 5:12 But above all things, my brethren, swear 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.

I mentioned Job as an example, as does James here in verse 11. Job was a man who did not understand what God was doing, but he knew that he had lived a good life and that when the truth came forth, he would come forth as gold.

Job 23:10 But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

We are warned not to swear. He says to swear not by heaven or earth. We should be honest people, and not use double tongued words. We are to say yes and no, and to mean exactly that. That is God's desire. He wants us speaking yea for yea, and nay for nay.

James uses Job as an illustration of the same. The thought is in reminding them of Job, they saw his final conclusion. God had mercy upon him and blessed him after his trials even more than at the first.

Implied is that in enduring troubles in the Christian life, God will certainly reward His people. Whether it is in this life or the next is beside the point. It will come. In the case of Job, it happened even in his lifetime. Therefore, be patient unto the coming of the Lord.

As the epistle nears its final thoughts, James interjects this godly advice in verse 12. "But above all things, my brethren, swear 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."

James may well be building upon what Jesus said in Matthew 5:34-37.

Mat 5:34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

Mat 5:35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

Mat 5:36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

Mat 5:37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

He is touching upon the eastern custom of swearing, that is, using oaths before they spoke. The word translated as above {pro pro} is most commonly translated as 'before.' The middle-eastern custom often found men uttering such as oaths as 'by the heavens above,' or perhaps, 'by the earth beneath my feet.' Jews would often use such oaths not using God's name, thus thinking they were free from taking God's name in vain.)

Modern men are even more profane. They routinely use the name of God or Christ as a byword. (Of interest is that we never hear someone say, 'Well, by Lucifer, let's do this,' etc. Men routinely will use the name of God in such oaths.

What is even more subtle is the modern practice of diluting the oath. Though a Christian will avoid using the name of Jesus as a byword, many will use the diluted oath of 'gee.' They will not use the name of God as a byword, but they will use such diluted oaths as 'golly' or 'by gosh.'

Most Christians will not use the word 'hell' as a byword, but will use its diluted form, 'heck.' James gives this simple directive. "But let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."

Rather than interjecting a byword, the inspired writer enjoins, just say 'yes,' or 'no.' We need not say 'blank yes' or 'blank no.' To do so is to risk being chastened by our Lord.

IV. Prayer for the Sick

James 5:13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

James 5:14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

We are commanded to do three things in verses 13 and 14. Pray, sing Psalms, and call upon the elders of the church to pray for the sick. Some have mistakenly took verse 14 to teach that the oil does the healing. But it is not the oil that does the healing, but God himself. Verse 15 tells us to pray, and that the prayer of faith shall save the sick.

Next come the last major thoughts of the epistle "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms." The idea likely is, 'if one is undergoing trouble, rather than improperly swear as noted above, let him pray.' And conversely, if there is occasion for joy rather than use the inappropriate figures of speech prevalent in the world, rather sing psalms.

James enjoined praise to God when blessings come. However, he clearly is making transition to a greater truth and that of prayer. The overarching principle in the final portion of the epistle is to pray when there are difficulties in the Christian life.

In verse 14, James asks, Is any sick among you? The thought likely is of serious sickness. Such was a crisis in the life of believers then even as it is today. James

therefore counsels, “let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.” Some have suggested that James is referring to the gift of healing operative in the early church. However, the focus is upon the faith of the sick and the elders of the church. James is dealing with the principle of faith and prayer.

James 5:15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

It appears that the sickness mentioned in this chapter was due to sin in the people’s lives. It is important that we understand that much sickness has nothing to do with sin, but God certainly can use sickness to bring our lives back into fellowship with Him. Confessing our faults to one another means that when we sin against a brother or sister, we confess to that person our wrong.

It doesn’t hurt to have accountability partners, but we are not to go around broadcasting all of our sins to everyone. We are to seek help and encouragement, and we sure need to pray and exhort one another. When we sin, the most crucial thing we need to do is bring it to the Lord, repent of it, and get things right. Verse 16 contains a great promise. It says the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Because of Christ, we can be righteous, and when we pray seriously, and consistently, our prayers are heard and God answers those prayers.

Mark 11:23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

Mark 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

He notes, “ And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.” No gift of healing is in view. Rather, there is prayer and faith evidenced by the sick person calling for the leadership of the church to pray over him.

Recall the various miracles of Lord ascribed to faith on the part of the one seeking such help.

Mat 9:21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

Mat 9:22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

Mat 21:22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Mark 6:56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

Though the gift of healing is no longer operative, God is still in the healing business. In verse 16, James continues to expand upon the principles for answered prayer. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."

To confess our faults to each other refers to resolving conflicts between each other. To have conflict and bitterness with another will short-circuit our prayer life. Jesus clearly taught the same in Matthew 18:19, 35.

Mat 18:19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

Mat 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Mat 18:35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

James touches upon the matter of first confessing our offences to those involved and seeking their forgiveness. The latter portion of the preceding verse seems to make transition hereto. Such spiritual healing is a necessary prerequisite for physically healing. The Lord inspires a truth and promise kept by God Himself.

"the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much".

What James likely is driving at is that effective prayer is fervent and from the heart rather than ritualistic and matter-of-fact. When a man will pour out his heart in prayer, God tends to hear the same. Witness some of the great prayers in the Old Testament: Daniel 9:18-19, II Chronicles 20:12, or I Samuel 1:10-11.

Dan 9:18 O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

Dan 9:19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

1 Sam 1:10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

1 Sam 1:11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt

indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

1 Sam 1:12 And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth.

James then refers to a “righteous man.” He no doubt intends one righteous in his position in Christ (justified). But he also likely refers to one righteous in his living, who is pleasing to God.

1 John 3:22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

When such a Christian—one righteous not only in his position, but also in his person—comes to God in fervent energized prayer, that prayer will avail much.

V. Power In Prayer

James 5:17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

James 5:18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

Elijah was a man that prayed for it to not rain, and it did not rain for 3 and a half years. We need to realize that Elijah was not some type of super human prophet, but it says he was a man of like passions just like us. The reason many times we don't receive answers is because we do not have enough faith. As we read there in Mark, we need to pray and believe. God is pleased when we put our total trust in Him.

James concludes his discourse on prayer by using the illustration of Elijah on Mount Carmel.

“Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.” The narrative harkens back to I Kings 17:1.

James' point is that Elijah was a man like we are. He essentially was no different. As directed by God, he had prayed that it stop raining. Because he was praying according to God's will, it stopped raining for three-and-one-half years. God so directed Elijah to pray. He thus prayed according to God's will (I John 5:14).

1 John 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

Elijah, as led by God, announced to Ahab that it was not going to rain. He then went to prayer and besought God to do as He had led Elijah to announce. It thus stopped raining in Israel for three-and-one-half years. However, as detailed in I Kings 18:18. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

James does not touch upon the dramatic events on Mount Carmel leading up to Elijah's announcement of rain, but he makes clear that Elijah prayed down that rain. See I Kings 18:41-44.

1 Ki 18:41 And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

1 Ki 18:42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,

1 Ki 18:43 And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.

1 Ki 18:44 And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

The point is that Elijah effected the powerful works he did through prayer. Moreover, James makes clear that Elijah was a man just the same as us.

The larger truth is that great potential is available in prayer whether it be healing or needed rain. The conditions expressed herein for power in prayer are confessed sin, evident faith, fervency indicating such faith, and righteous living.

James 5:19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

James 5:20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

When someone errs from the truth, and we convert that soul, that person has a soul that is saved from death and an eternity of punishment in hell. Christ can save anyone who truly seeks forgiveness, and comes with faith trusting Christ as Lord and Savior.

Believers Study Bible said this about verses 19 and 20.

5:19, 20 The one who "wanders from the truth" is either (1) a professing, though not genuine, Christian who is in danger of spiritual death, or (2) a brother in Christ who has fallen into sin and is in danger of the most severe discipline of the heavenly Father by the loss of physical life. Both realities are taught in Scripture and the interpretive step is not an easy one, though the content of the passage would seem to favor the first option. In v. 20, the wanderer is called "a sinner," not a brother, and it is his "soul" which he is in danger of losing. "Soul" in this passage has the meaning of "life," and more particularly, his "eternal life" that will forever continue in either heaven or hell.

James may again be echoing the words of the Lord Jesus, who said in Matt. 16:26, “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”

The epistle concludes, “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him”. The thought however is that if a brother is led astray from the truth (another gospel which Paul warned about—see Galatians 6:1) and one restores him.

Gal 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

The word translated as convert (epistrefw epistrepho) has the sense to ‘return,’ or to ‘bring back.’ The thought here is of returning a brother who has been led astray into false doctrine.

“ let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” The greater thought is in restoring a confused brother back to the gospel.

He is delivered from the deception and death of that error. Moreover, such restoration will cover many sins. To straighten out a confused brother will prevent others from falling prey to his same error.

Many a misguided denomination might have been precluded if its founder had been restored to right doctrine. The multitudes led astray thereby would have had their theological error accordingly covered thereby. Thus ends the epistle.

KJV Bible Studies are prepared and distributed free of charge. The lessons may not be sold without consent. If you have questions or wish to discuss the lessons, or possibly need help in finding Jesus Christ as your Personal Lord and Savior, contact us at the email below.

Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.