

redemption. <sup>31</sup> *Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.* <sup>32</sup> *Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

### CONCLUSION (JM 5.11)

Friends, we have a great prediction that has been made for our future: a forecast we can be certain that will come to pass—the judgment and coming of Christ! And because of that, we ought to remember the words of **vs. 11**: *Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.*

There's a great day coming, Brethren: a promised return of Christ—a promised judgment against the oppressor, and a promised release of the righteous. And in light of that fact, James and God call for us to **be patient, establish our hearts, and do not grumble** against one another. But, we might think as we sit in our metaphorical storm shelter as we wait...**how much longer must we wait?**

**2PT 3.8-10** ~ *But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* <sup>9</sup> *The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.* <sup>10</sup> *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*

### INVITATION

**1PT 3.21-22** ~ *Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.*

#630 [EXP-GE] (BE#810)  
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Is Patience a Virtue?

PC \_\_\_ Pchd \_\_\_\_\_

JM 5.7-11

**QUESTION:** Is patience a virtue?

### TRN TO JM 5

### INTRODUCTION

**ILL—Instant Gratification Culture** (you just don't need to wait for anything anymore; like the show? Binge the season; want the new book? Download it to your Kindle; want a meal? Have it delivered!) When I was a kid, it was considered impressive that you could get a pizza delivered in 30 minutes. Now, you can get a steak brought to your front door, get a prereleased game pre-downloaded to your console, and watch a theatrical release in your bathtub on a whim!

In this modern age, we can't help but even ask: **is patience even really needed anymore? Is patience still a virtue?**

### BACKGROUND (JM 5.1-6)

James wrote to a diverse group. But amongst them, there were powerful people who were taking advantage of the brethren. As a result, he sought to help get them to understand what was coming. And for the wealthy who were oppressing the poor of the church, it wasn't pleasant!

**JM 5.1-6** ~ *Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you.* <sup>2</sup> *Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten.* <sup>3</sup> *Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days.* <sup>4</sup> *Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.* <sup>5</sup> *You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.* <sup>6</sup> *You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.*

**ILL—Severe Storm Watch** (get these alerts from time to time; when they come, what's expected? How should we act when we hear of a coming storm?) In a way, that's exactly what James is writing about—he's warning of a coming storm. And his solution—his call—was to **be patient!** That seems odd advice to us. But as we look at his advice in context, it'll make more sense to us all!

### BD1: Be Patient...for the Harvest is Coming! (JM 5.7)

Judgment was coming—the oppressors would receive the results of their works. **But the question was...when?** It was wonderful to know that justice was coming, but it was hard for the church, as they didn't know when exactly that would happen. For that reason, James pled for the church to **“Be patient...for the harvest is coming!”**

**JM 5.7** ~ *Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.*

**ILL—Storm Radio** (starts to chime and alert; we stop what we're doing, and we pay attention; it tells us where it's coming, and when to expect it to arrive; and then, all we can do is wait) As we get closer to the expected arrival time of the storm, the

anxiety starts to build (and with it, a bit of excitement). And that's exactly what James is talking about here: there's something great and powerful coming, soon. But while you wait, you have to trust and be patient.

Of course, with our storms, we can't be certain that it'll actually happen. We all know of times when a storm is forecast and never arrives (or at least, not in its expected strength). But when it comes to the storm that James described, it was not a question of **"if"**. It was a statement of **"when"**!

**EX:** James starts out and, after pointing to the coming judgment against the oppressive wealthy that were oppressing the church, he tells the church there to **"be patient"**—to trust that the coming storm of His judgment against the unrighteous wealthy was coming. And he doesn't just say that once! Rather, he repeats himself 5 additional times in just 5 verses! Because he understood a simple fact: it's hard to **be patient**—even when you know **the harvest is coming**.

#### **AGRICULTURE/First Century/Patience**

**GL 6.7-10** ~ *Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. <sup>8</sup> For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. <sup>9</sup> And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup> So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

#### **BD2: Establish Your Hearts...Build Up Your Strength! (JM 5.8.10-11)**

**ILL—Preparation for Storms** (in truth, the reason why my family rests during the alarm is that we've already prepared for it; we have emergency rations, batteries, blankets, etc; the time to prepare for an emergency is before it happens!) People often think of patience as just **"sitting there"**. But that's a poor understanding of the virtue! Patience is paired with hope and trust—because we know what's happening, we prepare for it! We **"establish our hearts...build up our strength!"**

**JM 5.8** ~ *You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.*

**EX:** But notice, James' advice isn't just to sit back and wait. Rather, he urges them to do something: to **establish their hearts**. That's an odd translation. The phrase here is closer to **"taking courage"** or **"strengthen your heart"**—basically, dig in your heels and prepare yourself for what's ahead. **Build up your strength!**

**JM 5.10-11** ~ *As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.*

**EX:** In the example of Job and the prophets, we see the same thing: a stubborn steadfastness—a willingness to dig in, hold on and hold out.

**IS 40.28-31** ~ *Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. <sup>29</sup> He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. <sup>30</sup> Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; <sup>31</sup> but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*

**AP:** Brethren, God's not asking us to stay still—unchanging. Rather, he urges us to **establish our hearts**...to **build up our strength** and our faith by looking to the examples of Job, who endured, and by Isaiah who mounted up on wings like eagles, ran without growing weary, and walked without fainting. It's not enough to just sit still—we need to grow: and the best way to do that is through the studying of those who've gone before us. For as we see their endurance, our own ability to endure is only strengthened!

**HB 11.32-38** ~ *And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—<sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. <sup>35</sup> Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. <sup>36</sup> Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup> They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated—<sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*

#### **BD3: Do Not Grumble...Especially Against One Another! (JM 5.9-11)**

**ILL—Gathered in the Bathroom in the Storm** (you've never known awkward until you've sat in a 4x4 room with three other people and three dogs; it's crowded, and tensions can be high) The next aspect of proper patience is shown in how you react under pressure: **"do not grumble...especially against one another!"**

**JM 5.9-11** ~ *Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.*

**EX:** The Christians James wrote to had a rough time ahead of them. And wisely, James understood what was coming. You can't put a bunch of people together under pressure without causing things to **"boil up"**. In a lot of ways, they were stuck in a bit of a pressure cooker, and it was starting to result in people snapping at one another over all the build-up. But rather, James wanted to encourage them **do not grumble...especially against one another!**

**PH 2.14-16** ~ *Do all things without grumbling or disputing, <sup>15</sup> that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup> holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.*

**AP:** One of the dangers that can come from closeness is that we start losing our **"filter"**. We start speaking to people and at people in a less than kind way as a **"vent"** for our feelings. And as we're enduring troubles, trials, and tribulations, it can only be worse! But James wanted the church to realize that should not be how they react. Rather than grumbling, they need to speak in love, caring for one another, and showing grace to each other—after all, we're all working together towards the same end and goal!

**EH 4.29-32** ~ *Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of*