

James 5:7-11
Wait Patiently for the Lord's Arrival

Introduction: What should you do when you have an unfair employer as described in 5:1-6?

1) Maintain a Godward view OF THE FUTURE—5:7-8

- a) **Wait for Jesus:** ⁷ *Be patient* (with people) [aor. aor. imp. **makroqume,w**], *therefore, brothers, until the (royal) coming [parousi,a] of the Lord (Jesus).*
- i) Compared to the unsaved, cruel landowners in 5:1-6 who will see this as a day of slaughter. (5:5)
 - ii) This is not the passive resignation of, whatever! Rather, it is the Spirit-engendered self-restraint that does not quickly retaliate against those who hurt you.
 - iii) Parousia is the most common term for the return of Christ.
- b) **Be like a farmer:** *See* [aor. act. impv. ivdou,] *how the farmer waits* [pres. mid. ind. evkde,comai] *for the precious fruit of the earth,*
- i) The “farmer” is neither a wealthy landowner nor a mere day laborer.
 - ii) How? *being patient* [pres. act. ptc. **makroqume,w**] *about it, until it (the land/soil) receives the early (autumn, Oct.-Nov.) and the late (spring, March-April) rains.*
 - iii) There is more than one day between planting and harvesting. But the value of the harvest justifies the waiting.
- c) **Be patient:** ⁸ *You also* (as well as the farmers), *be patient* [aor. aor. imp. **makroqume,w**].
- i) The point is not the length of waiting but the need to remain firm during the interim period. (Peter Davids)
- d) **Be stable:** *Establish* [aor. act. impv. sthri,zw] (stabilize, fortify) *your hearts,*
- i) This stands in contrast to the wicked landowners who have fattened their hearts. (5:5) Perhaps this is similar to, Get your hearts into shape.
 - ii) Why? *for [o[ti] the coming [parousi,a] of the Lord (Jesus) is at hand* [pf. act. ind. evggi,zw].
(1) When He comes, all the wrongs we have suffered will be set right.
(Peter Davids)
 - iii) The imminent return of Jesus (Rom. 13:11-12;

2) Maintain a Godward view OF OTHERS—5:9

- Referring to the petty conflicts and disunity in 4:1-10
- a) **Don't groan/sigh in your heart:** ⁹ *Do not grumble* [pres. act. impv. stena,zw] *against one another, brothers,*
- i) As Douglas Moo reminds us: We vent the pressure from a stressful work environment or from ill health on our close friends and family.
 - ii) Don't let unexpressed inner resentment, dissatisfaction, and smothered jealousy build up. These are trying circumstances for everyone.

- iii) Groaning is the opposite of patience and endurance which demonstrates frustration and a lack of faith during this particular trial.
- iv) Why? *so that* [i[na] *you may not be judged* [aor. pass. subj. kri,nw];
- v) Cf. Rom. 14:10-12
- b) **Wait for Jesus:** Behold [aor. act. impv. ivdo,u], *the Judge* (Jesus) *is standing* [pf. act. ind. i[sthmi] *at the door* (plural).
- i) The One who knows all things knows our hearts perfectly and will evaluate believers at the Judgment Seat (Bema) of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). Not only will the unsaved unrighteous landowners be evaluated, but so will suffering believers.
- 3) Maintain a Godward view OF BELIEVERS FROM THE PAST—5:10-11**
- a) Jewish OT prophets' relationship with difficult PEOPLE—5:10 ¹⁰ *As an example of suffering* [kakopa,qeia] *and patience* [makroqumi,a], *brothers,* take [aor. act. impv. lamba,nw] *the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord* (the Father).
- i) Cf. Rom. 5:3; Heb. 11:32-38
- ii) Suffering by itself is not a virtue. It is suffering with faithful Godward patience that is a virtue.
- b) Gentile OT believers' relationship with difficult EVENTS—5:11 ¹¹ Behold [aor. act. impv. ivdo,u], *we consider those blessed* [pres. act. ind. makari,zw] *who remained steadfast* [aor. act. ptc. u`pome,nw]. (cf. 1:12)
- [H]is concern is with the pattern of faith in the face of adversity and pressures toward unbelief, a pattern of faith set by those whom we now consider "blessed." (Dan McCartney)
 - Remain steadfast/endure is the attitude of the heart that does not easily succumb to suffering.
- i) *You have **heard** of the steadfastness* [u`pomoh,] *of Job,*
- (1) They have heard the reading and teaching from Job in the synagogue services.
- (2) Job endured incredible suffering, insensitivity from his counselors, and misunderstanding at home, but he continued to trust God through it all. (Homer Kent)
- (3) Job certainly struggled in his situation, but the overview of his life was consistent endurance and he finished well.
- ii) *and you have **seen** the purpose* [te,loj] (outcome; Job 42:10-17) *of the Lord* (the Father),
- (1) What is our view of God? *how* [o[ti] *the Lord is ...*
- (a) *compassionate* [polu,splagnoj]
- (i) Very tenderhearted and with great affection
- (b) *and merciful* [oivkti,rmwn].
- (i) Kindness focusing on the misery of others.
- (ii) Cf. Luke 6:36

(2) What you think about God's character will impact how you respond to your various trials of faith.

4) Things to remember:

- a) Patience is a difficult path, but when one has confidence of vindication and a beneficial outcome (in other words, when it has grounds for hope), one can more readily endure. Ultimately, it once again depends on faith. It is because one believes that the Lord is merciful and compassionate that one can look for the end in hope. (Dan McCartney)
- b) Douglas Moo is quick to remind us: Of course, James does not mean that patience in suffering will always be rewarded by material prosperity; too many examples in both the OT and the NT prove this to be wrong. But James does seek to encourage our faithful, patient endurance of affliction by reminding us of the blessing that we receive for such faithfulness from our merciful and compassionate God.
 - i) This is not your best life now, and was never intended to be. In fact, if this IS your best life, you are in trouble. For believers, your best life is yet to come!
- c) The message for James' readers, therefore, is to focus on the ultimate outcome of their own trials in light of the Lord's coming. As He was compassionate and merciful to Job, He will be the same to them at the outcome of their own trials. (W. Varner)