



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

FACE TRIALS PATIENTLY TILL JESUS CHRIST RETURNS- JAMES 5:7

COLORADO

MARCH 5, 2013

Dan File, P.O. Box 1088, Lake City, CO 82135-1088/303-345-8830 | filefamily@centurytel.net

We live in a fallen world and a part of our universal experience is that we will face trials and tribulations. As believers, we will face rejection by a hostile world for the cause of Christ because they reject His message and thus will reject us. James knows that believers could easily react wrongly to unfair, oppressive persecution. Those who face trials and persecution risk losing patience with their circumstances, with other people and even with God. Recognizing that danger, James exhorts us to be patient in the midst of persecution until Jesus Christ returns.¹

FACE TRIALS PATIENTLY TILL CHRIST RETURNS-JAMES 5:7

James 5:7 "Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains."

James now moves his attention from those who persecute the poor and righteous, to those who are persecuted in 5:7-11. He instructs on how to be patient in the midst of persecution...how to be patient in trials.² Last time we saw that patience is the self-restraint which does not harshly retaliate against a wrong.³ Now this word for patience refers to the idea of being long tempered, patient in respect to people who cause personal distress or suffering. It is the opposite of a temper or anger that easily brews and lashes out. In the Greek this verb is in the aorist imperative which would refer to a strong call for long suffering (meaning not to suffer a while, rather to tolerate someone for a long time). This must be our unwavering attitude until Christ returns. We are called to be long suffering, long tempered, patient in hard and difficult days.

I. PATIENT UNTIL CHRIST RETURNS -JAMES 5:7

James 5:7-"Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord..."

How long does God call on us to be patient with our neighbor? Until Jesus Christ returns.

A. "UNTIL" – JAMES 5:7B

The word "until" carries a special meaning here. It is the idea of a goal, but it also suggests a time frame. It means *as you wait for, as you look for...the coming of the Lord*. As believers we are to exercise patience, long suffering with one another as we wait for, as we look for and as we eagerly anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ. The attitude James calls on us to adopt here includes resignation in the face of suffering along with confident expectation of a day when the fortunes of this life will be reversed.⁴ Such self-restraint that does not retaliate against a wrong will be necessary until the Lord's return.

B. "THE COMING OF THE LORD" – JAMES 5:7C

James 5:7-"Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord..."

The believers' great hope is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

"the coming+Greek *παρουσία*" means presence, compound noun, which means alongside of, close to being alongside of, or presence; to the Greek it referred to the arrival of a king or a dignitary, a royal visit.

Scripture uses this word to refer to the arrival and presence of our Lord with His people as the Second Coming. It refers to the coming of Christ at the end of history to judge the world and delivers the saints. This truth is found in over 500 verses in Scripture and remains our distinct, Christian hope of the personal coming and presence of Christ in glory for all who believe.

We are talking of the Lord's personal arrival and presence with His people. Jesus Himself taught us about His 2nd Coming in Matthew 24-25, Luke 21 and Mark 13. There we learn that Christ's return will be vivid, visible and unmistakable, that no one knows when it will happen. For believers, this joyful hope is a sure hope, a strong hope and a certainty with a strong call to endure and prepare for His coming by holy living.

Hebrews 11:10 encourages us with a heavenly perspective that we are headed for a city Whose Architect and Builder is God. We have a great hope! This life is not forever. It will have an end and we are heaven bound. Our trials are temporary. Be encouraged to long suffering, long tempered and patient living with your neighbor remembering we have such a bright hope in the promised return of our Lord!

1 Peter 1:6-7 reminds us that, *"In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."* Be encouraged...even though we face hard and difficult days now for a little while, let the Lord use those trials to bring about that good work in your life which will bring honor and glory to Him both now and when He returns. Focusing on Christ's return motivates us to godly living!

Peter wrote in 2 Peter 3:14, *"Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things (the return of Christ), be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless."* Our motivation for godly living is the personal return of our Lord and Savior, especially in the midst of adversity and suffering... Christ is returning personally for all who trust in Him as

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their Lord and Savior! Serve Him, please Him and honor Him. And James would say that until this day does come, we must have an attitude of patience and long suffering towards others.

II. PATIENT AS THE FARMER UNTIL CHRIST RETURNS -JAMES 5:7

James 5:7-“Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.”

James goes on to give an example of the attitude he just encourage us to have. It’s the farmer who prepares a field, sows the seed and then waits for a crop. There is little he can do to affect the outcome but must wait and pray for the right rain at the right time.

A. “BEHOLD THE FARMER WAITS...” – JAMES 5:7D

James says, “Behold”, or *see*, calling on us to pay special attention to his illustration. This would have been a natural example for anyone living in the land of Palestine at that time. The “*farmer*” was one who tills the soil and would have been an independent landowner or tenant, but not a day laborer. This farmer was invested and dependent on his harvest for survival. So James says, look at the farmer who “*waits*”.

“waits+Greek %*ekdechetai*” compound verb that conveys the thought of looking expectantly for something that is to come from without.

The farmer knows that the harvest will not simply grow as a result of his own personal work but is dependent on things outside of his control. What does this farmer eagerly and expectantly look for? It is “*for the precious produce of the soil.*” The fields must be tilled and prepared for planting, then sown with seed and then there is a period of time for the growth of the crop before it can be harvested. Of course the crops to come are the “*precious produce.*” The anticipated crop is valuable and of great worth not just because of the hard work involved, but because the farmer depends on it for his very existence.

B. “BEING PATIENT ABOUT IT...” – JAMES 5:7D

What is the farmer’s attitude as he waits for the harvest of his crop?

“being patient+Greek %*makrothumon*” present participle portraying a constant attitude of expectation, waiting eagerly.

%*about it*+Greek “*ep auto*” for it, denotes the central interest, focus.

The farmer waits with eager anticipation and constant expectation between seed time and harvest whether there is rainfall or not. His constant focus remains on the expectant harvest. His concerns are focused on that crop.

C. “UNTIL IT GETS THE EARLY AND LATE RAINS” – JAMES 5:7E

The farmer is focused on the harvest until his fields get or receive the rains. This was not a fast process and often the farmer would have to wait a long time. In Palestine, the farmer was especially dependent on the rain that came in the late autumn and early spring without which no harvest coupled be produced in Palestine. They are referred to in Deuteronomy 11:14 for example. The “*early*” rains referred to the fall rains usually in October or early November which softened the hard baked soil for plowing and planting and helped the seed to germinate. The “*late*” rains come in March, April and May along with warmer temperatures which are important for maturing the crop and the longer the rains fall, the greater the potential yield.

So what is James saying to you with his illustration? *First*, faith meets life’s tests, and through patience (and not without it) grows into full maturity of settled character. James’ doctrine of the Christian life is a

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doctrine of process and growth.

Patience is the central requirement. We neither drift into holiness nor are we wafted there by some heavenly visitation- we grow into holiness and like every harvest, it is a process.⁵

And *second*, James reminds us with this illustration that just as the farmer has

to be patient, you be patient as well for the Lord’s return. In spite of the opposition, oppression and injustices, you must maintain and strengthen an attitude of long suffering forbearance in this life as you wait on God to fulfill His purpose through them. Nothing can hurry on the early and late rains and nothing can speed up the imminent coming of the Lord – but all will be well- for when the harvest time comes, then the harvest is ready!⁶

Remember Galatians 6:9 and be encouraged, “*And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary.*”

¹MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on James*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.252-253.

²MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on James*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.252.

³Knowing, R.J., *The Epistle of St. James; Westminster Commentaries*. Methuen, 1904.

⁴Moo, Douglas J., *The Letter of James*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2000. Pg.222.

⁵Motyer, J.A., *The Message of James*. InterVarsity: Downers Grove, Illinois, 1985. Pg.180-181.

⁶Hiebert, D. Edmond, *James*. Moody Bible Institute: Chicago, Illinois, 1992. Pg. 272.