

James #7 Chapter 5a

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In this short letter to Jewish Christians, James has been giving many tests of true faith and all of them are given to those within Church walls; they have been tests of faith to verify the true faith of some, while at the same time exposing the false faith of others. These tests of faith bring about a separation in the Church; they reveal the separation of the goats from the sheep and the wheat from the tares. Down through the history of the Church there have always been many who were coming to meetings and sitting in the pews but were not really part of the true Church, the Body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their hearts were being deceived into thinking they were really saved while outwardly they were, whether purposely or inadvertently, deceiving others.

Now James comes to another test of true faith which has echoed in the Church, down through the Centuries, until our time in these last days when it is louder than ever... the issue of Christians who are wealthy with other Christians who are wishing they were.

A Multibillion dollar 'industry' has risen since the 'prosperity gospel' began to take off last Century with false teachers such as Norman Vincent Peale and revivalists like Oral Roberts and Kenneth Hagin, and has been carried forward by modern false teachers and prophets, disguised as churches and denominations. The 'Prosperity Gospel' now infects hundreds of millions around the World. Fabulously wealthy 'pastors' are flaunting their wealth in front of millions of greedy, drooling goats who long to see God's supposed blessing in their lives so that they too can be wealthy and '**be a blessing to others.**' But they don't 'be a blessing to others;' they instead turn around and go into debt, buying houses, cars, boats and anything else that will advertise to others that 'God loves me and blesses me too!'

TBN is filled with these kinds of 'ministries' with millions staying glued to their TV's, mailing in their 'seed faith' contributions, counting the days and hours until a check might come in the mail from an unknown source to make them debt free and ready to minister. These millions of foolish people are being taught and trained to be greedy, selfish and lazy do-nothings and know-nothings having no plan whatsoever to work hard and live a life of faithful diligence. They know next to nothing about the Bible because their false teacher 'pastors,' wolves in sheep's clothing as the Bible calls them, teach them nothing about the Word of God... they are only taught about giving and tithing.

I could list many many false gospel charlatans with multimillion dollar ministries today but I won't because I don't have to; just look for the richest, flashiest, phoniest preachers on TV and around the World; they are the ones who are training their people to despise the truth of God's Word and to embrace the World system and all that it seems to offer. I also won't list any of them by name because as soon as I do, someone will complain that I am talking against their favorite super spiritual man or woman of God whom they watch on TV almost every day. Someone will say, 'I've watched so and so on TV for years and I've never heard him say anything wrong.' That's because you don't know what 'wrong' sounds like and that, sadly, is because you don't know what 'right' sounds like because you haven't been taught to know truth from error or you haven't paid attention when you were taught it.

James is not writing about rich people out in the World... this test of faith is about how those within Church walls respond to God's gift of earthly riches. James is now coming full circle from the first part of his letter. He is, in no way, condemning anyone for being wealthy but the fact that he references those within the Church's walls (again, I say 'within the Church's walls' because they are not necessarily true Christians, no one is necessarily a true Christian just because they go to Church and sit in the pews) James hits on this theme three times in his letter. In chapter one, he wrote, 'Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation,¹⁰ but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away.¹¹ For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.'

What James means is that all of us will die, unless the Rapture comes first, and what we pursue will impact eternity... our eternal rewards. What a man pursues is the most important thing about him. Does a man (or woman) pursue riches? Does he pursue fame? Does he pursue power? All of these things are meaningless; they will fade away like a little flower that withers and dies when the hot Sun hits it... or does a man pursue God? What does he pursue, what does he seek?

The Bible says:

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly **seek him**. Heb. 11:6 ...those who seek Him... not who seek the things of the World.

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. Jer. 29:13 This means bringing our whole heart to God... not holding back part of our heart in order to seek things of the World. Jesus said that where your treasure is,

there will your heart be also. If our treasure consists of money, gold, silver, houses, cars, boats... that is where our heart will be and it will not be being brought to God.

I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. Prov. 8:17

The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing. Psalm 34:10 God promises throughout Scripture that if He is our treasure, if He is where our heart is... that He will supply all of our needs and also that we will find Him and have Him and be able to hold Him.

In huge parts of the Church today, in churches that are rapidly rushing into apostasy, people are seeking not God, but riches, blessings, experiences... this is what their false teaching pastors are teaching them and modeling before them.

Again, James references Worldly wealth and the pursuit of it several times. In Chapter two he wrote, 'My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with partiality. ² For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, ³ and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," ⁴ have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ... Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? ⁷ Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?'

Some 'Christians' try to be around only well off people, as if their 'well offness' will rub off on them... and, conversely, they want nothing to do with poor people, as if their poverty will rub off on them.

Then, in chapter 4 he writes, 'Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires for* pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?' Desire for what the World offers draws many away from true faith in God through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. They desire pleasure, temporary, fleeting pleasure that the World offers.

Now, in chapter 5 he again puts his focus on earthly wealth and how Christians, or 'supposed' Christians respond to wealth, either having it or wanting it...

Verse 1: 'Come now, *you* rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you!* ² Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. ⁴ Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabbath. ⁵ You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.'

James is writing, not only to a group of Jewish Christians, but he is also writing to us, the Church of the end times, during the last days of the Church on Earth before the Rapture. He even wrote, 'You have heaped up treasure *in the last days,*' signifying that he is also speaking to us in the last days. There are huge numbers of people who believe they are real Christians but who have been deceived by false teachers, never having come to true saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Rapture will occur and they will be left behind to face the terrible years of the Antichrist. Then they will either wake up and realize they have been misled by false teachers and turn their eyes and hearts to the Lord Jesus Christ, refusing to take the **Mark of the Beast** and probably be killed for their faith, or they will believe the Antichrist is Jesus returned and willingly follow him, joyfully taking the fancy tattoo that proves they 'belong to the lord,' not knowing he is the Antichrist until it is too late and end up in Hell forever, all thanks to the Charlatans who misled them from TV and from pulpits.

He says, '... your corroded gold and silver will be a witness against you!' This goes along with what we've talked about before. Those to whom Jesus will say, 'Depart from Me, I never knew you.' These are those who are not really born again but they thought they were; they had done many good works in Jesus' Name but it was all for nothing. They hadn't even known Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

He is also writing to those who have businesses out in the World... those who have paid their workers fairly vs those who haven't.

These are the ones he is writing to who are not really born again... many 'prosperity gospel' teachers... many 'prosperity gospel' believers.

Then James, after warning those readers who are unsaved, suddenly turns around and writes to those who are truly born again; he calls them 'brethren':

Verse 7: Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.

In referencing the early and latter rain, he is alluding to quite a bit of prophetic insight. He is, like Paul, admonishing his readers to patiently watch and wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Rapture. First, he is thinking about the 'lifespan of the Church, the true Church. It began with God's outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, which was the 'early rains,' and it will end with the Rapture when the Holy Spirit will have been 'poured out' again on Israel which will then be the 'latter rains.'

Joel wrote, "And it shall come to pass afterward
That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions.

²⁹ And also on My menservants and on My maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

³⁰ "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth:
Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.

³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

³² And it shall come to pass
That whoever calls on the name of the LORD
Shall be saved.

For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance,
As the LORD has said,
Among the remnant whom the LORD calls. Joel 2:28

That last line, by the way, is another proof of the Election of God... among the remnant whom the Lord calls... Remnant.

This prophecy was partially fulfilled with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost with the birth of the Church and it will be completely fulfilled after the Rapture and into the Millennium.

Remember: After the Crucifixion, God put Israel on a shelf, on the 'back burner' while He created the Church, the Body of the Lord Jesus Christ. He caused Rome to destroy the Temple and all of Jerusalem and God caused the Jews to be scattered across the whole World but He has always kept His eye on Israel, He has never abandoned her; He has always known where every Jew has been for the past 2000 years. In the meantime, He has been gathering in Gentiles from every tribe and tongue. This 'time of the Church' has been the gap of time between the end of the 69th 'week of Daniel' and the beginning of the 70th 'week of Daniel.' (Daniel 9) At the moment of the Rapture, when He removes all of the Gentiles and Jews who have ever placed their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, both the living and the dead, at that moment, He will pour out His Spirit on Israel once again. Then, during the 7 years of the 70th 'week of Daniel,' He will draw in to Himself many Jews until the moment when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to Earth, setting His feet on the Mount of Olives, and He causes all of the remaining Jews left alive to recognize Him for Who He is and they will all believe in and turn to Him in an instant.

Verse 8: You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

This is just one more of the many verses of Scripture that prove to us that the Rapture will happen at any moment and that it will occur before the Tribulation.

Just like Paul, James is admonishing his readers to always be ready to meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the air at the Rapture. He is reiterating what Paul, Jesus, Peter and John have told us: the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ at the Rapture will happen at any moment; no one knows the day or the hour but we are not to be ignorant of the time of the season; we are to know how to recognize when it is near.

If the Rapture was to wait until after the Tribulation or half way through it, then James and Paul would be lying to us in saying that the coming of the Lord 'is at hand.'

Verse 9: Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

Again, the Rapture will happen at any moment, maybe even today. Do not grumble against each other... love one another. Jesus Christ is just about to come for us; don't sin by grumbling and refusing to love one another... He will be coming to receive us unto Himself and take us back to the place He has prepared for us where He will reward us richly for our faithful service. Don't be one who suffers the loss of unimaginable eternal rewards because of an unloving, unforgiving heart.

We will never be judged as far as salvation is concerned; we have passed from judgment into eternal life but we will be judged meticulously as regards rewards. Everything we've ever done 'right' will receive a very generous eternal reward but everything we've ever done 'wrong' or failed to do 'right,' will result in our suffering the loss of rewards.