

4:13 - 5:11.

Three Mini-Essays In Proverb Form.

- ▶▶ Making Plans Without God's Input; ~~ 4:13-17.
- ▶▶ The Judgment Coming Upon Wealthy Non-Believers; ~~ 5:1-6.
- ▶▶ Waiting for the Lord; ~~ 5:7-11.

Today, ~ begin the judgment coming upon wealthy non-believers; ~~ 5:1-6

- ▶▶ Overview and foundation in order to make sure we understand James' purpose.
 - ▷▷ E.g., ~ identity of wealthy.
- ▶▶ Details ⇔⇔ Much will be repeated as we get into the details.

In This Mini Essay, ~ James Makes ~ A Prophetic, Cutting Denunciation ~ Of The Ungodly Rich.

Passage reflects the prophets of the OT ~ in their fiery denunciation of social injustices.

- ▶▶ E.g., ~ Is. 10:1-4.
- ▶▶ In like-minded fashion, ~ 77

▷▷ James rails against unbelieving wealthy ~ who are greedy, selfish, and oppressive. 1/13

James first declares the fact of coming judgment upon them.

▶▶¹ Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you.

In vv 2-6, ~ James then lists the crimes ~ against which this judgment ~ will be meted out.

▶▶ These crimes are 4 in #.

▶▶^{1st}, ~ guilty of hoarding, ~ 2-3.

▷▷² Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. ³ 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.

↪↪ I.e., ~ You have hoarded wealth in the last days.

▶▶^{2nd}, ~ defrauding their workers.

▷▷⁴ 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.

▶▶^{3rd}, ~ extravagance.

▷▷⁵ You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

▶▶ And ^{4th}, ~ oppression.

▷▷⁶ You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you. 2/13

1st, ~ We'll Talk About The Identity Of The Wealthy Here.

There are good reasons to believe ~ that the persons referred to in this mini-essay ~ ¶¶

▶▶are not believers.

To begin, ~ those addressed ~ are not called to repentance.

▶▶Nor is there any indication ~ that they must amend their ways as inconsistent with their faith.

▶▶This we've seen earlier ~ when James was addressing believers. ⇔⇔ cf. 4:8-10 and 4:15.

▶▶Rather, ~ in the current case, ~ he simply announces the fact ~ that judgment awaits them.

▶▶James' language implies ~ final condemnation ~ rather than temporary discipline.

▷▷The Grk word translated "howl", ~ e.g., is usually associated with judgment in the LXX.

▷▷Final condemnation cannot apply to Christians.

↳↳There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

→→Again, ~ point Paul is making is ~ that condemnation is, ~ in every sense, ~ ¶¶

↳↳out of the question ~ for those who truly belong ~ to Christ Jesus.

Also, ~ all that James says leans only toward despair. 3/13

▶▶ Can't be talking about believers.

▷▷ We wait ~ for the blessed hope, ~ the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Plus, ~ attitude ascribed to these rich ~ is not that of 1:10, where rich believer is in view, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ but rather ~ that seen in 2:6-7.

Something else that points to these people being unbelievers.

▶▶ Vs 3a, ~ Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire.

▷▷ Believers: wks not done for Jesus burned up, not us.

And a final, ~ and the most important, ~ reason to believe ~ ¶¶

▶▶ that the persons referred to in this mini-essay ~ are not believers.

▶▶ Remember the Jewishness of James.

▷▷ Well, ~ this passage is very similar ~ to the OT prophets' addresses to pagan nations.

▷▷ Remarks directed to Israel's oppressors ~ were a common feature of the OT prophets.

↪↪ Isaiah delivered a message to Babylon ~ and that nation was told to wail.

→→ He also gave prophecies to ~ Philistia, ~ Moab, ~ Damascus, ~ Ethiopia, ~ and to Tyre and Sidon. 4/13

↳↳ Ezek. addressed messages to ~ Ammon, ~ Tyre, ~ Sidon, ~ & Egypt.

Based on all of this, ~ I think with we can conclude ~ that this paragraph is talking about wealthy unbelievers.

Now Let's Talk About James' Focus & Primary Purpose For Including This ¶ About ~ ¶¶

the Judgment Coming Upon Wealthy Non-Believers.

▶▶ Again, ~ this ¶ is very much related ~ to the OT prophets' addresses to pagan nations.

▶▶ Regarding OT, ~ it is highly unlikely ~ that those nations the OT prophets addressed ~ ¶¶

▷▷ ever heard or read those prophecies.

▷▷ The OT prophets' prophecies were addressed ~ to wicked nations in form only.

↳↳ They were actually written ~ to encourage Israel.

→→ TPID, ~ they were speaking to people who were not present, ~ for the benefit of those who were.

▷▷ The prophets' actual focus ~ was on God's people, ~ Israel. ⇔⇔ **Message to them.**

↳↳ And their primary purpose ~ was to provide encouragement to Israel ~ ¶¶

→→ by assuring the nation ~ that God would ultimately deal with her oppressors.

↳↳ I.e., ~ all of these pagan nations the prophets were addressing. **5/13**

▷▷Based on Jewishness of James and his similarity to the OT prophets, ~ ¶¶

↳↳Like the OT prophets, ~ James, ~ in 5:1-6, ~ is speaking ~ ¶¶

→→to people who were not present, ~ for the benefit of those who were.

▷▷IOW, ~ in form ~ James' announcement of judgment is addressed to wealthy unbelievers.

↳↳But James, ~ no doubt, ~ was well aware ~ ¶¶

→→that his words would probably reach ~ but few of those being addressed.

▷▷James' focus ~ was actually on believers.

↳↳Wrote this ¶ ~ for our benefit.

In view of that, ~ now let's talk about James' primary purpose.

▶▶1st, ~ what his purpose is not.

▷▷It is not for us to have a ready-made sermon to go out to the street corner & rail against wealthy unbelievers.

▶▶No, ~ James is teaching us something for our spiritual growth.

▶▶Remember his overall purpose for this letter.

▷▷And i.e., ~ to instill correct thinking & right behavior in believers. 6/13

▶▶ Well, ~ as I see it, ~ his primary purpose in this ¶ is ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to instill correct thinking & right behavior in us regarding the wealthy rich.

↪↪ Talk about what that is and implications as we go through details.

A Secondary Purpose, ~ I Would Suggest, ~ Is To Encourage & Comfort Us.

Most likely specifically in area of mistreatment & oppression by wealthy unbelievers.

This, ~ of course, ~ lines up with the specific purpose of the OT prophets.

▶▶ In this ¶, ~ James assures us ~ that if they don't repent ~ ¶¶

▷▷ wealthy unbelievers, ~ as well as all unbelievers, ~ will face God's judgment.

↪↪ 2 Thess. 1:6-10.

▶▶ They seem to get away with all sorts of bad stuff.

▷▷ But they will be held accountable.

↪↪ How encouraging and comforting ~ knowing that any wrongs against us will be avenged.

▶▶ But we should not gloat.

▷▷ Weep for them.

↪↪ And pray they turn to Jesus before it's too late. 7/13

But This Passage May Also Hold An Implication ~ That Serves As Another Secondary Purpose.

▶▶It could very well be ~ that James is implying ~ that we should not envy the wealthy.

▶▶David, ~ Ps. 37, ~ not to worry about the wicked.

▷▷Ps. 37:1-11, 35-40.

▶▶Asaph, ~ Ps. 73:1-3, 12, 13-17, 18-20, 25.

This Passage May Hold Another Implication ~ That Serves As One More Secondary Purpose.

James makes it clear ~ that God will judge.

▶▶The implication then is ~ not to avenge ourselves on our enemies. ⇔⇔ Rom. 12:19-21.

▶▶Paul exhorts us not to take revenge on our enemies.

▶▶Instead, ~ we are to let God take revenge, ~ as he has promised.

▶▶David's refusal ~ to kill Saul on two occasions ~ ¶¶

▷▷when it seemed that God had delivered Saul into David's hands ~ ¶¶

↪↪is a classic biblical example of this principle.

▶▶In light of God's promise to execute vengeance, ~ ¶¶

▷▷a Christian should therefore ~ feed their enemy and quench his thirst. 8/13

▶▶ In short, ~ we are to respond to their evil ~ with Christ-like love.

▶▶ The coals on the head ~ may refer to a ritual in Egypt ~ 77

▷▷ in which a person showed their repentance ~ by carrying a pan of burning charcoal on his head.

▶▶ Helping rather than cursing an enemy ~ may cause them to be ashamed and penitent.

Peter had pretty much the same idea in mind.

▶▶ 1 Pet. 2:12, ~ Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

Of course, ~ Jesus serves as the supreme model for us.

▶▶ 1 Pet. 2:23, ~ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

▶▶ Jesus was verbally abused throughout his trials and crucifixion.

▷▷ Mark's gospel tells us ~ that Jesus was mocked ~ 77

↪↪ by the soldiers, people, chief priests, and the teachers of the law.

▷▷ But Jesus did not revile in return.

▷▷ No matter how many insults were thrown at him, ~ he did not throw insults back at them. 9/13

▷▷ In fact, ~ He accepted their insults in silence.

▷▷ [Is. 53:7](#) points this out.

↪↪ Propheying about Jesus, ~ Isaiah says, ~ ¶¶

→→ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth ([Is. 53:7](#)).

▶▶ Next, ([1 Pet 2:23](#)) ~ Peter tells us that ~ Jesus did not threaten revenge.

▷▷ Jesus was subjected to severe physical sufferings.

↪↪ He was struck in the face, ~ spit on, ~ beaten, ~ crowned with thorns, ~ ¶¶

→→ forced to carry His cross, ~ and crucified.

▷▷ From what I understand, ~ it was common in Jesus' time ~ ¶¶

↪↪ for the one being executed ~ ¶¶

→→ to cry out for vengeance ~ and to threaten his executioners.

▷▷ Instead, ~ Jesus forgave all of His persecutors and executioners.

▶▶ Finally, ~ Peter tells us ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Jesus continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. 10/13

▷▷ Most likely, ~ this means ~ 77

↳↳ that Jesus did not keep the physical pain and mental anguish He was feeling ~ 77

→→ at the forefront of His mind and thoughts.

▷▷ Rather, ~ that Jesus kept His Father at the forefront of His mind & thoughts ~ 77

↳↳ as he underwent unjust suffering.

▷▷ We must do the same & God will help us.

▶▶ Peter says ~ that God the Father judges justly.

▷▷ Jesus may have been suffering unjustly at the hands of men.

↳↳ But He knew He could trust ~ that His Father would treat Him fairly, ~ 77

→→ and that His Father ~ would set things right, ~ because God judges justly.

▷▷ The application for us ~ should be very encouraging.

↳↳ Though people may treat us unfairly, ~ though we may suffer unjustly, ~ 77

→→ we too ~ can count on the fact ~ that God will treat us fairly, ~ 77

↳↳ and ~ that God will eventually set things right. 11/13

Before moving on, ~ let's summarize James' ~ primary and 3 secondary purposes.

Primary.

▶▶ To instill correct thinking & right behavior in us regarding the wealthy rich.

▷▷ Talk about what that is and implications as we go through details.

& 3 Secondary purposes.

▶▶ Encourage & comfort believers. ⇔⇔ Not to envy the wealthy. ⇔⇔ And not to avenge ourselves.

Now, ~ In Our Overview And Foundation Building, ~ We Need To Mention Something Very Important.

James is not condemning wealth in and of itself.

▶▶ Wealth is not their problem.

▶▶ It's not even mentioned in the list of sins for which they will be judged.

▶▶ Applying the text to all wealthy people ~ would be a misreading of the passage.

▶▶ Being wealthy ~ is not a sin.

▶▶ 1 Tim. 6:17-19.

▶▶ The rich ruler. 12/13

That's Our Overview And The Foundation Is Set.

Next time ~ we'll start getting into the details ~ of James' discussion of the judgment coming upon wealthy unbelievers.

▶▶ Encourage to read ¶ multiple x and write down observations.

▶▶ What correct thinking & right behavior is James trying to instill in us? 13/13