

Today, ~ Finish Look At The 3rd And Final Brief Essay Of This 4 Major Section.

And i.e., ~ counsel for oppressed believers, ~ 5:7-12.

▶▶Reference to the oppressive rich in the previous paragraph, ~ ¶¶

▷▷may have led James to address believers' proper behavior while undergoing oppression.

▶▶In the immediate context, ~ he is referring ~ to how believers should act ~ ¶¶

▷▷while undergoing oppression by wealthy unbelievers.

▶▶But in general, ~ this present paragraph counsels us ~ ¶¶

▷▷on how to behave when undergoing persecution from a broad-spectrum of unbelievers.

As observed, ~ in 5:7-12, ~ James returns ~ to the theme of endurance in trials that he began with.

In This Brief Essay, ~ James Counsels Believers, ~ On How We Are To Behave ~

when undergoing persecution by unbelievers.

▶▶¶ = 4 parts.

▶▶In 7-8, ~ advises believers to exercise patience in view of Christ's return.

▷▷Last wk. 1/12

▶▶ In Vs 9, ~ counsels us ~ to avoid the natural tendency of the afflicted ~ to unjustly blame those around us.

▶▶ In Vv. 10-11, ~ James advises us to look at 2 godly examples ~ of suffering and endurance in the past.

▷▷ And i.e., ~ with the purpose of ~ gaining strength in present circumstances.

▶▶ And finally in vs. 12, ~ counsels us ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to refrain from deceptive oaths and to maintain integrity in speech ~ while experiencing hostility.

In Vs 9, ~ James Counsels Us ~ To Avoid The Natural Tendency Of The Afflicted ~ ¶¶

To Unjustly Blame Those Around Us, ~ While Experiencing Hostility.

9a, (NIV) ~ Don't Grumble Against One Another, Brothers And Sisters.

The Grk wd for ~ grumble ~ means ~ groan or sigh.

▶▶ The word typically signifies ~ an expression of frustration from the people of God ~ ¶¶

▷▷ who are suffering oppression or even judgment.

▶▶ E.g., ~ Ex. 2:23.

▷▷ During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. 2/12

▶▶ The broader biblical use of the word implies ~ that the groans are the result of oppression.

James anticipates that pressures ~ from outside the congregation ~ might be vented within.

▶▶ I.e., ~ through displaced frustrations, ~ we start complaining about one another, ~ and blaming our adversity on one another.

Grumbling against those who are close to us ~ is particularly likely to occur ~ ¶¶

▶▶ when we are under pressure or facing difficult circumstances.

▶▶ We vent the pressure from a stressful work environment or from ill health ~ on our close friends and family.

▶▶ So it would be quite natural ~ not correct but quite natural ~ if believers, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ experiencing hostility from unbelievers, ~ would turn our frustrations on one another.

Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters.

▶▶ The tense of the Grk vb shows that James is addressing an action that must always be avoided.

▷▷ Never ~ grumble against one another, brothers and sisters.

In calling his recipients brothers and sisters, ~ James reminds us ~ that we are spiritual siblings.

▶▶ We are brothers and sisters in Christ, ~ all part of God's family. 3/12

▶▶ Grumbling against one another is out of place in the family of God.

▶▶ We constantly need to be on our guard against this.

▶▶ Satan will use adversity in our lives ~ to try to drive a wedge between us.

▶▶ We must not let that happen.

▶▶ In the context of Satan-inspired persecution Peter writes, ~ (1 Pet. 5:8-9; CSB) ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.

My . . . , ~ we're all in this together.

▶▶ And we need to stick together.

▶▶ In Eph. ~ Paul exhorts us ~ to continually make every effort ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to preserve and protect the unity that the Holy Spirit has given us ~ through the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3).

▶▶ Being at peace w/ one another ~ will help us preserve & protect our unity.

▷▷ 1 Thess. 5:13b (NIV), ~ Live in peace with each other.

In Gal. 5:15, ~ Paul notes the danger of conflict among believers.

▶▶ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. 4/12

▶▶ Paul uses vivid imagery, ~ wild animals in a deadly fight, ~ to warn us that ~ 77

▷▷ attacking one another ~ ultimately will destroy our church.

As the culture around us gets more & more hostile, ~ 77

▶▶ we need to be extra vigilant ~ in not grumbling against one another.

In Vs 9b, ~ Why We Are Not To Grumble Against One Another.

^{9b} So that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge ~ [i.e., ~ Jesus] ~ is standing at the door.

Although grumbling may seem to us ~ to be a minor offense, ~ 77

▶▶ James' warning against it ~ is serious.

▶▶ God hates sin.

▷▷ Zech. 8:17, ~ Do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the Lord.

▶▶ Sin ~ provokes God's anger.

▷▷ Rom. 1:18 (CSB), ~ For God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all godlessness and unrighteousness of people who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

▶▶ And sin ~ grieves the Lord.

▷▷ Eph 4:30, ~ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ⇔⇔ I.e., ~ sin deeply hurts the Holy Spirit. 5/12

Held accountable for sin.

▶▶ In one sense ~ the concept of Jesus as Judge ~ pictures the final judgment at the second coming.

▷▷ But this Judge ~ is already standing at the door.

▶▶ And this language ~ emphasizes the reality ~ of experiencing Jesus's discipline now.

▷▷ Heb. 12:4-11

▶▶ James's point ~ is that those who grumble ~ ¶¶

▷▷ will experience discipline from Jesus ~ in part now ~ ¶¶

↳↳ and some level of judgment from Jesus at his second coming.

▶▶ 2 Cor. 5:10 (NIV), ~ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

▶▶ 1 Cor. 3:10-15

▶▶ Our sins have been judged and removed from us ~ through the death of Christ.

▷▷ God has removed our sins as far from us ~ as the east is from the west.

▷▷ In Rom. 8, ~ Paul makes the point that condemnation is, ~ in every sense, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ out of the question ~ for those who genuinely belong to Jesus. 6/12

▶▶ But ~ our lives as believers ~ will undergo ~ the Lord's heart-level ~ evaluation.

▷▷ The evaluated believer will be saved.

▷▷ But, ~ it will be like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.

▷▷ And it is the abundant mercy of God ~ that enables us to escape.

In Vv. 10-11, ~ James Advises Us ~ To Look At Two Godly Examples ~ Of Suffering And Endurance In The Past.

Again, ~ With The Purpose Of ~ Gaining Strength In Present Hostile Circumstances.

NIV: ¹⁰ Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ^{11a} As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. ^{11b} You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about.

1st, ~ the prophets, ~ 10-11a.

▶▶ A farmer provides a memorable image of patience.

▶▶ But ~ a more direct parallel of endurance amid unjust suffering ~ is found in the lives of the OT prophets.

▶▶ James says, ~ we consider those blessed who remained steadfast.

▶▶ IOW, ~ we can look back ~ 77

▷▷ at the prophets' faithful trust in the Lord through great trial ~ and declare them ~ to be favored by God. 7/12

▶▶ Should not their examples ~ inspire us to similar endurance?

▶▶ They showed that, ~ through faithful trust in the Lord, ~ endurance is possible.

James' 2nd example of suffering and endurance in the past, ~ Job, ~ 11b.

▶▶ (NIV) You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about.

▶▶ A reader of the book of Job may rightly ask, ~ "Did Job really remain steadfast? ~~ Didn't he complain a lot?"

▷▷ Yet, ~ even while fully expressing his lament to God, ~ Job did not take his wife's advice ~ to curse God and die.

▷▷ Also, ~ did not sin with his lips.

▷▷ In the end, even though Job was humbled and faced correction, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ he was commended by the Lord ~ both ~ at the beginning ~ and at the end of the book.

▷▷ He remained faithful.

▶▶ One way that James's readers are encouraged by the story of Job ~ is to see the outcome ~ that the Lord brought about.

▶▶ And the outcome of what God brought about ~ was blessing for Job.

▷▷ Job 42:10-17 8/12

▶▶ The point of comparison to the illustration of Job, ~ is that ~ ¶¶

▷▷ as in the case of Job, ~ believers can expect ultimate good ~ to come out of suffering.

▶▶ But be careful, ~ James is not using Job's story to promise ultimate good or material blessings in this life.

▷▷ Focus of context on Jesus' 2nd coming.

↪↪ This ultimate good brought out of suffering that James is talking about ~ ¶¶

→→ will come about when Jesus returns. ⇔⇔ Or death.

↪↪ Guaranteed.

▷▷ Might bless us in this life, ~ but no guarantee of that.

▶▶ Peter speaks about this as well.

▷▷ 1 Pet. 5:10, ~~ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

▷▷ Now, ~ there is no need to distinguish carefully between the mngs of the 4 vbs, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ for together ~ they emphatically make the same point.

▷▷ Peter uses 4 nearly synonymous verbs to emphasize ~~ what God himself will do for the benefit of Christians ~ after this life of suffering. 9/12

→→A loose paraphrase for this fourfold emphasis might be this: ~ 77

↪↪After you have suffered a little while, ~ God will make everything right beyond your wildest dreams."

▷▷We can apply David's words from Ps. 30:5b (NIV) to this.

↪↪Weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

↪↪Rev. 21:1-4

▷▷Christian suffering ~ pales in comparison ~ to the great eternal glory ~ that will be ours for eternity after this life.

▷▷Rom. 8:18, ~ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing ~ with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

▶▶All of this should give us ~ encouragement, strength, and courage ~ in the face of opposition.

Finally, ~ In Vs. 12, ~ Counsels Us ~ To Refrain From Deceptive Oaths & Maintain Integrity In Speech ~ While Undergoing Hostility.

CSB: Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "yes" mean "yes," and your "no" mean "no," so that you won't fall under judgment.

It Is Difficult ~ To See How The Swearing Of Oaths ~ Relates To The Preceding Or Following Material In James.

We do find a direct parallel to James's teaching ~ in the words of Jesus. 10/12

▶▶ Jesus attacked both ~ deception and the lack of truthfulness in everyday speech ~ ¶¶

▷▷ implied by the need to swear an oath (Matt. 5).

▶▶ I.e., ~ the need for an oath ~ implies our normal speech cannot be trusted.

How does this relate to James's letter?

▶▶ When suffering injustice, ~ one can be tempted ~ to protect oneself through deceptive speech.

▶▶ Perhaps James here mentions oaths ~ to call suffering Christians ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to both endurance of heart and integrity of speech ~ when the pressures of life ~ ¶¶

↳↳ would lead many to despair or compromise.

▶▶ This would certainly fit the context of controlling our speech, ~ which James addressed 3x prior to this.

▶▶ So, ~ when experiencing persecution, ~ whether mild or great, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ not only is there the need to endure, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ but also the need ~ to refrain from deceptive speech & maintain integrity in speech.

Note That James Again Points Out, ~ That The Lord Will Hold Us Accountable ~ ¶¶

for deceptive speech and lack of truthfulness. 11/12

▶▶ Unrepentant deception & falsehood in speech ~ will cause the believer to fall under God's discipline now.

▷▷ And will also bring disapproval ~ at the judgment seat of Christ.

Conclusion.

Purposely Skipped Vs 11c (NIV), ~ Because Wanted To End On A Very Positive Note.

So we'll take it in closing.

▶▶ Job's experience was proof that ~ The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

▶▶ God does not enjoy watching his people suffer.

▶▶ Rather, ~ he is compassionate.

▶▶ He is also merciful.

▶▶ Our heavenly Father cares for those who suffer.

▶▶ He will bring a good end of it all.

▶▶ 2 Cor. 4:16-8, ~ So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. 12/12