LESSON SEVEN: James 5

**REVIEW**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 30 CE | Crucifixion/Resurrection/Day of Pentecost | | | Gospel is Preached Only to the Jews | **Jesus Appears to JAMES** (1 Cor. 15:7) | | | |
| 31 | Stephen Martyred | | | PAUL Persecutes the Church | | | |
| 32 |  | | |
| 33 |  | | |
| 34 | PAUL’S Conversion | Churches of Judea don’t know Paul | | Paul is in Arabia & Damascus 3 yrs. then meets with Peter for 15 days in Jerusalem & **meets James** (Gal. 1:18-20) | | | |
| 35 |  |
| 36 |
| 37 | Gospel to the Gentiles | | | | | | | PAUL in Syria and Cilicia Ministering to the Gentiles |
| 38 |  | | | | | | |
| 39 |
| 40 |
| 41 |
| 42 | Barnabas sent to Antioch | Paul Receives the Revelation of Grace | | | | | |
| 43 |  |  | | | | |  |
| 44 | **James Mentioned as Leadership** |  | | | | |  |
| 45 |  |  | | | | |  |
| 46 | **BOOK OF JAMES** to the Twelve Tribes (Jews) | | | | | | |
| 47 |  |  | Paul rebukes Peter (Gal.2) | | | **PAUL’S** 1st Missionary Journey | | |
| 48 |
| 49 |  | | | | | | | |
| 50 | **JERUSALEM COUNCIL ACTS 15: GENTILES NOT UNDER LAW, James Writes Letter to the Gentile Believers** | | | | | **PAUL’S** 2nd Missionary Journey | | |
| 51 |  | | | | |
| 52 | **GALATIANS: Righteousness by Faith Not Law** | | | | |
| 53 |  | | | | | **PAUL’S** 3rd Missionary Journey | | |
| 54 | Paul in Ephesus | | | | |
| 55 |
| 56 | **2 CORINTHIANS 12 “14 years ago” (42CE)** | | | | |
| 57 | **ROMANS: Righteous by Faith Not Law, Paul’s Great Love for Israel** | | | | | | | |
| 58 | **ACTS 21: Paul Submits to James to Appease Jews** | | | | | Paul Arrested in Jerusalem | | |
| 59 |  | | | | | | | |
| 60 |  | **PAUL IMPRISONED** in Rome; Writes Philippians, Philemon Colossians,  **Ephesians** | | | | | | |
| 61 |
| 62 | **JAMES EXECUTED by priestly authorities in Jerusalem** | **HEBREWS** is thought to have been written by Paul shortly before CE 64. | | | | | | |
| 63 |  |
| 64 | Nero’s Persecution | | | | | | | |
| 65 |  | | | | | | | |
| 66 |  | | | | | | | |
| 67 | **Peter and Paul Executed** by Nero | | | | | | | |
| 68 |  | | | | | | | |
| 69 |  | | | | | | | |
| 70 | Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem ☼ Church is Scattered | | | | | | | |

1. The revelation of the gospel of grace came to the church gradually.
2. They understood that salvation came by faith in Jesus Messiah and belief in His resurrection, but only preached to the Jews.
3. Paul was converted four years after the resurrection but initially only preached to Jews (3 years).
4. Seven years after the resurrection (three years after Paul’s conversion), the gospel was preached to the Gentiles via Peter due to a divine revelation.
5. Paul most likely began to preach salvation to the Gentiles at about this time.
6. There was a rift in the church for many years. Many Jews believed that in order to be saved, the Gentiles had to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses.
7. About 7 years after Paul’s conversion, he had a vision and was taken up into heaven and we believe that is when he received the full revelation of the gospel of grace (that both Jew and Gentile were equal and free from all of the law).
8. For 20 years Jewish believers were likely taught to continue keeping the law.
9. Most Jews were still living under the law until the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, but the book of Hebrews was written 7-8 years before that, so it is thought that the believers were being delivered from the law via Paul’s letters.
10. Notice the many writings of Paul could have come to James’ attention after the scene in Acts 21. All of them spoke clearly of the gospel of God’s grace and freedom from the Law of Moses (Phil., Eph., Col., Heb.)
11. The early Church understood the facts of the Gospel, 1 Cor. 15, but until Paul’s revelation no one understood the full implication of the Gospel, i.e complete freedom from sin and the sin nature, and that we are to not look inward to perfect ourselves, but walk in His perfection.

*1 Corinthians 15:1-3   
Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.*

**This Gospel was known and believed and preached, and turned the world upside down. In A.D. 42 Paul received the Revelation of the Gospel. The facts of the Gospel were already known, but what Paul received was the implication of what the facts mean. Paul was given the fullness of what the facts of the Gospel mean.**

James Chapter Five

**Verses 1 -6**

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. 2 Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! 4 Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and put to death the righteous man; he does not resist you.

**CONTEXT!**

**An important question to ask when studying Scripture is NOT “HOW does this apply to me?”**

**We need to ask, “DOES this apply to me?”**

**If it DOES apply to us, then INSTEAD OF turning the needed correction into a law, we ask/trust the Holy Spirit to work the needed lesson into our lives so that we are motivated within by grace and not by law.**

1. **It is important to ascertain to whom it is that James is hurling such accusations. We have concluded there are four options.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **POSSIBILITY ONE: As the Amplified Bible implies, he is speaking to people who don’t have a true faith—imposters. They use their wealth only for themselves and even oppress those who work for them even to the point of having them killed. This seems unlikely because he does not make a distinction about whether or not they are believers.** | **POSSIBILITY TWO: He is speaking to believers who have become corrupted by the deceitfulness of riches, so much so, that they are focused on wealth and even oppressing the poor who work for them. Perhaps they’ve had their workers thrown in jail. His rebuke for such a person would be just.** |
| **POSSIBILITY THREE: He is speaking to true believers who have come back under law and now sin is abounding in their lives. They have become estranged from Christ by seeking to be justified by works and the law, so much so that James only recourse is to rebuke them.** | **IMPOSSIBILITY #1: He is speaking to believers who understand the gospel of God’s grace, who are internally taught by grace, who are being led by the Spirit. This group will naturally have love for each other, would not think of oppressing someone working for them, and will share their blessings with each other. Hopefully, you are in this group. If you are, JAMES IS NOT TALKING TO YOU!!!** |

*The selfish rich have killed the unresisting righteous one. It is doubtful to whom this refers. It could be a reference to Jesus. ‘You rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you’ (Acts 3:14). Barclay, William*

**Verses 7--8**

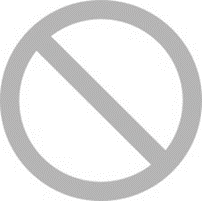
Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. 8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

1. **These verses are, without a doubt addressed to believers, and since James uses the word “therefore”, it seems to harken back to the previous verses which is a valid reason to believe that James is also speaking to believers in verses 1-6.**
2. **Clearly, this is an encouragement to the 12 tribes who had been dispersed to be patient knowing the coming of the Lord is near. Paul wrote, “Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season, you will reap, if you faint not,” (Gal. 6:9).**
3. **THE early Church lived in expectation of the immediate second coming of Jesus Christ, and James encourages his people to wait with patience for the few years which remain. Barclay**

**Verse 9**

Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.

1. **At first this verse seems disjointed from the others, but consider that when we are in situations that need patience, it is easy to complain against each other. James is likely loosely quoting Jesus who told us not to judge. Paul also encouraged the Romans not to judge each other.**
2. **The following quote shows the lack of understanding of the implications of the Gospel, in that under the Gospel we are never condemned by God. It also reflects the incorrect practice of turning every instruction into a “Christian” commandment.**

**

*During that waiting, they must confirm their faith. They must not blame one another for the troubles of the situation in which they find themselves – for, if they do, they will be breaking the commandment which forbids Christians to judge one another (Matthew 7:1); and if they break that commandment, they will be condemned. Barclay*

**Verses 10-11**

As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

1. **Just as Paul pointed back to the faith of those who came before, so James points back to the patience of the prophets and of Job. Paul never once mentions Job, and in all fairness, James only makes short mention of him here. He emphasizes the compassionate and merciful dealings of God.**

*James used two different words for patience. In James 5: 7– 8, 10 it was the word long-tempered. The words endure and patience in James 5: 11 literally mean “to remain under” and speak of endurance under great stress. Patience means “to stay put and stand fast when you’d like to run away.” Many Greek scholars think that “longsuffering” refers to patience with respect to persons, while “endurance” refers to patience with respect to conditions or situations. Wiersby*

**Verses 12**

But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.

1. **Above all? It might make us wonder why this admonition is “above all”. Perhaps Barclay sheds some understanding?**

*There was a distinction – especially in the Jewish world – between oaths which were binding and oaths which were not binding. Any oath in which the name of God was directly used was considered to be definitely binding, but any oath in which direct mention of the name of God was not made was held not to be binding. The idea was that, once God’s name was definitely used, he became an active partner in the transaction, but he did not become a partner unless his name was introduced in this way. Barclay*

1. **The other writers of the New Testament, but loving one another “above all”. Paul uses “above all” when discussing the armor of God, put faith above all when it came to armor. Otherwise it is used for love.**

[***Ephesians 6:16***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+6:16&version=NKJV)

*Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.*

[***Colossians 3:14***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+3:14&version=NKJV)

*But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.*

[***1 Peter 4:8***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Peter+4:8&version=NKJV)

*And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”*

**Verse 13**

Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.

1. **This is good advice, but we can also sing praises when we suffer and pray when we are cheerful.**
2. **The question that went through cdh’s mind: Was James’ audience so unintelligent and without sensibility that they needed this instruction?**

***Ephesians 5:17-21***

*So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.*

**Verses 14-15**

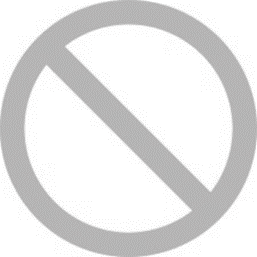
Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; 15 and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

*ANOTHER great characteristic of the early Church was that it was a healing church. Here, it inherited its tradition from Judaism. When a Jew was ill, he went to the Rabbi rather than to the doctor; and the Rabbi anointed him with oil – which Galen the Greek doctor called ‘the best of all medicines’ – and prayed over him. Few communities can have been so devotedly attentive to their sick as the early Church was. Justin Martyr writes in the second century that countless people possessed by demons were healed by the Christians when all other exorcists had been unable to cure them and drugs had had no effect. Irenaeus, writing late in the second century, tells us that the sick were still healed by having hands laid on them. Tertullian, writing mid-way through the third century, says that no less a person than the Roman emperor, Alexander Severus, was healed by anointing at the hands of a Christian called Torpacion and that in his gratitude he kept Torpacion as a guest in his palace until the day of his death. Barclay*

1. **We have observed that among the body of Christ, there are a wide-variety of beliefs about divine healing. The first one in this chart represents our belief.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Our Belief:** Healing is available to every believer today. Healing **was** purchased for us by His wounds. We not only believe He is able to heal, but that he is willing to heal and that He will heal. God does not withhold healing from us. We believe it does not take a special gift to receive healing by God. We simply ask without doubting. If an individual does not have this faith, he should call for the elders of the church to pray for him. |
| **This View is Not as Common:** God can heal, but only through the elders of the church or someone who has a gift of healing. Individual believers cannot ask God to heal and expect He will answer. |
| **Commonly Held Belief:** God can heal, but only if it is His “sovereign” will, and it might be His will for us to be sick so that we can be conformed to his image or because we are sinning. |
| **Also Very Commonly Held View:** God does not heal today. That ended when the last apostle died. Today, God uses medicine. |

1. **We don’t believe James is saying that sin causes anyone to be sick.** James knew that some would think this, so he was assuring them that their sins would be forgiven and they would be healed. However, James does not seem to know that their sins are already forgiven, something which Paul taught.
2. The following is commonly taught, **but is NOT true** nor part of the Gospel.

*The person is sick because of sin (vv. 15b– 16). The Greek text says, “If he has been constantly sinning.” This parallels 1 Corinthians 11: 30: “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep” (have died). James has described a church member who is sick because he is being disciplined by God. This explains why the elders of the assembly are called: The man cannot go to church to confess his sins, so he asks the spiritual leaders to come to him. The leaders would be in charge of the discipline of the congregation. Wiersby*

**Verse 16**

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

1. **In no other verse in the New Testament does anyone teach that in order to be forgiven from sin, we need to confess our sins to each other.** This passage is more likely referring to sins we’ve committed against each other.

*THIS passage contains three basic ideas of* ***Jewish*** *religion. (1) There is the idea that all sickness is due to sin. There is the idea that, to be effective, confession of sin has to be made to other people, and especially to the person wronged, as well as to God. Above all, there is the idea that no limits can be set to the power of prayer. The Jews had a saying that the one who prays surrounds his house with a wall stronger than iron. Barclay*

**Verses 17-18**

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. 18 Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

1. **James is encouraging them to believe that their prayers can accomplish much by giving Elijah as an example.**
2. **Elijah’s earnest prayer was not him fasting and crying out to God, it was Elijah simply declaring what was going to happen. 1 Kings 17:1, And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word.”**
3. **Elijah Prayed again after getting a specific word from God.** 1 Kings 18:1 And it came to pass after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, “Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth.” 1 Kings 18:41-45 41 Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain.” 42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, 43 and said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” So he went up and looked, and said, “There is nothing.” And seven times he said, “Go again.” 44 Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, “There is a cloud, as small as a man’s hand, rising out of the sea!” So he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.’” 45 Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain.

**Verse 19**

Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

1. **This seems an odd way to end his letter which gives rise to the theory of several commentators that James letter was more likely a collection of his teachings.**
2. **What does it mean to “wander from the truth”? It is when someone’s faith in Jesus is failing. To turn from Jesus is apostasy. If we see someone heading in that direction, we need to turn them from the error of their ways.**
3. **Another view point commonly taught THAT IS NOT NEW COVENANT.**

****

*That Christian has not only saved the other person’s soul but has covered a multitude of his or her own sins. In other words, to save another’s soul is the surest way to save one’s own. J. B. Mayor points out that Origen, the third-century biblical scholar, has a wonderful passage in one of his Homilies in which he indicates these six ways in which people may gain forgiveness of their sins – by baptism, by martyrdom, by almsgiving (Luke 11:41), by the forgiveness of others (Matthew 6:14), by love (Luke 7:47) and by converting a sinner from evil ways. God will forgive much to anyone who has been the means of leading another brother or sister back to him. Barclay*

*Here again we show this quote to show what is commonly taught, but this is not true under the Gospel. “The outcome of this wandering is “sin” and possible “death” (James 5: 20). The sinner here is a believer, not an unbeliever; and sin in the life of a Christian is worse than sin in the life of an unbeliever. We expect unsaved people to sin, but God expects His children to obey His Word”. Wiersby*

***In like manner, we abruptly conclude our study of the book of James.***

***We Believe:***

* *James’ did not understand the gospel of grace that Paul proclaimed because he had not read any letters of Paul’s at the time he wrote his letter. He was still greatly under the law for twelve more years.*
* *It is our hope, that as he read the letters of Paul, he finally understood the full implications of the gospel of grace, and for declaring it was martyred by the Jewish priestly authorities.*
* *Since James’ revelation was incomplete, it is perfectly acceptable to take his teachings with a block of salt. Where he agrees with Paul, we agree with James. If he contradicts Paul, we believe it is safer theologically to side with Paul, and NOT TO USE JAMES’ TEACHINGS TO “BALANCE” Paul’s.*