

# AVMC 'Zoom' Bible Study Friday

2.00pm Friday 19 June

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81472895929>

James 5 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

Come now, you rich people, weep and wail for the miseries that are coming to you. <sup>2</sup>Your riches have rotted, and your clothes are moth-eaten. <sup>3</sup>Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you, and it will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure for the last days. <sup>4</sup>Listen! The wages of the labourers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. <sup>5</sup>You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts on a day of slaughter. <sup>6</sup>You have condemned and murdered the righteous one, who does not resist you.

<sup>7</sup>Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup>You also must be patient.

Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup>Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup>As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup>Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

<sup>12</sup>Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your 'Yes' be yes and your 'No' be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

<sup>13</sup> Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. <sup>14</sup> Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. <sup>17</sup> Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. <sup>18</sup> Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

<sup>19</sup> My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, <sup>20</sup> you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

## Welcome to the fifth and final study on James Chapter 5.

In *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*, Dr. Alfred Edersheim gives us a picture of the Jewish history and attitudes towards commerce.

In the era of the Old Testament, Dr. Edersheim notes that the seaboard was, except for a short time during Solomon's reign, in the hands of foreigners. This along with the requirements of the Jubilee year and the characteristics of the land were not conducive to trade between the Jews and Gentiles. Dr. Edersheim quotes the Jewish historian Josephus on the matter of the Jewish attitudes towards commerce:

*As for ourselves, we neither inhabit a maritime country, nor do we delight in merchandise, nor in such a mixture with other men as arises from it; but the cities we dwell in are remote from the sea, and having a fruitful country for our habitation, we take pains in cultivating that only.*

But eventually Dr. Edersheim notes the attitudes gradually changed along with the changing circumstances of the people with the main object to restrict and regulate commercial occupations with rabbinical oversight. Long before the Babylonian captivity, a great number of Jews were living in Egypt and Dr. Edersheim notes that they. . . *“controlled Egypt's large export trade, especially in grain--and Egypt was the granary of the world--was entirely in their hands.”* Considering to whom this epistle was written, perhaps James had these rich traders in mind in these first five verses of chapter five, perhaps not.

## Questions

1. What should our attitude be towards the wealthy?
2. In chapter two James was speaking to the poor about the rich, but now James is addressing the rich directly in this last chapter. What's the main point of verses 1–5? Is it the same message Jesus provided in Luke 12, verse 15–22?

3. James says in verse twelve of James Chapter 5 that above all things that the brethren should not swear either by heaven or by earth or anything else or they will be condemned. Does a reading of Matthew 5:33–37 help us understand why we should not swear by heaven or earth? Does this include the use of profanity?

4. Again and again James calls for control of one's speech or tongue. We have seen a call for control of our speech in James 1:26, 2:12, 3:2–11, and 4:11. Finally he calls for control of our speech in verse twelve. Why does James emphasize this so much?

5. Do the lessons from the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew Chapters 5, 6 and 7 also occur in the Book of James Chapter 5?

Can you cite the verses?