

The Book of James

Chapter Five Workbook

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This Bible Study Workbook is designed to facilitate your study of Chapter Five of the Book of James. Upon completion of the study, it is recommended that you discuss your answers and insights with other Bible Students who also completed the workbook. Further information is available at www.free-online-bible-study.com

Workbook – James Chapter 5

James Chapter 5 (King James Version)

1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. 3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. 4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. 5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. 6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. 10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. 16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. 17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; 20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

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DAY ONE

In Sketches of Jewish Social Life,¹ Dr. Alfred Edersheim gives us a picture of the Jewish history and attitudes towards commerce. He states:

There can be no question that, according to the Divine purpose, Israel was not intended to be a commercial people. The many restrictions to the intercourse between Jews and Gentiles, which the Mosaic law everywhere presents, would alone have sufficed to prevent it. Then there was the express enactment against taking interest upon loans (Lev 25:36-37), which must have rendered commercial transactions impossible, even though it was relaxed in reference to those who lived outside the boundaries of Palestine (Deu_23:20).

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 or 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.

What should our attitude be towards the wealthy?

¹ Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Dr. Alfred Edersheim

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DAY TWO

1. How do the first five verses of James Chapter 5 fit with the last five verses of James Chapter four?

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 is the main point of verses 1-5? Is it the same message Jesus provided in Luke 12, verse 15-22?

Main Point?

Same Message?

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DAY THREE

1. Analyze the verses below from James Chapter 5. What did the rich do with their wealth that was wrong and sinful?

Verse 2 - Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.

Verse 3 - Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

2. Read the parable Jesus tells in Luke 12:16-31. What advice can we glean from this so that we can avoid hoarding our wealth?

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DAY FOUR

1. In verse five of James Chapter 5, James declares the rich have lived in luxury or pleasure on the earth, that they have been wanton or self-indulgent. In verse six he goes on to say the rich have killed the just or innocent who were not opposing them.

Now in verses seven through eleven what is the advice given, to whom is it given, who was offered as an example, and why is this advice given?

2. How does the advice of James Chapter 5 verse nine fit in the context of the chapter?

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DAY FIVE

1. 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?

2. 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?

3. What are the two things in verse fourteen James tells believers to do when they are sick? What are the two results that are promised in verse fifteen of James Chapter 5?

Verse 14 _____

Verse 14 _____

Verse 15 _____

Verse 15 _____

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DAY SIX

Do the lessons from the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew shown below also occur in the Book of James? Can you cite the verses? Fill the boxes below with the verses from James.

James	Matthew	Lesson
	5:10-12	When your life is full of difficulties and persecutions, be glad a reward awaits you.
	5:48	When your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect, mature, and complete.
	7:7-12	Ask God and He will answer.
	5:3	Those who are humble (who don't amount to much by the world's standards) should rejoice in their position as those whom God loves.
	5:22	Watch out for your anger, it can be dangerous.
	5:7; 6:14	Be merciful to others, as God is merciful to you.
	7:21-23	Your faith must express itself in helping others.
	5:9	Blessed are the peacemakers, they sow in peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.
	6:24	You cannot serve God <i>and</i> money, pleasures or evil. Friendship with the world is hatred toward God.
	5:3-4	When you humble yourself and realize your dependence on God, he will lift you up.
	7:1-2	Don't slander or speak evil against others,; these go against God's command to love one another.
	6:19	Treasures on earth will only rot and fade away – store up eternal treasures in heaven.
	5:12	Be patient in suffering; as God's prophets were patient.
	5:33-37	Be honest in your speech; just say a simple yes or no so that you will always be trusted.