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**A0749 – December 9, 2007 – Jas 5:10-11 – Behold The Outcome Of  
Enduring Suffering**

Last time we worked with James 5:7-9 and this is the beginning of the epilogue of this letter. These are his closing words. They begin with the word **Therefore** signaling the application of what we have learned about how to handle and behave during trials and sufferings. In light of the fact that God sends all Christians trials and sufferings we should all be patient during trials **until the Lord comes** at which point trials and suffering will cease. We do not know when the Lord is coming but we do know that He is coming. There is an end to trials and sufferings, that day is the day **the Lord comes**. So be patiently expecting Him as a farmer patiently expects the produce of the soil. Verse 8, **You too be patient; strengthen your hearts** or “establish your hearts”. This is what we do in the meantime as we patiently wait on the Lord; we study Bible doctrine so we become firmly established in the faith. We don’t want to be tossed too and fro by every wind of doctrine but rather be deeply rooted in the Scriptures, stable, mature Christians who bear fruit worthy of reward. The reason given for advancing to spiritual maturity is **for the coming of the Lord is near**. The perfect tense indicates the Lord has drawn near with the effect that He remains near. This is teaching that His coming is imminent. The Second Coming is not imminent but the Rapture is imminent. So this is a Rapture passage. Imminence means no prophesied event must happen before Christ Raptures His Church from earth before the Tribulation. And we know of no prophesied event which must happen before the Rapture. On the other hand, we do know of prophesied events which must happen before the Second Coming of Christ to earth. So, the Rapture and Second Coming cannot be the same event or happen at the same time. The only possible timing of the Rapture that does not destroy imminence is that it must occur before the Tribulation. That is why we say it is pre-Tribulational. Thus, it is separated from the Second Coming by at least

seven years. Further, in light of imminence no one can date the Rapture, no one knows when it will happen so don't listen to date-setters. As we patiently expect this event we should be growing in doctrine, advancing to maturity so we can bear much fruit. Verse 9, **Do not complain** or “grumble under your breath” against other believers. We are not called to grumble but “to love one another”. To love one another means to desire the highest good for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. That means directing them into all truth. God's word is truth. But if we continually grumble against them instead then we will be judged for it at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The Father has given all judgment to the Son and all believers will give an account of themselves before Christ at the judgment seat. The judgment seat of Christ is a sobering time, even a time of suffering for some, some will “suffer loss” so we should not complain against our brothers and sisters in Christ. **Behold**, James says, **the Judge is standing right at the door**. Again, another perfect tense meaning He stands with the effect that He remains standing right at the door. This is another description of imminence. When Jesus comes for the Church at the Rapture then the very next event is the judgment seat of Christ. So, we're going to face trials and sufferings and we are commanded to be patient as we work through them, continually trusting Him, studying Bible doctrine, becoming more firmly established in the faith so that we are prepared to go to the judgment seat of Christ and give an account for how we handled the trials. Have we been quick to hear the word of God, have we been slow to argue with the word of God, have we been slow to anger against God for bringing this horror into our life? God has a purpose for the trials He sends us and He wants us to patiently endure them as the prophets of old and Job, these are the two examples James uses in vv 10-11 to encourage us to do the same.

**James 5:10-11** Ὑπόδειγμα λάβετε, ἀδελφοί μου, τῆς κακοπαθείας, καὶ τῆς μακροθυμίας, τοὺς προφῆτας οἱ ἐλάλησαν τῷ ὀνόματι κυρίου. <sup>11</sup>Ἰδοὺ, μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομένοντας· τὴν ὑπομονὴν Ἰὼβ ἠκούσατε, καὶ τὸ τέλος κυρίου ἴδετε, ὅτι πολὺσπλαγχνὸς ἐστὶν καὶ οἰκτιρμῶν. **(BYZ)**

**James 5:10-11** As an example, my brothers, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup>Behold, we consider blessed those who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the outcome of the Lord, that He is concerned and very compassionate. **(Author's Translation)**

**James 5:10-11** As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup>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. (NASB95)

**As an example** (*upodeigma*), “a pattern” “a model”, **brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets.** So, that's the key, we want to look back through the corridors of time, look at the prophets, look at Job and see how they handled their sufferings. As we do that remember, we have an advantage. They couldn't see what was going on, they were caught in the thick of it but we can look back on their lives and see that the Lord had a purpose for their suffering. We can see how they remained patient despite not being able to see the end. We can see how they endured. So, we have a great advantage living after them. We can see that God had compassion and was merciful to them in the end in such a way that His end eclipsed the suffering. This is why Paul said a remarkable thing in 2 Cor 4:17, “For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.” Those are some of the most comforting words in all of Scripture. What we are going through now, the pain, the suffering, the affliction, at the present they seem terrible, and we don't want to downplay them, they are terrible, but in the end they will not even compare to the eternal weight of glory to follow. The sufferings will be totally eclipsed by the glories to follow. These are words we should all have etched on our hearts. Go home, etch these on your heart because you're going to face trials and here's how Paul kept them in the proper perspective, he compared them to the resurrection, and then they were nothing. It goes back to the fact that our sufferings do have meaning, they do have a purpose, they are not in vain. God is preparing us for something that will totally eclipse all the suffering. So, we are commanded **to take...as an example...the prophets** and **Job** who suffered and were patient. It's great that we have examples because we can see the outcome of those things and we can use them as models in our lives for being patient while suffering. So, James commands us **take the prophets** and that's a command, it's an aorist of urgency. Don't put this off. Do it now. Think of Joseph being sold by his own flesh and blood into slavery, being in jail for two years. Think of Obadiah hiding 100 prophets and having to live in a cave because Jezebel was trying to kill them. Think of Daniel and his friends being cast into a burning furnace. Reflect upon the prophets as an

example of **suffering**. The suffering they faced was not just your run-of-the-mill suffering. That word **suffering** (*kakapathia*) is a compound word from *kakos*, “bad or evil” and *pathos*, “suffering”, it’s “bad suffering”, there were terrible things they suffered. So, when you suffer you want to recall the sufferings of the prophets. We’ll look at some of their suffering in a minute. Yet they were **patient**. They are examples of patience. They give us a picture of what it is to obey that command in verse 7, **be patient**; how to remain tranquil under extreme circumstances. The **prophets** are the OT prophets since James is the earliest NT book written ~36-44AD. He’s giving the example of prophets his readers are well aware of because they are Jewish believers in the *Diaspora*, they would know all the OT stories, they would be very familiar with the prophets, what they suffered, how they endured so there was no need to explain them, they were already well-known. Men like Moses, Elijah, Uriah, Jeremiah. A **prophet** is not necessarily someone who fore-tells the future, they may do that, but a **prophet** is “a person inspired to proclaim or reveal divine will or purpose.” These are people who bear the message of God. God speaks through the prophet. These were very clearly marked out in the OT. Not everyone was a prophet. Just because someone taught Scripture did not make them a prophet. Teachers are not the equivalent of prophets. I’m not a prophet. The difference between a teacher and a prophet is this. A teacher proclaims previously revealed divine will or purpose but a prophet is *inspired* to proclaim or reveal divine will or purpose. Teachers are not inspired by God but prophets are inspired by God. None of my teachings are inspired by God. My messages are the result of careful analysis of the inspired text. My messages can be flawed. But a true prophet’s message cannot. It is the inspiration of God. No one is delivering inspired messages today. So, there’s a profound difference between a prophet and a teacher. Teachers were given to the Church to help explain what God is saying in the inspired word. So, we’re commanded to **take...the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord**, that is, the true OT prophets, not the false prophets. There are tests to determine a true vs a false prophet in Deut 13 and 18. Obviously we want to **take** the true OT **prophets** as **examples** to follow.

Verse 11, **Behold**, in other words, pay attention, **we count those blessed who endured**. Or better, “we consider blessed those who endured”. In other words, we look at those prophets and we consider them favored by God, we consider them fortunate. Isn’t it true that we look at them, we look at their

sufferings and how they **endured** them and we think, “Wow, how in the world did they put up with that?” and it encourages us to hang in there, to hold out, to endure. **Endure** is the word *hupomeno*, another compound word from *hupo*, “under” and *meno*, “to remain, abide”. These are people who remained under suffering for a long time. So, this word means “to maintain a belief or course of action in the face of opposition, *stand one’s ground, hold out, endure*” (cf 2 Tim 2:12, Rom 12:12; 1 Pt 2:20b; Heb 12:2-3; Jas 1:12). Despite the powers that be, powerful people, powerful rulers they stood their ground, they held out until the end, they didn’t collapse under the pressure. Now, the pressure to collapse is there. Every time we come under a suffering situation it’s easier to collapse, do something to get out of the situation. You may try to anesthetize the pain with drugs, alcohol, musical ecstasy, sexual ecstasy, something, anything to deaden the pain, anything to shut down the mind, but we’re not called to anesthetize the pain, we’re called to think it through, to maintain our belief in God and His purpose for our lives and to worship Him, give thanks to Him throughout the trial. Or, as James puts it, “Consider it all joy” and we said long ago on James 1:2, that word “consider”, *hegeomai*, is a mind word, it means “to lead with the mind.” We don’t anesthetize the mind as we go through the trial; we keep a clear head, knowing that the Lord is testing our faith to help us grow stronger. And we all want to grow in the Lord, we want to advance to spiritual maturity like the prophets of old, we all look to them as the great believers. So, let’s look at a few of the things these great believers suffered and how they **endured**.

Turn over to Heb 11. This is the chapter where we find several of the heroes of the faith, that is, believers who showed us how to walk by faith in the midst of great adversity. They’re not all prophets, some of them are, but we get a strong taste of some of the sufferings they endured. Let’s start with Moses in 11:24-27.

**Hebrews 11:24** By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, <sup>25</sup>choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, <sup>26</sup>considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. <sup>27</sup>By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

**Hebrews 11:32** “And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, <sup>33</sup>who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed *acts of* righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup>quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. <sup>35</sup>Women received *back* their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; <sup>36</sup>and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup>They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated <sup>38</sup>(*men* of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

Now, can you imagine some of that? These people were hated, they were threatened, they were laughed at, they were whipped, they were imprisoned for no just reason, they were stoned to death, just think of 30 and 40 pound stones striking your skull one after another till you're just a bloody mess. How could they stand up under that kind of affliction if they feared men? They couldn't. Nobody could. As long as you fear men you will never be able to stand up for the Lord. It's obvious they didn't fear men they feared God. And I fear that very few men truly fear God in this way. But they had a view of God that didn't allow them to deny Him so that no matter what the pressure, “We're going to throw you in a den of lions, we're going to saw you in two, we're going to stone you to death,” whatever, it didn't matter because they knew who God was, they had a proper view of God (2 Tim 2:12). They had a mission and by golly “I'm going to finish it no matter what.” They had the mentality of Martin Luther who said, “One man and God is always a majority.” Now, with that kind of mentality you can't stop a person. You can kill them but don't think you can stop the legacy, stop the message, it will just go on and on and on through the corridors of time influencing people. And that's why James says “take these prophets as an example”, you've heard of them because their legacy is recorded right here. The stories have been told for generations and generations. And v 38 records some of my favorite words in all of Scripture; it's just a side note, “men of whom the world was not worthy”. I'd like to do a series called “Men of Whom the World Was Not Worthy” and just study these guys lives. This is God's evaluation of

these men. Can't we learn something by their example? Do you want to be one of these men? You can't have any higher loyalty. You have to be willing to be crucified by the media. You have to be willing to die for your faith. You have to be completely dedicated to obeying God in mind and body. You have to be willing to do whatever the Scriptures say. Now, to do that you have to fear God, you have to be convinced your suffering is not in vain, that there's a purpose to all this and that in the end it's going to all be worth it. And that's why he gives the example of Job and he says "you've seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful." It is worth it. It may hurt now, you may not understand now but in the end it will all be worth it. Now, that's true but why is it that so few of us live that way? Why is it that we cave in under the pressure? Why is it that we don't endure? Why do we try to escape? Because we really don't fear God. We fear men. We're worried about our popularity or our reputation. And we really don't believe it's worth it. We really don't believe it serves any purpose. And that's why I've said before that I really think Christians have fallen into the pagan coping strategy that suffering is just the Absurd. It's there, I know I'm suffering, I know there's pain but there's nothing that can be done about it. It's pointless, it's hopeless. And any time we cave in under the pressure I suspect that's why. We've slipped in to a pagan coping strategy and a pagan worldview. We certainly aren't living according to the biblical worldview. We certainly aren't coping with it biblically because the prophets and Job, they're the example and we're not following their example. So, really it comes down to the questions, "Who do I fear most? Who is my ultimate loyalty? Does this serve any purpose or not?" And the only way you're going to get to that point where those OT prophets were is to say, like Joseph, "What you meant for evil, God meant it for good" (Gen 50:20). And the only way you can ever say that is to get grounded in Scripture. You've got to advance to spiritual maturity and that takes time, it takes concentration, it takes mental sweat, it takes consistency, it takes dedication to the Lord and His Scriptures. It doesn't come overnight and we live in a society that says entertain yourself, anesthetize your mind and so everything is geared against you becoming spiritually mature. And that's why we don't have a lot of men of whom the world is not worthy. They are few and far between. They've been carried away by the culture.

Verse 11, middle of the verse, **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.** Here's a specific man mentioned, Job. He is the penultimate example of **endurance** and suffering in the OT. Talk about a bad week, Job had the worst week on record and I'm not surprised this is the only time he's mentioned in the NT. Who wants to think about that week, it's horrible. But James says I want you to look at his **endurance** and look at the end, look at the outcome of how God dealt with Job, look at the final chapter of Job. There was a compassionate and merciful end. And the parallel for us is that whatever sufferings you endure in this life eventually you will see **that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.** We will see that God was concerned about us all along, that our suffering serves a purpose and it is well worth it. Now, it doesn't mean restoration in this life or money or anything like that but it does mean rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. Before we go on look at James 1:12. Here's how James summarizes these first verses where he told us to consider it all joy and endure the trials, verse 12, "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him." The crown of life is a reward that believers who persevere under trial will receive at the judgment seat of Christ. The rewards will far outweigh the sufferings. It will be well worth it. As Paul said, "...momentary light affliction cannot compare with the eternal weight of glory to follow." There will be no comparison. So, let's look at the story of Job, James' readers **had heard of the endurance of Job** and that's because they were Jews, they knew the story. Here's the story and keep in mind that Job didn't have the behind the scenes. We have that but he didn't.

**Job 1:1-5** There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. His possessions also were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the men of the east. His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.



**Job 1:6-12** Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it." The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil." Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing? "Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. "But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face." Then the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.

**Job 1:13-19** Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, and the Sabeans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

**Job 1:20-22** Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD." Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.

**Job 2:1-6** Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. The LORD said to Satan, "Where have

you come from?” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.” The LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause.” Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. “However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face.” So the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life.”

**Job 2:7-8** Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes.

**Job 2:9-10** Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!” But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women

speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

**Job 42:10-17** The LORD restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the LORD increased all that Job had twofold. Then all his brothers and all his sisters and all who had known him before came to him, and they ate bread with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversities that the LORD had brought on him. And each one gave him one piece of money, and each a ring of gold. The LORD blessed the latter *days* of Job more than his beginning; and he had 14,000 sheep and 6,000 camels and 1,000 yoke of oxen and 1,000 female donkeys. He had seven sons and three daughters. He named the first Jemimah, and the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch. In all the land no women were found so fair as Job’s daughters; and their father gave them inheritance among their brothers. After this, Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons and his grandsons, four generations. And Job died, an old man and full of days.

So, now **You have heard of the endurance of Job and you have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.** Just let me make a couple of comments about these two words “full of compassion” and “merciful”. The words **full of**

**compassion**, *oiktirmon* mean “to be concerned about another’s unfortunate state or misery, *merciful, compassionate.*” God is concerned about your sufferings. He’s not detached in a cold, unconcerned sense. He’s deeply concerned to the point that He’s going to make everything right. Now, that doesn’t take away the suffering but there was a purpose, something Job wasn’t privy too. In Sunday School we said some suffering has to do with the Resolution of the Unseen Angelic Conflict, and here’s a case in point. Job didn’t know what was going on behind the scenes but there was a purpose and in the end we find that God was concerned to the point that He doubled everything Job had. Now, the Lord is also concerned about your sufferings, deeply concerned and if you endure then you can expect the Lord to reward you bountifully at the judgment seat of Christ. Also, it says He’s **merciful**, that’s the Greek word *polusplagchnos*, from two words *polus*, “much” and *splagchnos* “bowels”, “an abundance of bowels”, this is a deep sense of sympathy, compassion. When you see someone hurting you it sometimes makes you sick to your stomach, that’s the idea, it’s “a very high degree of compassion for someone, *sympathetic, compassion, merciful*” and I have no doubt that when we get to the judgment seat of Christ and we’ve endured trials He will show an abundance of compassion for us as He talks through the sufferings that we endured and in the end He will reward us far above and beyond the pain of the sufferings. The rewards will so eclipse our afflictions that we will be overjoyed at all the Lord has done with our lives. So, the challenge of Scripture is to endure the trials, despite the horror, despite the pain, despite the frustrations in this life, patient endurance has a purpose and will be rewarded abundantly at the judgment seat of Christ. I hope these examples are an encouragement to endure, to press forward to spiritual maturity and eagerly expect the Lord’s coming.

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