

INTRO. The beating heart of this passage is in vs 8 *You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.*

The wisdom from above that James has been training us in only makes sense in the light of this HOPE FROM ABOVE.

Jesus is returning... AND SOON!

He will come with the clouds above... [Revelation 1:7](#) "Look, he is coming with the clouds," and "every eye will see him, even those who pierced him"; and all peoples on earth "will mourn because of him."

We believe that Jesus' return represents a future reality where God's will is perfectly fulfilled on earth as it is in heaven.

What does that mean?

- ❖ The best and most beautiful parts of our world will be renewed and shine with unspeakable new brilliance.
- ❖ The worst of our world— and all who hope in it— sin, injustice, greed, arrogance, violence... will be judged.

What we put our hope in matters!

Elie Wiesel, Dec 11, 1986. "*Just as man cannot live without dreams, he cannot live without hope. If dreams reflect the past, hope summons the future.*"

HOPE in Jesus' return summons the generosity and grace of Jesus into our present.

God's generosity and grace causes peace, healing, and joy to flourish

We call this THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

HOPE in Jesus' coming empowers us with a PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE to summon this future into our present.

FOCUS: James highlights TWO key areas to show us what this future hope and judgment looks like in our lives today.

- **WEALTH-** greed, injustice, and the pursuit of luxury.
- **CHURCH-** our relationship with one another as the family of God.

WEALTH- greed, injustice, and the pursuit of luxury.

Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. 2 Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. 4 Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. 5 You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.

James (the whole Bible) doesn't condemn wealth in itself— but the way one gets it and how one uses it.

James condemns 4 specific things: (1) hoarding- vs3 (2) defrauding- vs4 (3) selfish indulgence- vs5 (4) using violence- vs6.

The day of Jesus' return is a day of judgement for greed. "day of slaughter".

James writes about these rich people for two key reasons:

- 1) To call God's people to be patient when we see evil, powerful, greedy people succeeding in the world.
- 2) To call us to persevere/ stand firm in doing good— being generous & kind.

Psalm 37:1 "Do not fume because of evildoers or envy those who do wrong."

Fuming— consumed with anger and worry. Envy— Want what they have.

Either way- fuming and envying both have the power to distract and derail us

Hoping in Jesus' return frees us and cleanses us— to be patient and persevere.

Patience (4x)- makrothymēō— attitude of calmness and confident trust.

Patience empowers our perseverance.

Perseverance is our capacity to stand firm in doing good! Don't give up. Grit!

Prov 11:25 A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

CHURCH- our relationship with one another as the family of God.

9 Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

The call to not grumble against one another is not a gag order to hide, cover up: abuse, hurt, corruption or conflict.

Christian community must be a place where we learn and teach others how to face conflict and sin unto reconciliation and forgiveness.

E. Peterson— Intro to James: "So christian churches are not as a rule model communities of good behavior. They are, rather, places where human misbehavior is brought out in the open, faced, and dealt with."

As a community and individually— we must learn to receive correction.

- Prov 15:31 Whoever heeds life-giving correction will be at home among the wise.
- Prov 15:10 the one who hates correction will die.

The church that ignores correction will die.

But when James addresses [Grumbling](#) he's not talking about life-giving correction.

The word "grumble" ([stenazō](#)) means to complain; to give vent to our frustration.

1. We are speaking negatively of others.
2. We are seeking to gain an ally and sympathy for ourselves.
3. We are focusing on wrong in the other and ignoring the wrong in us.
4. We aren't committed to reconciling with the person in humility.

To this Jesus says in Matthew 7: ["Do not judge, or you too will be judged. 2 For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."](#)

Hope in Jesus' return reminds us that we will all be judged. And the judgement we put on others will be put on us.

The grace you give to others is storing up a grace account with interest for you.

- Be patient with the imperfections of others.
- Persevere in gathering with God's people.
Giving up on the church is only playing into the hands of the devil.