



Strengthen Your Heart and Endure

James 5:7-12

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 (James 5:11—KJV).

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 (James 5:11—NASB).

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 (James 5:11—NRSV).

In an uncertain world where disaster, disease, and death can surprise us at any moment, James tells Christians to be patient, to endure, and strengthen their hearts. Then, he tells us why. “The coming of the Lord is near.” We need to remember that the Lord is near now. The Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit indwell Christians. In 1 John 4:4 & 6, John wrote, “Little children, you are from God, and have conquered them; for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and whoever is not from God does not listen to us. From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.” Jesus will come again, though His coming has not been as soon as many Christians have hoped, and Peter tells us why. Peter explained in 2 Peter 3:8-9 “But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.” In addition, remember this: whenever Christians die, the Lord Jesus has come to take them to the place He has prepared for them. Jesus promised in John’s gospel, in John 14:3, “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.” We can endure with this blessed hope. Christians have good reasons to patiently endure because of the character of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Christians can remind

themselves that God is compassionate and merciful. God's mercies are new every morning as Jeremiah explained in Lamentations 3:21-25, "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.' The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him." Our trials have a purpose and through them we will become more like Jesus Christ. We will become more compassionate and merciful, and others will see the work of Jesus Christ in us and be drawn to faith in Jesus Christ. Amid our afflictions and before they begin, Christians need to strengthen their hearts. We do this through praise and prayers to the Lord God. We do this through the study of the Bible and through daily quiet times of Bible reading. We do this by showing the Lord we love Him by our daily obedience to Him and His Word. By believing and doing what the Bible teaches, people will be blessed.

Thinking Further

1. Why are farmers good examples of being patient?
2. How can Christians strengthen their hearts?
3. How are God's prophets examples of suffering and patience?
4. With what two qualities did James describe the Lord? Why are these qualities important to you and others?
5. How can someone who makes oaths fall under condemnation?