



James 5:7-9 The Coming of the Lord!
"Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!"
March 6, 2016

Text: James 5:7-9

Initial Thoughts:

1. First, let me say that there is no doubt that our LORD is coming again to judge the living and the dead and to usher us into the eschaton, or the eternal state with Him!

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. (2 Tim 4:1-2)

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Rev 20:11-15)

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. (Rev 21:1-7)

2. But let me also ask you a question: Is James referring to the *Second Coming* or a near or "fore-future" event judgement "coming?" Way back in our messages on the [Olivet Discourse \(Mark 13\)](#), we said:

There are three "times" or seasons one can normally observe:

- a. The **fore**-future, which describes events that are relatively imminent, perhaps within a generation from the hearers.
 - b. The **far**-future, which describes events that are a "long" way off.
 - c. The **final**-future, which describes events that are final consummation in nature, i.e. the return of Christ and final judgment...new heaven/new earth stuff.
3. Does it matter? I think it does if we are to get the "weight" of his exhortation to this church.

4. The actual application of these verses for us “RIGHT NOW” is actually very applicable as we’ll see. But regardless of where you land eschatologically on this, “The New Testament is filled with exhortations that a near eschatological event was on the horizon for those living at that time. Here are some examples...” —Gary Demar
- “The night is almost gone, and the day is **near**. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Romans 13:12)
 - “But this I say, brethren, the time has been **shortened**, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none” (1 Corinthians 7:29).
 - “Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the **ends of the ages have come**” (1 Corinthians 10:11).
 - “Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is **near**.” (Philippians 4:5).5
 - “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these **last days** has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world” (Hebrews 1:2).
 - “[Jesus] would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the **consummation of the ages** He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:26).
 - “[Let us not forsake] our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the **day drawing near**” (Hebrews 10:25).
 - “For yet in a **very little while**, He who is coming will come, and **will not delay**” (Hebrews 10:37).
 - “Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the **last days** that you have stored up your treasure! (James 5:3).
 - “The end of all things is **near**; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer” (1 Peter 4:7).
 - “Children, it is the **last hour**; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the **last hour**.” (1 John 2:18).
 - “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must **soon** take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John” (Rev. 1:1).
 - “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is **near**.” (Rev. 1:3).
 - “I am coming **quickly**; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.” (Rev. 3:11).
 - “And [the angel] said to [John], ‘These words are faithful and true’; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must **soon** take place” (Rev. 22:6).
 - “And behold, I am coming **quickly**. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.” (Rev. 22:7).

- “And [the angel] said to [John], ‘Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is **near**.’” (Rev. 22:10).
 - “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.” (Rev. 22:12).
 - “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.” (Rev. 22:20).
5. In other words, when there is “time-sensitive” language in Scripture, we’d do well to acknowledge it rather than to ignore or explain it away. If we don’t we might miss key meanings...
- *Mar 13:24-27 ESV* *"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, (25) and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. (26) **And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.** (27) And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.*
 - *Jer 4:13-14 ESV* *Behold, **he comes up like clouds**; his chariots like the whirlwind; his horses are swifter than eagles-- woe to us, for we are ruined! (14) O Jerusalem, wash your heart from evil, that you may be saved. How long shall your wicked thoughts lodge within you?*
 - *Isa 13:9-10 ESV* *Behold, **the day of the LORD comes**, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. (10) For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.*
 - *An oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, **the LORD is riding on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt**; and the idols of Egypt will tremble at his presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them. 2 And I will stir up Egyptians against Egyptians, and they will fight, each against another and each against his neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom; 3 and the spirit of the Egyptians within them will be emptied out, and I will confound their counsel; and they will inquire of the idols and the sorcerers, and the mediums and the necromancers; 4 and I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a hard master, and a fierce king will rule over them, declares the Lord GOD of hosts. (Isa 19:1-4)*
6. My point in all of this: James’ exhortation was **serious**!
- His hearers didn’t hear a shallow warning that wasn’t applicable to them.
 - They didn’t hear something they could ignore because he was really talking about their great, great, great, great, great great....grandchildren. They didn’t hear pastoral bluster or meaningless metaphor.
 - They heard, via the Holy Spirit who wrote the Text, “fix this now, because the coming of the Lord is at hand!” **Question: What do YOU hear? :**)

The Text:

Jam 5:7 - Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.

- In context, despite the wrongs being done by the rich (vv1-6), his hearers are exhorted to exercise long-**suffering**.
- Just as a farmer must cultivate, plant, weed, water, watch, pray for and wait for rain and then wait again for growth...the believer must do the same. The believer must learn patience.
- The backdrop of this exhortation is the coming of the Lord. Whatever approached would settle accounts and ensure unrighteousness was punished.
- **Applications for us:** Be patient, even when we suffer for **righteousness** sake. There is coming a day when every account will be settled and the meek shall inherit the earth. Take heart!

Jam 5:8 - You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

- Peter gives a similar exhortation for similar reasons:

*For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does. **The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.** (1 Pet 4:3-9)*

- The word “establish” is stērizō is Greek, and literally means “to fix, make fast, or set.” The image suggests something solid, firm, and unmoving.
- **Applications for us:** Again, the idea here is a patient “living-out” of the **precepts, principles, and patterns** of the Lord regardless of day to day suffering.
- Friends, how appropriate an exhortation for the 2016 Church! Are your hearts “established?” Are you going all the way with Christ regardless of what comes? When you refuse friendship with the world (because it’s enmity with God) and suffer, will you be steadfast, unmoving, and abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain? (1 Cor 15:58)

Jam 5:9 - Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.

- To grumble here implies a sighing or moaning. More than just gossip or slander, to grumble here carries the idea of being exasperated with one’s brother...uncaring, frustrated to the point of disunity and disconnection.
- **Applications for us:** Who has time for grumbling when the Judge is standing at the door? :)
- Since the Righteous Judge has every right to be frustrated with us and yet loves and forgives us, shouldn’t we be patient and forgiving towards one another?
- And since final judgment could happen at any moment, shouldn’t we want to “be found” in a loving posture towards one another?

In Summary CRCC...

- Historically, James wrote on the precipice of pending national judgment upon Israel. The temple was obliterated within a generation of his writing, and the national, spiritual, and socio-economic identity of Israel was totally destroyed.
- We too wait in earnest anticipation of judgment, this time a final one, the Second Coming of Christ, as every Christian has since His resurrection. Although we do not know when, **we must live as if it could be at any moment!**
- Our lives should manifest a sense of urgency. Our love should carry the weight of what is upon us, our peace laced with an eternal perspective, our contentment fueling a joy that comes by faith in His promises! Each day has meaning and purpose and moves us closer and closer to either our deaths or His return.

Let us live this way...armor on, holy, loving hard, refusing to grumble, hearts established in and for the LORD, patient in suffering.

May it be so Lord Christ! Amen.