

YOUR WEALTH WILL NOT SAVE YOU, ON THE JUDGEMENT DAY.

In ch.5:1-6, James turns to those who are well of, not necessarily the ones who might have been attending the church that he is writing into I think, but to those who are well off in general, which is helpful because he includes us today in this letter as well. In v5, he says “Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. ²Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. ³Your 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.” “Now listen” again here James wants the full attention of the well of people, he is saying weep and wail this is not a time of indulgence but that of weeping, why? He says because of the misery that is coming. At this point, I’m sure that the rich people looked around and laugh because it all peace and safety their investments are paying off. Well, James is saying weep and wail because the time to be liquidated like our SAA is coming, you are about to be hit by a hard recession, here he is using terms that they were familiar with like “rotted... moths and corroded” because if you were living during that time you were not putting your wealth in the bank as we know it but they built storages which at the end will be at risk of such damages. Imagine with all the savings that you’ve made, i.e. pension fund and so forth, waking up in the morning and checking your online balances and at your surprise, they is only zero, you try to refresh nothing changes, you log out and in again nothing changes, you then try to call the bank, and they tell you sorry you’ve been hit by cyber scammers and left you dry and we can’t trace anything. I think that James here gives a warning that is similar with Matthew 6:19, that is “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”¹ But, why such a disaster is coming to the rich? Well, James is going to give us two things, one is the injustice of not paying the wage of their workers and

secondly, it's their lavish lifestyle while there are poor people among them.

¹ Anon, 2011. [The New International Version](#), Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

In, v4, he starts with an emotionally filled command “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,” It clear that these people are not necessarily rich because if they were, they will be able to finance their lavish lifestyle and pay people at the same time but they can't, for them to satisfy their desires and finance their wasteful lifestyle they withhold wages. The painful thing is that the people had no other means to feed their families, so without their daily wage they will be no food. But I want to draw your attention on how James refers to God here, he refers to him as “the Lord Almighty” the One with many armies. What then does this means? Well, it means that God himself will revenge the injustice that is pressed down to the poor by the rich, James wants us to know that friendship with the world is enmity with God. As we see in the OT with Cain and Abel how when he had killed his brother, his brother's blood cried out to the Lord and the Lord responded to Cain by judgement.

Are you in a position of being an employee, how do you treat your workers? Are you generous? Are you in any form of leadership? How do you treat people that are under you? In the way that you are treating them does it lead them to worship God and be thankful to God for your leadership?

In v5-6, James condemn their lavish lifestyle that is on the expense of the poor, “You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. ⁴ ⁶ You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.” “you have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter,” meat was scares to the poor, they will only have meat when they are feast or some sort of celebration but as of the rich they will have excess of meat; but the picture that James is giving us here is really that one of a cow that is fattened for the purpose of being slaughtered. Such is the rich with their lavish lifestyle and diet, they are fattening themselves for the day of judgement. In v6, not paying people their wage was almost killing them since they had no other means of feeding themselves and their families.

James had spoken harshly about the rich, is he against being rich, I don't think so in ch.1:10, he encouraged those who are rich to take pride in their humiliation, but he is against those who put their hope in their riches rather than in Christ and being boastful of their riches rather than being humbly and wait for the Lord to lift them up.

How is your lifestyle enabling you to serve God more? Or how's it hindering you to do so? How can you store up your treasures in heaven through your lifestyle? It is time that we become heavenly bound with our material things and our lives.