

## **Jas24 – Unjust Suffering James 5:1-11**

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Open your Bibles. Title of the message today, “Unjust Suffering.” Initially I was only going to teach half the text. We are going through eleven verses of James Chapter 5 from verse 1 to verse 11 so go ahead and turn there.

I was only going to teach half of it because there seemed to be a break there. And I was considerably worried because the first half of the text today is completely all Old Testament style bring down the fire, judgment. Baam! For six verses nothing but judgment. And I was saying to God, “What am I supposed to do with this? Do you really want me to spend fifty minutes on pure judgment?” That’s a lot to take. Thankfully, because of you giving God’s provision, I have very good computer software that includes a lot of really good Greek scholars. And these Greek scholars teach me what I don’t know (which is a lot.) They teach me about Greek grammar, and Greek structure and specifically for today they teach me about literary devices especially in the Greek. And so these scholars helped me see that our first half that is all judgment is really set up, foundation laying, for our second half. Hear me, please. Our first half supports and leads into our second half.

Here’s how it does it. Our first section today is pure judgment upon the ungodly rich who are taking advantage of the godly poor. And so James is going to begin his message today with a hot condemnation of what most people call the evil rich who are causing unjust suffering to the godly poor.

Here’s the deal. Most scholars agree this is a literary device called “rhetorical apostrophe.” Here is the concept of this literary device. It means “*to turn away from the person you are addressing and address someone else who is not there for the benefit of the person who is there.*” And so you rhetorically address someone who will never hear what you say in order to benefit the person who is hearing what you say.

There is a rhetorical apostrophe here. In Ezekiel Chapter 29, Ezekiel was speaking to Israel and here’s what God says to Ezekiel. He is speaking to Israel while they’re in captivity yet God says to him:

### **Ezekiel 29:2 (NLT)**

***2 “Son of man, turn and face Egypt and prophesy against Pharaoh the king and all the people of Egypt.***

And so Ezekiel is addressing Israel for their benefit but God says turn and address someone who is not there who is not going to hear these words, turn and address the

Pharaoh and the people of Egypt. Why? To assure Israel that God knew what was going on. To assure Israel that God knew the unjust suffering that they had been through and were under, and to assure them that he would do something about it. It's called rhetorical apostrophe.

Jesus does this same thing. (I'm just setting it up so you understand.) Jesus does the same thing Luke 10 verse 13. He's speaking to his disciples, the seventy actually, the larger group. And he says

**Luke 10:13 (ESV)**

***13 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! . . .***

He turns from those he is addressing and address two cities. Well, obviously the cities cannot hear what he is saying to them. But he addresses them directly and then he issues a prophetic judgement against those cities. Why? For the benefit of the disciples that he is speaking to. This is really important that you understand this, because I need you to understand this. It's rhetorical apostrophe.

And so James is going to turn from who he is talking to and address someone who is not there and is not going to hear what he is saying, for the benefit of those who are going to hear what he is saying. He is going to condemn the evil rich who are causing unjust suffering to the godly poor. And he's going to use that to lead into very strong encouragement to those who are suffering unjustly. Here's what he's going to do:

#1) He's going to make it clear God knows. *God knows*. If you are experiencing unjust or are suffering wrongly, James is going to tell you today, God knows. He knows and he is more than able to handle it. In fact, judgment is already set.

#2) He's going to call the believers to stand steadfast. To stand strong. To put their trust and their faith in him. To be patient and to cling to Christ right through their unjust suffering.

So he's going to explain that God knows, and he's going to explain what to do while we experience suffering wrongly, or unjust suffering.

Let's pray. *Lord Jesus we just need to know what you need us to know. That's it. That's all we need. We need to understand your Word, Lord. We need to draw out the original intent that you gave James to write. And then we need to see how it applies to our lives, Lord. That's what we need. That's what we need God. And so Lord we know that we can't do that in our own logic or reasoning, it must be revealed. And so we ask for divine revelation, that before this time is over that we would know that you know, Lord. You*

*know what's going on around us and possibly to us. If we are suffering unjustly you are aware and you are able and your judgment is already in place. And Lord, we need to know what to do about it in the meantime. Show us Lord, what you call us to in the midst of unjust suffering, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen.*

Let me just say before we jump in the point today, please hear the point before we get to the first section, is strong encouragement to believers who are suffering unjustly. Strong encouragement to believers to remain steadfast in unjust suffering that we will experience in this world. That's the main point. The source of the unjust suffering that hearers are experiencing just happens to be from evil rich people. Alright? That doesn't mean all rich people are evil, but some rich people are evil. Here's a news flash, some poor people are evil. Here's a bigger news flash, some poor people love money more than rich people, that's the worst of all. But that's not really the point today.

James is going to issue this fiery Old Testament judgment on the unrighteous rich who are abusing the righteous poor. But these unrighteous rich almost certainly aren't in the congregation, and will probably never read the letter or hear what James is saying. He's doing it for the benefit of those who are listening, so that they know – oh, okay, God does understand. God does understand what I'm going through. When someone has wronged me, when someone is causing me pain unjustly God is absolutely aware and he has a plan to even the score (you might say. Which gives me a lot of peace.)

### **James 5:1 (ESV)**

***I Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you.***

If we were to just stop there, then the title above this section in your Bible that says something like “warning to the rich” would be accurate. In my humble agreement to many scholars who know, this isn't really a warning to the rich at large. It is a warning to the rich who are abusing the poor. And we will see that as we continue. James is not simply condemning the rich en masse or money. We'll see in just a minute he's condemning the actions of these rich toward the poor. The Bible, as you may know, does not condemn money in and of itself.

However, the Bible very clearly condemns our love of money, and I might say whether we have it or not, it condemns how much we love it. It does not condemn riches, per se. There were many heroes in the Bible who were very wealthy, starting with Abraham. Super wealthy. King David. King Solomon of course, super wealthy. In the New Testament church, listen, I'm just going to be honest with you, it's the same as in this church. In the New Testament church God always put a wealthy person in the midst of the church to help support his work. In every city that Paul went to. Think of Lydia that started the church in Philippi, God uses people that he gifts with wealth to give.

By the way, God gives to those who give. I'm not saying anything, I'm not promising you anything. I'm just telling you how God works. He gives people the gift of giving, Romans 12 lists giving as one of the spiritual creation gifts, and once he gives someone the gift of giving, then he gives them something to give because he gave them the gift of giving. So he gives them something to give and God always uses those people to absolutely, well, it's more than provide, for the ministry. This ministry would not exist without those people.

Let's move on. James 5:1, is a fiery wake up call to the rich who are abusing the poor. ***Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you.*** And then he continues prophesying judgment upon them. James 5:2-3.

### **James 5:2-3 (ESV)**

***2 Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten.***

***3 Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days.***

There's the James we know and love. He's speaking to the ungodly rich, those who have riches that they have obtained in an ungodly, unrighteous and evil way. We'll get to it in a second, he says your riches that you think are so sweet have rotted. Your garments that you think are so fine are moth-eaten, they are. They already are. It's prophetic judgment. Your gold and silver you think is your security is corroded to worthlessness and the corrosion of all that you think is so fine is going to end up being evidence against you in the Day of Judgment. And not just that, but the corrosion of riches is going to eat your flesh like fire.

This might be a little bit of hyperbole. It's to get a point across. That your riches in a spiritual way, if they're handled incorrectly, if your heart is incorrect in them, will not only be evidence in the Day Of Judgment against you, but will corrode your flesh like fire.

The end of verse 3 in the NLT says ***This treasure you have accumulated will stand as evidence against you on the day of judgment.*** Reminds you of Jesus, doesn't it, in Matthew 6:21 where he says ***"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*** You've heard me say it before, I'll say it again. If you want your heart in the world, put your treasure there and your heart will follow. If you want your heart in heaven, put your treasure there and your heart will follow. So wherever you want your heart just put your treasure there. These people's treasure is going to stand as evidence against them proving the evilness of their heart.

In verse 4 James begins to tell us why. Again, not a general all-encompassing blasting of judgment on the rich, but on these evil rich. Here's why. James 5:4.

### **James 5:4 (ESV)**

***4 Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.***

This is not referring to a one-time accounting error, but referring to a method, a lifestyle. The way these people got rich is by keeping back fraudulently the wages that they owed those that worked in the field. The picture is of a rich land owner versus a day laborer in the field. Something that honestly we can still really relate to here in our community.

This is how they got rich. They got rich by abusing the poor. And God was watching. The poor is who James is writing to. But he is speaking to the rich, why? To let the poor know that God knows. So he turns from the poor and says to the rich, “This is what’s coming.”

And what are all these poor, unjust suffering believers in James’ church doing? “Yeah, God! Bring it!” They’re starting to feel pretty good, right? You are all thinking that’s not a very Christian thing to do. Well, God says that their evil riches are going to corrode their flesh like fire. Just agree with God – “Yeah God I agree. Amen. Corrode away.”

Listen, the point is, what are we called to do as unjust sufferers. When we suffer wrongly at the hands of the world. When we suffer wrongly, what do we do about it? First thing we do, is we know that God knows. We know that not only does God know but he will judge justly and fairly. The prophetic judgment, ***the wages of the laborers you have defrauded are crying out against you.*** Just like when Cain killed able and God says to Cain in Genesis Chapter 4, ***The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground.*** Here’s the first point – God sees injustice done to you. *God sees injustice done to you.* It cries out to him. That is reassuring.

In verse 4 it says ***the cries of the harvesters*** themselves ***have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.*** Not that any of you fit this description, but hypothetically, if you did this is where you would want to be very afraid. When the cries of those you have defrauded have reached the Lord of Hosts. The name “The Lord of Hosts” in Hebrew is YAHWEH SOBOATH. (It gives me chills.) Which means literally “*The Commander of the Armies of Heaven.*” Okay, now you just made the wrong guy mad! Because of your injustice to his kids, he “ain’t happy” and his name is the Commander of the Armies of Heaven, and that’s bad news for someone inflicting unjust suffering on one of God’s kids. That is bad news! It gives me peace. I can say “You know. And I know who you are. You are YAHWEH SOBOATH, you are the Commander of the Armies of Heaven. I don’t have to lift a finger because they’ve called down your fury for messing with me.”

I don’t know about you, but it gives me a little peace. That’s what James is trying to do here. James is saying, “Your God knows. ***YOUR GOD KNOWS!*** You don’t have to say ‘Hey God do you notice what’s happening here.’” God knew it before you were born.

The Commander of Heaven's Armies is watching and he's not happy. That gives those who are suffering unjustly, some peace.

In James 5 verses 5-6, James finishes the oppression of the poor. James says to the evil rich:

**James 5:5-6 (ESV)**

***5 You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.***

***6 You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.***

These evil rich who have gotten their gain by abusing the righteous poor, they've lived in luxury and self-indulgence at the expense of God's kids. But God says what is really happening is they are just fattening themselves up for the day of slaughter. Like a pig about to become bacon. That's what these people are doing, they are fattening themselves up to become bacon. That's what God says, look in verse 5. "You've fattened your hearts to become bacon." Paraphrased. Notice, why does he say fattened their hearts? It's not because they're eating Big Macs every day. It's not because they are closing up their veins with Big Macs. It's because the heart is the center of who we are. It's the very core of who we are. It's our thoughts, it's our emotions, and it's our desires. And God says "You have fed your inner desires, fattening yourself up for the day of slaughter." Pretty aggressive language. God wants James' listeners to know that the people who are causing them suffering unjustly will be reckoned with by God. The Commander of the Hosts of Heaven. This means you don't have to get involved. God sees it.

Sometimes, certainly, I went overboard. Maybe every time now that I think about it. But when someone starts messing with my kids, I'm like, "Listen, baby. You go sit in the room, lock yourself in, cover your ears. I'll take care of this."

I'm just thinking about when the enemy got people in this church to attack my children in the early days. And I went off on them like a Tasmanian devil. And the enemy, then he used that too. I was wrong. I should have just said, "God. Get them. You are the Commander of the Hosts of Heaven. And mess with my kids they're messing with your grandkids. Do that whole 'flesh corrode by their riches' thing, or something. Just do that thing. I'm good with it."

I should have locked myself up with my kids. If you're God's kid today, he knows what's going on. He will even the score. Let's move on.

Finally, the NLT for James 5:6 says:

**James 5:6 (NLT)**

***6 You have condemned and killed innocent people, who do not resist you***

Some of those innocent people are in the church that James is writing to. This brings us to part two, which is our primary focus. James has laid this foundation so you know as a child of God that when someone wrongs you, God's aware. You know that know. He is aware and he "ain't happy." (Can I say "ain't" when I talk about God? I don't know.) Here's part two. James is going to encourage those who are unjustly suffering in two ways, he's going to encourage you.

#1) He is going to want you to know that God knows and that his judgment is already set for those who causing suffering in your life.

#2) He wants you to know what to do about it in the meantime. He's going to tell you right now.

We started James with six messages on God's encouragement in the midst of our trials. Messages 2-7, we made a little mini-series called "Trials" out of them. You can ask Pam at the wordbymail table and she will get you all six of those messages. The "Trials" mini-series.

Here's a cool deal. God started James with encouragement in trials and he is going to finish James with encouragement in trials. The trial, unjust suffering – evil rich abusing godly poor. James is going to tell the believers in the church and he is going to tell us, listen carefully, he is going to tell the believers how to handle unjust suffering.

First, James assures us that God knows what our oppressors have done. He hasn't missed it. He's on the job. He's watching. He already knows what he's going to do about it. That lays the base for James to build his encouragement on.

Now James can say, now that the question "what about them?" is out of the way, James can move on to the question "what about you." You can get that what about them question out of the way. God knows when you've upset the Lord of the Commander of the Armies of Heaven, that's not blessing. God knows, let it go.

The only question that's left is "what do you do about it?" You know what God's going to do about it. The only question now is what do you do about it. James is going to tell you now, God can handle them how are you going to handle yourself? What are we supposed to do when we find ourselves in the midst of unjust suffering? When we are mistreated by those in the world unjustly? What are we to do? Here's the answer, James 5:7-8.

**James 5:7-8 (ESV)**

***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.***

***8 You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.***

James is going to tell us right up front, be patient. Settle down. Be patient. See the word “therefore” that’s the word that connects this to the previous text. James says, therefore, because God’s got this, here’s what you do. Be patient, brothers.

So we know from the word “therefore” that James is still talking about unjust suffering from the first section, and he says therefore because of what we just read, because you know that God is going to bring justice in that unjust situation. Because you know that God is going to judge and you don’t need to, therefore be patient. Be patient. Until when? Until the coming of the Lord. Really? That long? Look – that might be before lunch. And when it does come it is going to come quickly. Be patient. *Be patient*. It’s Godly counsel. Not just until the coming of the Lord, but by focusing on the coming of the Lord.

*Do you know what you set your mind on determines how you live?* If your mind is set on your “self” you are going to live for your “self.” It’s not rocket science. If your mind is set on money, you are going to live for money. If your mind is set on the coming of the Lord, you are going to live for the coming of the Lord. This is not that complicated. It’s just that we love the stuff that kills us – we love our sin, and we love the world. So we set our mind there and we get exactly what we set our mind on, destruction and death. But if we’ll set our mind on the coming of the Lord, we’ll live for the coming of the Lord.

Colossians 3:2 says

**Colossians 3:2 (ESV)**

***2 Set your minds on things that are above*** (like the coming of the Lord), ***not on things that are on earth*** (like your SUFFERING).

Set your mind on things above, like the coming of the Lord, the righteousness of God, the just recompense of God. Set your mind on those things, not on the things of this earth, like your temporary (Paul says in Corinthians) light and momentary affliction. Be patient. *Be patient*. Set your mind on the coming of the Lord.

This word “be patient” (I love it) is used only twice in the New Testament. Both times right here. Here’s what the word means: “*to be even tempered while enduring trying circumstances.*” That takes the power of God. When Galatians 5:16 says ***walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh*** you’ve got to be in the Spirit. When Ephesians 5:18 says ***be full of the spirit*** (be “being” filled, be constantly filled) you need that in order to be even tempered while enduring trying circumstances.

Another lexicon (Louw-Nida) says it means “*a state of emotional calm in the face of misfortune.*” Paul says “I’ve learned the secret to abounding and abasing, having plenty or suffering need.” What does he say? “I can do all things through Christ. I’m at peace in the midst of misfortune. Be even-tempered, be calm in the face of unjust suffering. Be patient.

How? Easy for you to say, James. (Probably wasn't.) How do we get this kind of patience? Let me tell you what James says.

#1) By knowing God will handle the situation. God you've got that, so I'm going to just relax here. I'm going to be patient. I'm going to back off and let you be God, and be my Daddy, my Abba.

#2) You set your mind on the coming of the Lord. Isn't that great counsel? You set your mind over the horizon... Lord any day. Any day. Any day. Any moment.

In James 5:7 he uses a farming illustration to paint a picture of this type of patience. Let me just tell you up front, in case you have heard these verses read in another way or for another purpose. This is not allegorical. This is a real farmer, planting real crops in a real field. Some or even most of us have seen this occur.

***James 5:7 . . . 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.***

This is called "rain fed agriculture" or "rain fed farming." It's a very real deal, it was real in Canaan at that time and it's real today. Now I'll tell you where it wasn't real – Blythe. Because there was no rain fed farming in Blythe. We had the Colorado River. But out here we experience rain fed farming.

Here's how it works. In the fall, the rains come. And they usually come hard and they prepare the soil. And so as soon as the first rain comes, the farmers all rush out and they work themselves to the bone (they work themselves to the bone all the time) but they work really hard to plant. And then what do they do? They don't put out sprinklers. They wait. The rains come, they work hard and then they wait. They wait patiently. They wait patiently until the rains of late spring. And when the rains of late spring come, the seeds have germinated and they have done all their stuff and they are just coming up, all of a sudden in late spring the fields get green. This is rain fed agriculture. That's what James is talking about, and that's what they did in Canaan, otherwise known as Palestine. The point of the illustration is hard work followed by difficult patience. Waiting and trusting that God will send exactly what we need when it's time, just before the harvest.

The reason I am spending a little time on this is just in case you are familiar with what we call the "Latter Rain" theology or the movements associated with it. I'm not speaking completely about those things. I can just tell you after intense agonizing exegesis, this verse is about farming. It's about how a farmer farms. And the context is about *us waiting for the deliverance from God in our suffering*. Suffering is hard. We are waiting for God to bring the rain just before the harvest. Verse 8 confirms that.

### **James 5:8 (ESV)**

***8 You also*** (just as the farmer), ***be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.***

This just proves that the illustration of the farmer was about patience. Remember, this is about you standing in the midst of unjust and unfair suffering. Be patient. Establish your heart and set your mind on the coming of the Lord. Be patient. Trust God. Don't take things into your own hands. Wait for God. Let him bring his justice in his time. You trust. You wait. You rely on him. You establish your heart. You stand firm.

How? By trusting that the Lord is already at work. He has not left you, he has not forsaken you. He's not sleeping. He is involved. And you can trust him and be patient.

Next, James addresses one other thing very common for us. Very, very common. He addresses the fact that when things get tough for us, we tend to grumble. Don't we? When things get tough for us we grumble. James is going to say, while you are patiently enduring your unjust suffering, make sure that you aren't taking it out on the people around you.

### **James 5:9 (ESV)**

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

He just put you in the same boat as the ungodly rich who are going to be judged. Now he says, hey, pal. Don't think those evil rich people are the only ones who are going to be judged. You don't grumble against one another so that you may not be judged. And then, by the way, the Judge is standing at the door. By the way, the judge is standing at your door too, pal, so you better watch how you're handling things while you are suffering unjustly. It's so common for us to take out our frustrations on those around us. It's so common. We have a bad day at work, we come home, someone at work has wronged us, we take it out on our wife or our husband. We're stressed. We're tired, we stayed up too late watching late night TV. We don't have enough sleep and who do we take it out on the next day? Our poor kids. They're just being kids. But we can't handle it because we are stressed and tired so we take it out on our children, we take it out on our spouse. James says don't do that so that *you* won't be judged. Don't do that so that you won't be judged because the Judge is standing at your door just like he is standing at the evil people's door.

The people that are harming you aren't the only ones that the Lord is watching. The people who are doing you harm aren't the only ones who are subject to God's judgment. We are too. He's at our door too. The word for "grumble" here, it "*involves criticism and faultfinding directed at others.*" Listen, if you're continually criticizing and fault finding

get some Holy Spirit on you, get transformed. You've got to crucify that because it brings death. Criticism, faultfinding, grumbling. God says be careful you're not doing that, you're going to get judged just like those evil rich people. YIKES! James make his point so well.

God's watching us too. So while you're patiently enduring, make sure you're not treating one another poorly. *Make sure that as you endure unjust suffering that you are not causing unjust suffering to those around you.* Or you will end up in the same boat as the people who are causing you harm. Now we all need Jesus, don't we?

Finally in response to unjust suffering, James says consider the prophets and the heroes of the faith.

### **James 5:10-11 (ESV)**

***10 As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.***

***11 Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.***

Again, verse 10 says ***As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord***. The word "take" means literally "to hold before your mind." You think you have suffered? Read Hebrews 11, the second half, and you'll see suffering of the faithful. Right, if you haven't been sawn in two or torn apart by lions yet, you are still short on the suffering scale. Consider the heroes of the faith and consider how they suffered. Hold that in your mind as an example for what God calls you to in your unjust suffering.

And then verse 11 says ***we consider those blessed who remained steadfast***. Remain steadfast. I have said to my family and myself a thousand times, the devil only wins if we quit. *The devil only wins if we quit.* God is victorious. *God is victorious!* And all you have to do is remain steadfast. "Lord, I am not moving. I am going to remain steadfast. Lord I want to remain steadfast in the face of this suffering; I want to be found faithful. I want to establish my heart in you, I want to remain steadfast, and Lord help me to do that. Give me the strength to do that. Help me to hold on to the examples of the prophets and the men and women who have gone before me in suffering. And Lord, remind me that your blessing comes to those who remain steadfast in the midst of their suffering."

That gives you purpose. It gives you purpose. There is a purpose to remain steadfast in your suffering, because God promises a blessing. If you will choose to set your mind on him alone, on Christ alone, if you'll choose to trust that he is going to come with both reward and judgment, including for believers – 1 Corinthians 3 and other places explain

reward and loss for believers based on how we have stood in him. If you will trust him to make things right you will be blessed if you stand steadfast. In Christ. No matter what. That's strong encouragement. God will honor those who remain steadfast.

There's no better example than Job. What happened to Job wasn't fair. He didn't deserve it. Job had great struggles. He did. But he remained steadfast. He remained *steadfast*. He remained steadfast. The word for his "steadfastness," used twice here means "*the inward fortitude necessary to withstand hardship or stress.*" I am going to stand and I am not going to move until Jesus comes. I am just going to be steadfast and wait for my Lord to show. That's what the prophets did. That's what the heroes of the Bible did. That's what we need to do.

Have an inward fortitude that enables us to withstand hardship and stress. That is steadfastness. May we be steadfast in the faith and in what God has called us to, may we be steadfast.

We may not like the fact that God allowed Job's trials. But you weren't around for God to get your okay, so he had to go ahead and make that decision himself. God had a purpose. God had a purpose in Job's suffering. Can I just tell you please, God has a purpose in your suffering? He does. And I know you're saying, "I'd like to know!" Yeah, I'd like to know to. But that would make us equal with God. What God wants is for us to trust he has a purpose, not to demand he shares his purpose with us, but to trust his purpose.

*God gave Job the steadfastness and Job had to choose to be steadfast every single day.*  
At the end of James 5:11

**James 5:11 - (NLT)**

***11 . . . You can see how the Lord was kind to [Job] at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy.***

Let me just tell you guys, ***in this world you will experience tribulation*** Jesus says. ***In me you will have peace.*** He says. ***In this world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*** Jesus says in John 16:33. God knows you're going to suffer unjustly and he has already provided the victory.

The only question now is how will you suffer? How will you go through it? My prayer is that we would be steadfast, that we would trust him, that we would stand firm in him. And that we would wait for his coming with blessing and reward with him in response to our steadfastness. Amen!

Let's pray. *Heavenly Father, please we know we don't have this in ourselves. We know that we don't have this in ourselves. We need it from you. Jesus, please, pour into us your*

*Spirit that we would trust you when we are wronged unjustly. That we would trust you. And that we would be more concerned about how we respond, not what they have done to us, but how we respond. Lord our desire, our prayer, is to be faithful and to stand steadfast, to be sure and to trust you more than our circumstances. To set our eyes on you. To set our minds on things of heaven, to look for your soon and coming return. Make us steadfast in the faith, being patient. Patiently waiting for you to come with reward in your wings. Please strengthen us and give us daily encouragement we pray in Jesus' name, amen.*