

## James 5:13-15

### Prayer

- James is writing to them amid the stress and hostility and persecution and temptations and trials that the world is bringing to bear on them to encourage them to stay faithful. That was the theme in chapter 1, and he returns to it in verses 7 to 11 in chapter 5 when he says, “Be patient; endure your mistreatment; strengthen your hearts.” Which brings the context in full view when we begin in verse 13.
- Prayer is mentioned in every single verse, from verse 13 through verse 18. In verse 13, he talks about the individual. And then in verses 14 and 15, he talks about the elders. Then in verse 16, he talks about the whole congregation, the one another’s.
- **Verse 13:** It is a passage about healing spiritual weakness, spiritual weariness, spiritual exhaustion, spiritual depression which calls for spiritual means - prayer.
- Suffering in verse 13 is a Greek word that means “evil treatment.” Same word used in 2 Timothy 2:2. A continual pleading. If you’re not suffering, then praise God on the other hand. The Greek word here for cheerful flows with context also, well in the spirit.
- **Verse 14:** Sick here in the Greek is Astheneo which primary meaning is weak. For context study Romans 4:19, 14:1-2, 1 Cor. 8:9; 11-12, and Romans 5:6. Used in each case as being spiritually weak. Study also 2 Cor. 12:7-10.
- If you’re just suffering, you pray.” But if you’ve hit rock bottom, sometimes it’s hard to pray, isn’t it? You call on others to pray for you. Verse 14, “Let him call for the elders of the church.” Acts 6:4
- Notice he does not say call for the one with the gift of healing. Also notice the plural elders. Implying there would be several elders in the local church.
- Anointing with oil. The verb is aleiphō. It means rubbing. Literally, it means to crush over. “After having oiled him.”
- Not ceremonial anointing. The word chriō is ceremonial.

- So, from a literal viewpoint, you can see a persecuted Christian coming in, whose body is broken because he has been attacked literally and physically for the cause of Christ. You can see a believer coming in who's wounded and broken and crushed in his spirit. On the one hand, they might really apply oil.
- This is the ministry of restoration, that the wounded, broken, pained, weak, weary, exhausted believers are coming to the elders.
- **Verse 15:** Sick is the word *kamnonta* which means weary. The prayer offered in faith by those godly men will restore the one who is weary and has lost heart. Spiritual restoration, spiritual strength. Obviously, it must be a prayer offered in faith. James 1:6-8.
- "Raise him up." That's the word *egeirō*, which means to arouse, to awaken, to excite. Encouragement! Isn't that what we all need?
- If it is the case that you're weariness and your spiritual defeat is a result of sin, in that environment of crying out to God and confessing your need, He'll forgive you.
- **Conclusion:** Let's consider the Great Shepherd for a moment and look at Psalm 23. "He anoints my head with oil."
- Do you know what that meant? When the shepherd brought all the sheep into the little fold on the hillside, after they'd grazed all day, he put his staff down in front of the little entry, and only one sheep went through at a time. He checked over the whole body. Wherever there was a wound, he poured oil and soothed it. Wherever the skin was parched, he rubbed it then let the sheep go in. That's the shepherd's ministry. That's the ministry. The ministry of caring. It's a ministry of restoration.