

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



“The Wait Between the Rains and the Harvest”

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): James/Jacob 5:7-11; 1:2-8, 19-20; Deut. 11:14; Jer. 5:24; Hos. 6:3; Joel 2:23-27; Heb. 12:1-3; Ex. 34:6-8

There is a difficult space between planting and harvesting. The seed has gone into the ground, the work has begun, and yet there is no visible fruit. You may know that something is happening beneath the surface, but from where you are standing, the field can still look empty. That waiting becomes even more difficult when the situation involves injustice, mistreatment, or something that feels deeply unfair. We want the harvest now. We want resolution now. We want God to step in immediately, make things right, and show us that none of our faithfulness has been wasted. And please show it soon, Lord!

Jacob has just addressed wealthy landowners who were withholding the wages of their workers. He tells them that the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of ADONAI. Then he turns to those who are suffering and says, *“So be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord”* (Jas. 5:7). He is speaking to people who are living in the wait between the rains and the harvest. His message is not that injustice does not matter or that they should pretend nothing is wrong. His message is that, while they wait for God to bring the harvest of justice, they must not allow the waiting process to negatively reshape their hearts into the likeness of those who have wronged them. Rather, our character is to be being shaped into the likeness of Yeshua, who demonstrated the character of the Father.

1. WAIT PATIENTLY FOR THE PRECIOUS HARVEST

Jacob begins by pointing us toward a farmer: *“See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient for it until it receives the early and late rain”* (Jas. 5:7). The farmer is a powerful picture because there are certain things he simply cannot control. He can plant the seed, prepare the ground, remove the weeds, and care for the field, but he cannot command the rain to fall or force the seed to grow. He must work faithfully, trusting that what he cannot produce with his own hands will come at the proper time.

The farmer's waiting is not idle, passive, or careless. He continues working the field because he believes a precious harvest is forming beneath the surface. Jacob calls it *“the precious fruit of the earth.”* The word translated “precious” commonly describes something rare, valuable, and worthy of honor. In the same way, God is producing something precious within us during the long space between the rains and the harvest. We may not yet see the fruit, but the waiting is not wasted. The question is not merely, “When will this be over?” but also, “Lord, what are You growing in me while I wait?”

2. STRENGTHEN YOUR HEART WHILE YOU WAIT

Jacob continues, *“You also be patient. Strengthen your hearts because the coming of the Lord is near”* (Jas. 5:8). Biblical patience is more than simply tolerating a difficult situation. The word Jacob uses – **μακροθυμία/makrothumia** – literally conveys the idea of being slow to anger—keeping anger/boiling passion at a distance. Being patient or “slow to anger” reflects the character of ADONAI, who is slow to anger (Ex. 34:6). When we are mistreated, we are called to choose the attitude with which we will endure the waiting, remembering that human wrath cannot produce God’s righteousness or justice.

That is why Jacob immediately adds, *“Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged. Behold, the Judge is standing at the doors”* (Jas. 5:9). Grumbling is often the early rumbling of anger before the eruption comes. The harvest has not yet arrived, the rain seems delayed, and frustration begins to turn inward toward the people around us. We may not have openly lost our temper, but the conversation taking place **within** our hearts is already feeding resentment. Jacob tells us to deal with the lava before the volcano erupts. The Judge is standing at the door, so we can entrust the timing and outcome to Him while allowing Him to strengthen and purify our hearts.

3. ENDURE BY CLINGING TO THE LORD

Jacob then gives us examples: *“As an example of suffering and patience (makrothumia – “slow-to-anger-ness”), brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord”* (Jas. 5:10). The prophets spoke boldly against injustice, even when the person responsible was a king. They did not remain silent, but neither did they incite violent revolution or pursue personal revenge. They spoke the Word of ADONAI, called people to repentance, and trusted the Lord with the outcome. They are not merely historical figures for us to admire; they are patterns showing us how faithful people should live under pressure.

Jacob particularly draws our attention to Job: *“You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the outcome of ADONAI—that ADONAI is full of compassion and mercy”* (Jas. 5:11). Job’s endurance was not passive silence. He wrestled, questioned, grieved, and cried out, but he never released his grip on God. He refused the shallow answers offered by his friends and continued pursuing ADONAI through the confusion. That is endurance: not pretending that suffering does not hurt, but clinging tightly and unyieldingly to the Lord when we cannot understand what He is doing.

CONCLUSION

When we face unfair treatment, we may feel that we have endured enough. We may think, “This is wrong. I have to fight back. I have to defend myself. I have to make this person pay.” We may be asking, “When will this trial be over?” Yet Jacob invites us to ask a different question: “Lord, what are You trying to **produce in me** through this?” There may be actions we need to take, truth we need to speak, or boundaries we need to

establish, but we must do those things with hearts shaped by the character of Yeshua rather than hearts controlled by anger, resentment, and revenge.

Today, the invitation is to bring the grumbling, the anger, the weariness, and the injustice before the Lord. Perhaps you have been standing under something for a long time, and the ground feels dry. Do not give up before the latter rain comes. Strengthen your heart, fix your eyes on Yeshua, and trust that something valuable is being formed in you. Come before Him and say, “Lord, I release my right to revenge. I give You the person who hurt me, the situation I cannot control, and the justice I cannot produce. Make my heart firm. Keep me slow to anger. Teach me to wait faithfully until Your precious fruit is brought to completion.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why does Jacob connect the command to be patient with the injustice described in Jas. 5:1–6?
2. What does the farmer teach us about the difference between passive waiting and active, faithful waiting?
3. Where are you currently tempted to take justice into your own hands rather than entrusting the outcome to the Lord?
4. What inner grumbling or repeated conversation in your heart may be slowly feeding anger toward another person?
5. How can the examples of the prophets, Job, and Yeshua help you endure suffering without becoming bitter, passive, or vengeful?

CLOSING PRAYER:

ADONAI, You are greatly compassionate and full of mercy and slow to anger. Teach us to wait faithfully when we cannot control the rain, change the situation, or produce the outcome ourselves. Strengthen our hearts and make us firm in You. Expose in us any grumbling, resentment, and anger that may be growing beneath the surface so that we can address it and repent of it, and keep us from trying to produce Your justice through human wrath. Help us to work faithfully while we wait, trusting that You are producing precious fruit within us. Give us the endurance of Job, the courage of the prophets, and the character of Yeshua. May total joy lead the way as we trust that Your presence is near and that You will bring Your work to completion.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.