

## **James 5:9-11 — Patient Endurance Among God's People in Times of Trial**

Today we continue in James chapter 5, covering verses 9-11.

Memory Verses:

James 1:2-4 NKJV

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

### **Revision**

Last week we saw that James chapter 5 starts off with a dire warning to the unbelieving rich in the church who were completely absorbed in, or focused on, their materialistic ways. James paints this scary picture so that we as believers won't be envious of them and so be tempted by the sinful enticements, temporary comfort, and false sense of security that materialism offers. Instead, James encourages and exhorts us to be patient and establish our hearts to seek the Lord and serve in His kingdom. Why? Because we are waiting for our Lord and Saviour, and when He comes (either the rapture or when we die), He will right every wrong, and richly reward us for all that we have done, sacrificed, and suffered for the sake of the gospel.

We'll start this week by reading James 5:1-11.

**James 5:1-11 NKJV**

**Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you!* <sup>2</sup> Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. <sup>3</sup> Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. <sup>4</sup> Indeed the wages of the labourers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. <sup>5</sup> You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. <sup>6</sup> You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.**

**<sup>7</sup> Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. <sup>8</sup> You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.**

**<sup>9</sup> Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! <sup>10</sup> My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. <sup>11</sup> Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.**

## Patient Endurance Among God's People in Times of Trial

James 5:9-11 NKJV

**<sup>9</sup> Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! <sup>10</sup> My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. <sup>11</sup> Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.**

v **9 Do not grumble [sigh, groan, or complain] against one another, brethren:** When times get tough, or things just aren't going our way, how do we usually react? We get grumpy. We turn into Mr Bad Mood with the bad attitude. We become irritable and impatient. But worst of all, we become critical of other believers and even of God. We are prone to think or say things like, "Why did God allow this to happen to me?" We also start to look for faults in other believers to make ourselves look good or justify our sinful and selfish behaviour. All in all, we become critical and difficult to get along with as we **grumble**, sigh, moan and complain against each other. This doesn't look good to the watching world, nor does it encourage others in their walk with God.

v **9 lest you be condemned [judged] ... Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!** Times of hardship are no excuse to treat our brothers and sisters in Christ in an unloving way. We won't lose our salvation over it, but we will be held accountable for our thoughts, words, and actions towards other believers when we stand before Jesus at the Bema Seat Judgement.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 NKJV (*The Bema Seat Judgement for Believers*)

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. <sup>11</sup> For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup> **each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.** <sup>14</sup> **If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.** <sup>15</sup> **If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.**

Notice here that **"If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."** This judgement or condemnation that James is talking about is all about reward, not salvation.

What about grace? The bible tells us that all believers have the Holy Spirit living within them, and therefore we have no obligation to live according to the desires of our sinful nature (Romans 8:12-13). However, we need to recognise that when we are born again, we are "baby" or immature christians. We don't know much and our faith is weak. When it comes to spiritual warfare we are lacking knowledge and experience (1 John 2:12). Also, when it comes to developing character, we have only just begun down the "road to producing God's agape love"; we have only just enrolled in "God's becoming Christlike character transformation program." This will become clear as we read 2 Peter 1:3-11. This passage shows us that, although God has already given us all the resources we need to live a godly life, we still need to work hard to develop the godly character potential that we all believers receive when they are born again. So it's only after after we take the time to develop our character to become more Christlike that will we be able to love others when we are going through trials.

2 Peter 1:3-11 NLT

By his divine power, **God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him**, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvellous glory and excellence. <sup>4</sup> And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are **the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.**

<sup>5</sup> **In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises.** Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, <sup>6</sup> and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, <sup>7</sup> and godliness **with brotherly affection [Greek: *philadelphia*, similar to Greek: *phileo* love], and brotherly affection with [God's Greek: *agape* or unconditional] love for everyone.**

<sup>8</sup> **The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.** <sup>9</sup> **But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins.**

<sup>10</sup> So, dear brothers and sisters, **work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen.** Do these things, and you will never fall away.

<sup>11</sup> **Then God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.**

Notice that the ability to be patient and love others in times of trial doesn't come automatically; it takes hard work, "**work hard [be diligent] to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen.**" This is not saying work hard to be saved, but rather, once you are saved, the hard work you put into developing your character will show (or prove) to others that you are a true believer as people around you observe you change to become more like Christ.

Again, these character traits that take time to develop or mature, but it is definitely worth the effort. Why? "**The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**" Who doesn't want to be productive and useful in the Kingdom of God? Basically, the more mature or Christlike we become, the more useful we become. This means that God can use us more, and we receive a greater reward. How do we develop these Christlike character traits? We need to be daily in the word, in prayer, in fellowship, and purposefully and deliberately submitting our will to God's every day. *We grow in character or Christlikeness as fast as we choose to, and the faster we grow, the more pain we save ourselves and others.*

Notice the last two stages of our character development. Firstly, there is brotherly love, which is the love shown by believers to believers, especially during times of trial. Brotherly love is *philadelphia*, similar to *phileo* love. This would be the opposite of the "grumbling against one another" that James talks about in James 5:9. So as we grow in our character and become more like Jesus, we will learn to, or gain the ability to, love our brothers and sisters in Christ during times of persecution and suffering.

Secondly and finally, there is God's agape love, which is God's unconditional love for all people. The ultimate goal for all Christians is to develop the character that Christ had where we love others like God does — unconditionally and without limits. Only then can we truly love our enemies, even when they are actively and deliberately hurting and persecuting us. Like in the beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-11), the ability to love your enemies is the result or natural consequence of having first developed *all* the previous character traits.

I say this so you will not become discouraged when you find it difficult to obey what God's word says about how to love each other in times of trial. If you struggle, just remember that although God has given us all we need to live a godly life; we still need to learn how to put it into practice. What James will show us is that there are many who already have achieved this level of maturity, this level of Christlikeness.

It's like an AFL football player. They were born with the potential to be a great football player, but were not always a great football player, and their achievement was not assured or guaranteed. As they grew up they had to go through the various leagues and competitions, along the way gaining knowledge and developing the self-discipline, endurance, and skills necessary to compete in the AFL. In the same way, because of the blessings and promises that God has already given us, we all have the potential inside of us to be the people God is calling us to be; to be like Christ. However, just like the amazing AFL football player, we all need to be disciplined and willing to train hard so we can grow up to be a Christlike Christian who loves all times with God's agape love.

Again, what does it look like for the Christian to be at the top of their game, to be playing in the top league, so to speak? To be able to love and willingly forgive even our enemies with God's unconditional agape love. Therefore, like the AFL football player, we must learn to train and work hard at submitting to God, actively seeking God's help to change those areas of our lives where growth and change is required.

Another application here is that, considering none of us are fully mature or fully developed in our character, we must have an attitude of grace and forgiveness towards one another, remembering that we are all travelling down the same path, and will all make mistakes along the way. Paul describes nicely the attitude we need to have towards each other as we help each other grow to be more Christlike.

Ephesians 4:29-32 NKJV

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>32</sup> **And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.**

So let's continue to encourage and support each other as we all seek to grow and become more and more Christlike. When someone is grumpy, instead of getting grumpy along with them, put into practice what Paul said and also remember the following exhortation from the book of Hebrews:

Hebrews 10:24-25 NLT

**Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.** <sup>25</sup> And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

Before we move on, I just want to point out that this is just as applicable in our physical family relationships as it is in our spiritual or church family. Husbands and wives, parents and children, sibling to sibling, brother to sister etc, we all need to learn to **be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you** (Ephesians 4:32). In fact, the family unit is the hardest environment to demonstrate Christlike behaviours and attitudes. Remember in marriage that it's the engagement ring, the wedding ring, and then the suffer-ring!

## Examples of Patient Endurance

v 10 **My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience:** There are an abundance of prophets in the Old Testament that we can use as examples of patient endurance. Let's consider Jeremiah. Some of the highlights of Jeremiah's suffering include: being put in the stocks (Jeremiah 20:2), thrown into prison (Jeremiah 32:2), and lowered into miry dungeon where he almost died (Jeremiah 28:6). He was also ridiculed and put down by the people on many occasions, falsely accused, and taken advantage of. However, worst of all, the people he loved, the nation of Judah, over a period of many years continuously rejected the message of repentance that God gave him for them. It's no wonder that Jeremiah was called the 'weeping prophet." Yet despite all of this, Jeremiah persisted and persevered in the ministry that God had called him to. The writer of Hebrews summarises the suffering of the Old Testament saints well in:

Hebrews 11:35-39 NLT

But others were tortured, refusing to turn from God in order to be set free. They placed their hope in a better life after the resurrection. <sup>36</sup> Some were jeered at, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in prisons. <sup>37</sup> Some died by stoning, some were sawed in half, and others were killed with the sword. Some went about wearing skins of sheep and goats, destitute and oppressed and mistreated. <sup>38</sup> They were too good for this world, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground.

<sup>39</sup> **All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith, ...**

If you are wondering why godly people are so often persecuted, Jesus gives us the answer.

John 15:18-21 NLT

**"If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. <sup>19</sup> The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. <sup>20</sup> Do you remember what I told you? 'A slave is not greater than the master.' Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you. <sup>21</sup> They will do all this to you because of Me, for they have rejected the One [the Father] who sent Me."**

v 11 **Indeed we count them blessed who endure:** As we talked about last week, it's all about perspective. Having a prosperous and comfortable life in the here and now is in no way a proof of God's approval of how we are living. Listen to how Jesus describes the "blessed life" in the gospel of Luke.

Luke 6:20-26 NKJV

<sup>20</sup> Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said:

"Blessed are you poor,  
For yours is the kingdom of God.

<sup>21</sup> Blessed are you who hunger now,  
For you shall be filled.

<sup>w</sup>Blessed are you who weep now,  
For you shall laugh.

- 22 Blessed are you when men hate you,  
And when they exclude you,  
And revile you, and cast out your name as evil,  
For the Son of Man's sake.
- 23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!  
For indeed your reward is great in heaven,  
**For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.**
- 24 "But woe to you who are rich,  
For you have received your consolation.
- 25 Woe to you who are full,  
For you shall hunger.  
Woe to you who laugh now,  
For you shall mourn and weep.
- 26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you,  
For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

## The Example of Job

### James 5:11 NKJV

**Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful:**

Now we come to what I consider the "holy of holies" when it comes to patient endurance during trials. There is no greater example, aside from Jesus, of a man successfully enduring suffering and trials without giving up, cursing God, and denying his faith. To summarise Job's suffering quickly:

- Job suffered the death of all his 10 children unexpectedly at the same time.
- Job lost all his possessions.
- Job went from being the greatest man in the East to the laughing stock of the East.
- Job had a very horrible wife. She encouraged Job to curse God and die.
- Job had the worst kind of friends; they relentlessly, continuously, neverendingly, day after day, falsely accused and condemned him. They tried to convince Job that his severe and extreme suffering could only be due to the judgement of God on him because of some unconfessed sin in his life.
- Job lost his health and suffered extreme physical pain for months. One boil is bad enough, just imagine being literally covered in extremely painful boils for months on end.
- All these things were happening simultaneously.

v 11 **You have heard of the perseverance of Job:** The readers in James' day would have been very familiar with the story of Job. So let's see what James is talking about.

v 11 **Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful:** James here tells us four things about Job and why he is a good example for the suffering Christian.

1. The perseverance of Job through the trial — he never gave up
2. God had a goal and purpose in Job's suffering — “the end intended by the Lord”
3. Job's trial showed that the Lord is “very compassionate and merciful”
4. Job was considered blessed because he endured the trial

### 1. The perseverance of Job

Job refused to curse God despite his severe suffering. Here are some of the scriptures that show Job's faithfulness to God, despite him having no understanding of why things were happening — he didn't have the heavenly perspective at the time that we have now.

#### ***Round 1 — the loss of his children and possessions.***

Job 1:8-12, 20-22

**Then the Lord asked Satan, “Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil.”**

<sup>9</sup> Satan replied to the Lord, “Yes, but Job has good reason to fear God. <sup>10</sup> You have always put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property. You have made him prosper in everything he does. Look how rich he is! <sup>11</sup> **But reach out and take away everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face!”**

<sup>12</sup> **“All right, you may test him,” the Lord said to Satan.** “Do whatever you want with everything he possesses, but don't harm him physically.” So Satan left the Lord's presence. ...

[v 13-19 — Job's 10 children are subsequently killed and he loses all his possessions in dramatic and traumatic ways]

<sup>20</sup> **Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship.** <sup>21</sup> He said,

**“I came naked from my mother's womb,  
and I will be naked when I leave.**

**The Lord gave me what I had,  
and the Lord has taken it away.**

**Praise the name of the Lord!”**

<sup>22</sup> In all of this, Job did not sin by blaming God.

*Scoreboard — God 1: Satan 0*

#### ***Round 2 — the loss of Job's health; Job endures prolonged and excruciating pain.***

Job 2:3-10 NLT

**Then the Lord asked Satan, “Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil. And he has maintained his integrity, even though you urged me to harm him without cause.”**

<sup>4</sup> Satan replied to the Lord, “Skin for skin! A man will give up everything he has to save his life. <sup>5</sup> But reach out and take away his health, and he will surely curse you to your face!”

<sup>6</sup> **“All right, do with him as you please,” the Lord said to Satan. “But spare his life.”** <sup>7</sup> So Satan left the Lord’s presence, and **he struck Job with terrible boils from head to foot.**

<sup>8</sup> Job scraped his skin with a piece of broken pottery as he sat among the ashes. <sup>9</sup> His wife said to him, “Are you still trying to maintain your integrity? Curse God and die.”

<sup>10</sup> **But Job replied, “You talk like a foolish woman. Should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?” So in all this, Job said nothing wrong.**

### *Scoreboard — God 2: Satan 0*

This is truly incredible perseverance in trials. But how could Job be so strong in the times of difficulty? Consider the way he lived before the trial.

#### Job 1:1-5

There once was a man named Job who lived in the land of Uz. **He was blameless—a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil.** <sup>2</sup> He had seven sons and three daughters. <sup>3</sup> He owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 teams of oxen, and 500 female donkeys. He also had many servants. He was, in fact, the richest person in that entire area.

<sup>4</sup> Job’s sons would take turns preparing feasts in their homes, and they would also invite their three sisters to celebrate with them. <sup>5</sup> When these celebrations ended—sometimes after several days—Job would purify his children. **He would get up early in the morning and offer a burnt offering** for each of them. For Job said to himself, “Perhaps my children have sinned and have cursed God in their hearts.” **This was Job’s regular practice.**

What we observe is that Job had a strong daily walk with God. He was a holy and righteous man who feared God and he was also a worshipper. Like Job, if in the good times we develop the daily habit of seeking God, strive to live a pure life, and choose to regularly worship Him, coming to Him in humble submission, then we also will have the strength to endure the hard times as well. Our hearts will be prepared and we will pass the test.

Remember that God knew the condition of Job’s heart, and so knew that Job was strong enough to withstand the test. After all, Job had already survived the ongoing test of materialism; Job had learned how to not let his great wealth and high position in the community distract him from his relationship with God. Job had made God more important than his wealth and family. He was a man of no compromise.

## **2. The end intended by the Lord**

What was the ultimate goal and purpose of God in allowing the suffering to come upon Job? In Job’s case, the greatest end intended by the Lord was to use Job as a lesson to angelic beings. Did you realise that the same is true for the church today?



Ephesians 3:10–11 NLT

**God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.** <sup>11</sup> This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.

What are some other reasons for our trials? To be a witness to a lost and dying world, to develop our character, and to correct us if we are sinning. Given that God has a good purpose for our trials, shouldn't we be willing to submit to God's will for our lives, even if it involves suffering. Consider the following analogy:

David Guzik: "If a man were to attack me with a knife I would resist him with all my strength, and count it a tragedy if he succeeded. Yet if a surgeon comes to me with a knife, I welcome both him and the knife; let him cut me open, even wider than the knife-attacker, because I know his purpose is good and necessary."

It all comes down to this: Do I trust the Doctor as He cuts me open? Do I trust that God is doing what is best for me? Do I really believe Romans 8:28-29? If I do, then like Job, Jesus, the prophets, the apostles, and millions of New Testament believers, I will be willing to completely and joyfully submit to God's will for my life, even if it involves suffering and trials. I will remember that it's only during trials that my character can grow.

Romans 8:28-29 NLT

**And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.** <sup>29</sup> For God knew his people in advance, **and he chose them to become like his Son**, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

### **3. Job's trial showed that the Lord is "very compassionate and merciful"**

v 11 **That the Lord is very compassionate:** Spurgeon: "I wish we could all read the original Greek; for this word, 'The Lord is very pitiful,' is a specially remarkable one. It means literally that the Lord hath 'many bowels,' or a great heart, and so it indicates great tenderness."

You might be wondering just how the story of Job illustrates the goodness, compassion, tenderness, and mercy of God? Without careful consideration of God's motive and the results or outcome of Job's trial, we could easily come to the conclusion that God was being cruel to Job. Yet if we look closely, we can see that God was indeed **very compassionate and merciful**. David Guzik list some of those ways:

- God was **very compassionate and merciful** to Job because He only allowed suffering for a *very good reason*.
- God was **very compassionate and merciful** to Job because He *restricted* what Satan could do against Job.
- God was **very compassionate and merciful** to Job because He *sustained* Him with His unseen hand through all his suffering.
- God was **very compassionate and merciful** to Job because in the whole process God *used* Satan himself.
- God was **very compassionate and merciful** to Job because, at the end of it all, God had accomplished something wonderful: To make Job a *better* and more *blessed* man than ever. Remember that as good as Job was at the beginning of the

book, he was a *better man* at the end of it. He was better in character, humbler, and more blessed than before.

Like Job, when it comes to our suffering and trials, we can take comfort in the following verses:

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 NLT

If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall. <sup>13</sup> The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.

#### **4. Job was considered blessed because he endured the trial**

Spurgeon: “And when we come to look all Job’s life through, we see that *the Lord in mercy brought him out of it all with unspeakable advantage. He who tested with one hand supported with the other.* Whatever Satan’s end might be in tempting the patriarch, God had an end which covered and compassed that of the destroyer, and that end was answered all along the line, from the first loss which happened among the oxen to the last taunt of his three accusers.”

We see this to be true in the last chapter of Job. We’ll read some of it.

Job 42:1-7, 10-17 NLT

Then Job replied to the Lord:

<sup>2</sup> “I know that you can do anything,  
and no one can stop you.

<sup>3</sup> You asked, ‘Who is this that questions my wisdom with such ignorance?’  
It is I—and I was talking about things I knew nothing about,  
things far too wonderful for me.

<sup>4</sup> You said, ‘Listen and I will speak!  
I have some questions for you,  
and you must answer them.’

<sup>5</sup> **I had only heard about you before,  
but now I have seen you with my own eyes.**

<sup>6</sup> I take back everything I said,  
and I sit in dust and ashes to show my repentance.”

<sup>7</sup> After the Lord had finished speaking to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite: “I am angry with you and your two friends, for you have not spoken accurately about me, as my servant Job has. ...

<sup>10</sup> When Job prayed for his friends, the Lord restored his fortunes. In fact, the Lord gave him twice as much as before! <sup>11</sup> Then all his brothers, sisters, and former friends came and feasted with him in his home. And they consoled him and comforted him because of all the trials the Lord had brought against him. And each of them brought him a gift of money and a gold ring.

<sup>12</sup> So the Lord blessed Job in the second half of his life even more than in the beginning. For now he had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 teams of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. <sup>13</sup> He also gave Job seven more sons and three more daughters. <sup>14</sup> He named his first daughter Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third

Keren-happuch. <sup>15</sup> In all the land no women were as lovely as the daughters of Job. And their father put them into his will along with their brothers.

<sup>16</sup> Job lived 140 years after that, living to see four generations of his children and grandchildren. <sup>17</sup> Then he died, an old man who had lived a long, full life.

Job 42:5 is the greatest blessing that God could have given Job; a greater understanding and love of God. **“I had only heard about you before, but now I have seen you with my own eyes.”** Even if God hadn’t blessed Job materially, I believe Job would have been more than content with the huge, indescribable, eternal, and unmeasurable blessing of a closer walk with God, a deeper relationship with God. This is all God wants from all of us — relationship with Himself.

For me, if a trial results in me growing closer to God, loving Him more, then I will gladly embrace it and willingly endure it because of the joy of a closer love relationship with God — most of the time. Sometimes the trial reveals that I am not submitted to God.

Also, what we see played out physically in the life of Job will be played out spiritually for each of us. Our reward will not be on this earth, but we will be rewarded in heaven. Consider how Paul describes the trials that he went through, and the eternal perspective that he had.

2 Corinthians 4:7-10, 16-18 NLT

We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.

<sup>8</sup> We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. <sup>9</sup> We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed. <sup>10</sup> Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies. ...

<sup>16</sup> That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. <sup>17</sup> **For our present troubles are small and won’t last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!**

<sup>18</sup> **So we don’t look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.**

We’ll finish by reading today’s verses from James:

**James 5:9-11 NKJV**

**Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! <sup>10</sup> My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. <sup>11</sup> Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.**