

Prayerful Community

Key Verse: *“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.”*
—James 5:13

Selected Scripture:
James 5

the few who are rich, as contrasted with the economic disadvantage under which the vast majority of the human family lives.—James 5:1-3

The Master cautioned believers not to set their affections on attempting to attain earthly prosperity. “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.”—Matt. 6:19,20

The only solution for the deteriorating worldwide societal conditions that are increasingly evident even in our day is the establishment of God’s kingdom of righteousness, equity, and peace that has been guaranteed by the sacrificial death and resurrection of the Just and Holy One, Jesus Christ.—Acts 3:15,16; James 5:4-6

In view of the intense persecutions endured by the Early Church, and the fact that the Gospel Age would

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guage, the Apostle James describes some of the conditions that would be manifest in the world before the long-promised kingdom of God would be established in the earth. Throughout history there has been a great disparity in terms of the great wealth accumulated by

continue for approximately two thousand years before the body of Christ would be complete and the blessings of a new era would be ushered in, the followers of Jesus would need to exercise great patience and submission under difficult conditions.—vss. 7-9

Prior to the Christian era, several Old Testament heroes demonstrated great faith and patience under adverse conditions as they served God. “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”—vss. 10,11

Our Key Verse underscores the need for Christians to avail themselves of the great privilege of praying to the Heavenly Father in every circumstance of life. He is able to provide succor during times of stress and suffering and gladly receives our expressions of praise as well.

The context of this entire chapter addresses the impact of observing the various inequities that surround the human family and the need for believers not to be downcast because of their extremely difficult experiences. Nevertheless, there are occasions when we might be overtaken in a fault and need prayer offered on our behalf for restoration to wholeness. (Gal. 6:1) The healing from sin sickness rather than miraculous healing from physical ailments is what is implied by calling upon the elders for prayer, and the anointing with oil which seems to symbolize the Holy Spirit.—I John 2:20,27

How thankful we should be that we have access to the Father through the power of prayer, and that forgiveness of our unintentional trespasses is a divinely arranged provision for restoring our soul when we have gone astray. “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”—James 5:16, Ps. 23:3 ■