

“The Prophets, Job and a Farmer”

Rev. Dustin A. Largent

August 3, 2025

Opening and Introduction to Trials

You want to grab a Bible because we're going to get into scripture. This is an important thing too—that we dive into scripture. So, if you got a Bible, open up to it.

We had a lot of prayers today about really serious struggles, really serious trials. People that are making decisions of, "Am I going to do treatment or not?" Those are major trials. You have each gone through major trials. Big things have happened to you. Some of them are situational problems—where it might have been a health issue, or it might have been a financial issue, or you might be going through it right now.

There are others that are more relational. They're not situational—they're more relational. Somebody has been kind of going after you for one reason or another. More persecution. You said something or you're standing for something, and now you're taking a beating for it. That's part of the trials and things that we face.

The question is: **How do you respond?** How do you respond to that? How are you, as a Christian, supposed to respond when you have these heavy things that you're bringing here in prayer? When you leave here, what are you supposed to do? How do you get through these major trials?

Last week, we ended up talking about the rich people who were persecuting and ripping off and robbing and using the courts against the poorer people, right? They were being oppressed by these richer people. They were facing a lot of struggle, a lot of pain, a lot of hurt.

How did they respond? If you go back into scripture, if you look at last week, if you look at the verse, verse 6 said this. This is how those people that were being oppressed by another group of people—this is how they responded:

“You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.” (James 5:6)

They weren't opposing them. They weren't fighting back. They were kind of just taking it. They were suffering kind of in silence. They responded the same way that Jesus responded when He was sent to the cross. They responded the way Paul responds in the book of Acts.

It's not retaliation. It's not vengeance. It's not like, "Let's put up our dukes and let's fight it out." Vengeance belongs to the Lord. I'm going to rest in God, and yes, I'm going to take a bit of a beating here on earth, and I understand that.

They didn't seek vengeance. Instead, what they did is they patiently endured. And that's going to be the key. That's going to be the word. It's a bad word we're going to talk about today. Some of you don't like that word. It's the "P" word: **Patience**.

The Challenge of Patience

Patience. How many of you are very patient people? We've got Jeff is the only one in the entire... We've got two very patient people in the church. Notice my hand did not go up.

Patience is hard now, right? Now I get everything instantly, right? I had to buy a chord that goes to this piano because we're adding another voice to the piano and I had to get that chord. Normally, I remember probably 30 years ago that would have been eight weeks to get there. Well, you want next day shipping? I can get it the next day.

We're so used to getting stuff right away. We don't need to be patient about nothing. I want something, I just get it. But that's not how it works with the trials in your life. That's not how it works with the trial.

When you talk to the doctor and the doctor says, "Listen, you've got cancer," well, you're going to have to be patient. You're going to have to work through that. You can't just—like that—it's fixed.

People come to me with major problems in their life and they come to me and they don't have patience. They're like, "It took you 40 years to get into the problem and the mess that you're in, and you want me to fix it today?" Come on. It doesn't work that way, right? It takes a while for stuff to get through.

Let's look at this verse. It says in verse 7:

"Be patient then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming." (James 5:7)

Be patient. They're facing all these trials from other people that are oppressing them, and they're taking a beating for it. People aren't liking them. People are talking bad about them. There's all kinds of... and they're feeling hurt and they're not sleeping, or there's all these issues.

And the response that they're given: *"Be patient then, brothers and sisters,"*—that means Christians—*"until the Lord's coming."* Be patient.

Biblical Words for Patience

Now this word here for "be patient"—we had another word for kind of patient endurance. If you remember back in James chapter one:

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you face trials of many kind, because you know the testing of your faith develops perseverance. It says perseverance must finish its course so you may become mature and complete, not lacking anything." (James 1:2-4)

That word "perseverance" was a word called *hupomonē*. *Hupomonē*, right? It's a Greek word that's there. And it's a different word that's used in this last part. That word for *hupomonē* is more situational—enduring through a trial or a struggle.

What we have here is the word *makrothumēō*. *Makrothumia*, okay? This word is a different word.

Now, break down *makrothumia* for you. Alright—macro. What does macro mean? Well, what does micro mean? Right? Micro is itty bitty. For some of you, micro is teeny weeny. Just depends on how you're feeling. Right? It's either teeny weeny or itty bitty, but it's small. Micro.

The opposite of that is macro. Now, we all went to public school. What does that mean? Big. Large. Long. Huge. Alright, so macro in the Greek would be big.

This word that we have—the second part—would be *thumos*. That means anger. So it's long anger. Not short temper, but long temper. Long temper.

I'm able to handle—it takes a long time for me to freak out. Right? I can handle it for a long time. And I might be... but I can last because I have a long time, because I'm long-tempered. Right? I can take a beating a long time. I can be in pain for a long time. I'm long-tempered.

So now, if you're like me, I'm not sure how long I can get ripped off by somebody. Right? Like some rich dude comes in and is taking me to court and ripped... like how long can I get ripped off and scandalized and persecuted before my fuse reaches its end and I do or say something that contradicts Christ's life in me?

And see, that's what we've got to avoid. We've got to somehow persevere this without contradicting Christ in our life. That's the issue at hand.

And you say, "Well, how do we do that?" Well, the Bible's practical. I've said this over and over. The Bible's practical. So is God. So is James. And so, he's going to give us the answer.

Enduring Because the Lord Is Returning Soon

It says, I can patiently endure what people do to me because the Lord is returning soon. If you got your notes, if you look at those notes, the very first one is: **I can patiently endure what people do to me because the Lord is returning soon.**

Right? It says:

"Be patient then, brothers, until the Lord's coming." (James 5:7)

People are going through a whole lot of pain and injustice when they know that it's temporary. Right? When I know that it's going to stop—that this struggle and this pain and this being beat up by other people and this turmoil—when I know that's going to come to an end and I can see the end, I can handle it. Especially when I know that it's going to be at the return of Christ. I can deal with a whole lot.

The disciples were able to face all kinds of persecution and even go to their death knowing, "You know what? I'm going to see God soon, and this will all be over, and I'll be with God in heaven."

Now, I've been through a number of different experiences. In 2006, I had back surgery. That was worse than when I fell off the roof. It was worse. I'll tell you why it was worse.

When I fell off the roof, I went into the trauma center and they said, "You're going to have to sit in a wheelchair and you're going to have to have this neck brace on for a long time, but it's going to heal and everything's going to be fine." Okay? There was an end to it. All I have to do is suffer until I'm better. I just have to suffer for... and I asked them, I said, "How much? How long will the pain be? How long until I can walk? How long until that?"

Because I know what the future holds—if I know I'm going to probably be able to walk again—then I can rough it out and I can tolerate it. I can take a lot of pain if I know it's going to stop.

Right? Some of you girls, you had your ears pierced when you were little. “This is going to hurt so bad,” right? “Well, it’s only going to take a second.” Okay, well then—no problem. And now they pierce everything. But that’s the deal.

Now, when I had my back surgery, that was a different story. I was on my back, couldn’t hardly move. I remember Connie taking me to the doctor one time. It was miserable. I was on the ground. I couldn’t—it was excruciating pain. Jeff knows what this is like watching his wife. It’s excruciating.

Here was the problem: I didn’t know if I would ever not have that pain. Like, there was no guarantee that surgery or any of the treatments was going to fix that. So it was far, far worse. Not having any kind of an answer as to what’s going to happen. Because I didn’t know if it was temporary or if it was going to be permanent.

So it says in verse 7—watch this:

“Be patient then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming.” (James 5:7)

You say, “Well, how long until the Lord’s coming? When’s Jesus going to come back?” Great question.

Here’s what you need to know about Jesus coming back: nothing else has to happen eschatologically. That means nothing else has to happen in history before Jesus returns. Okay? It’s not like they have to build some big temple somewhere, or this nation has to kill this nation, or... nothing biblically has to happen before Jesus comes.

He could come now. He could come at the end of the service. He could decide I’m going too long and stop me and say, “You know what? That’s it. We’ve had enough.” Right? “I’m coming now.” He could do that. He could come 100 years from now. He could come whenever He wants. His return is imminent.

Look at verse 9 of 2 Peter chapter 3:

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9)

Why hasn’t Jesus come yet? Because He’s patient. There are still people He wants to come to repentance.

Romans 11:25 says:

“I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.” (Romans 11:25)

So, He’s being patient. God is patiently waiting for people who aren’t Jews to finally come to Christ before He returns.

And so, here’s what James does. He lays out three examples for us. The first example—a lot of you will relate to—is a farmer.

How many farmers? Anybody farm? No? Only a couple farmers. All right. Boy, we used to have, I think, more farmers. I guess we have less farmers now. I don't know what that's... AI has started doing all the farming now, I think. I don't know what's going on.

Watch what it says:

“See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.” (James 5:7)

So, the way it happened over there is different than here. Here we plant in the spring, we harvest in the fall. There, they'll plant in October or November, and then they'll harvest later in the spring. It's a different deal.

Now, he's waiting—expecting something. How is he able to wait? Like, it's not like McDonald's, right? You don't put the seed in the ground, and then all of a sudden you go around the drive-thru, and then your corn is there. Right? You have to wait.

And you're waiting for rains. Like there, they have fall rains and they have spring rains, and they're waiting for those specific rains. And it's going to take time, right?

The Prophets and Job—Examples of Endurance

It goes on and he gives us a second example. Here's a second example that he gives. We had a farmer, now he shifts over to another example of how to be patient—*makrothumia*—how do we be patient?

He uses the prophets. Now I don't know how much of you have read of the Old Testament, but the Old Testament is full of prophets, and they took a beating. It's a general thing—even today—if you preach the Word of God, if you tell the truth to people, you will not be liked.

The prophets were continually going to Israel and telling them the truth about what God says about their wickedness and the things they were doing. And as a result, they took nothing but grief for it. They were beaten. They were killed. It was bad news.

I'll give you some examples:

- **Jeremiah** was beaten. He was thrown in a cistern. So all he was doing was telling the truth, but people don't want to hear the truth about God.
- **Elijah** gets hunted down by Jezebel.
- **Zechariah** gets stoned to death.

If you turn to *Acts chapter 7*, Stephen is speaking to the Sanhedrin. At the end of his speech—he's given this long speech—and at the end of the speech it says:

“You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: you always resist the Holy Spirit. Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute?” (Acts 7:51–52)

Now this is the incredible irony of it. He's calling these people out, saying, "You're just like your ancestors who persecuted the prophets." You know what they do for him making that statement? They pick up rocks and they kill him. Just like the prophets. It's crazy.

Matthew 21:33–36 says:

"Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way."

Who are these servants? In this story, the servants are the prophets. So they're stoning these people, they're killing these people. Last of all, he sent his son. And the story is basically saying: you persecuted the prophets, you killed the prophets, and then God finally sent His Son—who is the real spokesman for Him—and you killed Him.

If you go to *Matthew chapter 5, verses 10 to 12*, it says:

"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:10–12, NIV)"

Job—The Ultimate Example of Endurance

So, number four: **I can patiently endure what people do to me because I know there is a valuable reward awaiting me.**

Here's the last example. We had a farmer. We had the prophets. The last example is **Job**. Job's the best example of patience.

Watch what it says here:

"You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy." (James 5:11)

So here's what happens with Job. If you don't know the story of Job, here's what happens in the book of Job. And read it—it's a long book—but it's a lot of bellyaching for a whole lot of time, and not on Job's part. Other people complain about Job.

But here's what happens. Job is a guy that's living a really good life. He's following God. He's faithful to God. But up in the celestial heavens where God is, Satan shows up. All the angels come—all the good angels come—and they're all coming to God to worship Him. And what happens is Satan shows up too.

And God suggests to Satan, He says:

"Have you considered my servant Job?" (Job 1:8)

Have you ever considered him? Have you ever considered bringing trial and struggle and heartache and hurt on him?

That sounds like a crazy thing for God to do. But what He's doing is—this isn't about us and you and me. This is about God in heaven. He wants to prove to Satan and all the demons that are on the earth. He wants to prove to the demons that this lesser being can and will be faithful to God no matter what happens to him.

I mean, Satan rejected God when he was blessed and everything was good. God's saying, "You know what? I'm so wonderful. I'm so great as God. And I'm so perfect and I deserve such praise and majesty that even a lesser being like Job—even if you bring misery on him—he will still remain faithful and serve Me."

Because that's where the glory is for God. The glory is not that you are faithful to God when everything is good. God is glorified when everything is bad and you continue to be faithful to Him. That's where the glory is really there—because the angels and the demons are like, "What is going on? How could they possibly do this?"

See, this is us. Job is having an effect on the heavens. He thought this didn't have to do with it. He didn't even know about that. Job just thought, "Man, I'm taking a beating. I don't know why. I don't know what's going on. I know I'm not going to deny God. I know I'm going to continue to be faithful to Him."

He doesn't know that that thing that he's going through—standing firm in the midst of all this chaos—is bringing immense and total glory to God that has celestial implications. He is ministering to angels.

And when you are going through a deep, deep trial and you are persecuted and you are hurt and you remain faithful to God, you are witnessing to all the people on earth and you're witnessing to all of the angels and even the demons that hate Him—how good God is and how worthy He is. That's how we worship Him.

"At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said: 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.' In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing." (Job 1:20–22)

God, You haven't done anything wrong.

See, that's what we tend to do. Something bad comes on us. "You know what? It's God's fault." Well, it is within God's plan, but it doesn't mean that God's evil—that God has done something wrong.

The purpose of all of this is for the glory of God. You're here for that purpose, and Job understood this.

And the only reason Satan didn't kill Job is because God wouldn't let him kill him. Right? When Satan comes to God, He says, "If you consider my servant Job, you can do whatever you want to him, but you can't kill him. You can't touch his body." The next time He says, "All right, you can touch his body, but you can't kill him."

I mean, Satan can't do anything more to you than God allows. Right? Because God's in control.

“You have heard of Job’s perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about.” (James 5:11b)

This is the best part. God had a reason. Job didn’t know what it was, but it was huge. It involves Satan’s testimony through the life of Job to fallen celestial beings we know as Satan. And you can bet the other angels are watching.

So indeed, Job’s patience mattered.

Final Encouragement and Closing Prayer

And so, when you, as a believer who are following Jesus faithfully, face pain—when you face hurt—let me finish this up.

When you face pain, you face hurt, when you face persecution from people over and over again, you and I—both of us—we can patiently endure what people do to us because:

1. **The Lord is gonna return soon.** Okay? The Lord’s gonna return soon.
2. **Because the results are of great value.**
3. **Because Jesus is waiting for you at the finish line.** He’s waiting there. I don’t want to do something right before...
4. **Because there is valuable reward awaiting me on the other side** because of me standing firm.
5. **And because there is purpose in the pain.** Okay? There’s purpose in the pain.

We’ve got one week left of James. We’re gonna wrap it all up next week, put a little bow on it, and then move into something else. But I want to thank you for staying with me. I know I went over a little bit, but you know what? I didn’t even preach a half hour. So that tells you—we’re doing all right.

Let me pray for us. We’re gonna escape. We haven’t had a last song for... I have the same last song that we were supposed to do back in like June. Because we haven’t hit it yet, because we keep going long. But that’s cool. We’ll just kinda keep that one there. Eventually we’ll do the doxology. But for right now, we’re good.

Let me pray for you.

God, I pray for each one of us here. We have had major issues in our life. Some of us are struggling mightily right now. And the temptation when we’re struggling and we’re hurting is the temptation—as Satan wants us to say—“Well, God’s doing you dirty. God’s bringing, allowing bad to happen to you.” And so reject God.

But God, Job was faithful. And the prophets were faithful. God, and the farmer’s faithful. God, you’re gonna return soon. And so we’re going to be faithful.

God, the results of us standing firm—they matter. They’re of great value. God, you’re waiting at the finish line with open arms to welcome us. It’s gonna happen soon. There is a valuable reward awaiting for us. God, there is purpose in our pain.

God, give us strength through the power of the Holy Spirit to stand firm and to never deny Christ, to never deny you, but to stand firm.

In Jesus' name, amen.