JAMES SERIES #23: Money Talks
James 5:1-6
Grace Community Church
Kingston, Tennessee
Sunday, June 30, 2019

1. **INTRODUCTION: Believers' attitude toward money will portray their walk with the Lord more quickly than anything else in their lives. MONEY TALKS**

2. **TEXT: James 5:1-6, (1) Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! (2) Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. (3) 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. (4) Indeed the wages of the laborers 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. (5) You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. (6) You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.**

I. CRUELTY OF THE WEALTHY IDENTIFIED

A. VALUABLES STOCKPILED, James 5:2-3, (2) "Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. (3) 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.]

1. **The Bible does not discourage the acquiring of wealth**

   a) **Dt. 8:18, "And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth…."**

   b) **Some of God's most choice saints have been wealthy**

   c) **1 Tm. 6:10, "For the LOVE OF MONEY is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."**

   d) **Psm. 62:10, "…If riches increase, do not set your heart on them."**

2. **The Bible does not even condemn saving money**

   a) **1 Tm. 5:8, "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."**

   b) **Mt. 25:27, "So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest."**

3. **Oftentimes, something happens in the human heart when one becomes wealthy**

a) EX—John D. Rockefeller and Lot

4. The people to whom James wrote had laid up their wealth and were not doing anything with it.

a) Problem stated in GENERAL terms (v. 2)

(1) V. 2, "riches are corrupted" (the word "corrupted" refers to food that rotted)

(2) The same is true of the wealth God gives us

b) "Corruption" expounded in SPECIFIC terms

(1) SPECIFIC #1: v, 2, "Your garments are moth-eaten"

(2) SPECIFIC #2: v. 3, "Your gold and silver are corroded"

5. v. 3, "You have heaped up treasure in the last days"

B. VICTIMIZED BY STEALING (v. 4, "Indeed the wages of the laborers 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.")

1. The people James addresses defrauded others to enrich themselves.

2. 1 Tm. 6:10, "The love of money is the root of all evil"

3. In the Law of Moses, God had given very explicit instructions to employers about paying their employees

a) Dt. 24:14-15, (14) "You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether one of your brethren or one of the aliens who is in your land within your gates. (15) "Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the LORD, and it be sin to you.

b) Lev. 19:13, "You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning."

4. NOTE IN JAMES 5: the season in which these masters defrauded their servants was set in the harvest time, the time when the master's income would be at its highest level for the entire year.

5. The tenses of the verbs in the Greek tell the story:

a) V. 4, "mowed", "indicate the completed mowing and reaping"[1]

b) V. 4, the wages were "kept back", "the wages are held back permanently"[2]

C. VORACIOUS SELF-INDULGENCE, (v. 5, "You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.")

1. The rich people to whom James was writing were using their wealth for a lifestyle of excess.

2. "PLEASURE" (v. 5), "to live luxuriously or in high style"[3]

3. "LUXURY" (v. 5), "to live in the same way [in high style] but with the idea of wastefulness"[4]

a) EX—Lk. 15:13, like the prodigal son who "…wasted his possessions with prodigal living."

4. James 5:5, "You have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter."

a) James is using the imagery of fattening an animal in order to slaughter it.

b) "Day of slaughter," i.e., day of judgment

D. VIGILANTE SENTENCES (v. 6, "You have condemned, you have murdered the just….")

1. These people to whom James was writing were vigilantes who were using the court system to enrich themselves.

2. "CONDEMNED," "to sentence" as in a court of law

3. "MURDERED," i.e., arranged for the courts to condemn to death the ones who got in the way of the rich

II. CAUTION: WRATH IS IMMINENT (the agonies of Hell await)

A. PRESENTS the REASON (v. 1, "for your miseries that are coming upon you!")

1. Rm. 2:5, "But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God…."

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[1] Richard C. H. Lenski, X, 650.
[2] Richard C. H. Lenski, X, 650.
[3] Richard C. H. Lenski, X, 651.
[4] Richard C. H. Lenski, X, 651.

B. PHYSICAL REACTION (v. 1, "miseries that are coming upon you!")

1. "MISERIES"

a) "…trouble, calamity…."[5]

b) Lk. 16:23 (of rich man in Lazarus story), "And being in TORMENTS in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

III.

1. V. 3, hoarded wealth on earth will bring intensified punishment in Hell, "their corrosion will eat your flesh like fire (reference to Hell)"

2. Hell is a place of physical, emotional and spiritual torment (Lk. 16)

a) V. 24, PHYSICAL, "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'"

b) Vv. 27-28, EMOTIONAL, (27) "The he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, (28) 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'"

c) SPIRITUAL, rich man knew that because of his godless lifestyle God was just in sentencing him to an eternal Hell

B. PERSONAL RESPONSE (v. 1, "weep and wail"):

1. v. 1, "Wail," "to cry aloud, in invocation [to beg someone for help]; to howl, utter cries of distress, lament, bewail"[6]

2. WAILING denotes a soul in utter misery. WAILING is in the Pesent Tense (i.e., continuous action)

C. POTENTIAL RETRIBUTION (v. 1, "miseries that are coming upon you")

D. PERVERSION REVEALED (3 witnesses against them in the Day of Judgment)

1. FIRST WITNESS: WORKERS OF THE WEALTHY, v. 4, "the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth"

a) Psm. 56:8, "…put my tears in to Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?" NOTE 2 THINGS:

(1) TEAR BOTTLE

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[5] ***Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament***, ταλαωτωρια.
[6] ***The Analytical Greek Lexicon***, **p. 287.**

(2) BOOK

(a) Mal. 3:16 refers to God's Book of Remembrance that He keeps for those who fear Him

(b) Rev. 20:12 says, "And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books."

2. SECOND WITNESS: WEALTH OF THE WEALTHY (v. 3, "their corrosion will be a witness against you")

3. THIRD WITNESS: WITHHELD WAGES (v. 4, "Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out….")

a) CRY OUT, "a present tense to indicate the continuous crying of the wages held out"[7]

E. PRESIDING REFEREE (v. 4, "Lord of Sabaoth")

1. "SABAOTH"

a) Is a "…noun form from a common Sem. verbal root, …'to wage war,' and usually has reference to large groups of ordered beings."[8]

b) 1 Kings 22:19, "Then Micaiah said, 'Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left.'"

c) 1 Sam. 17:45, (David confronting Goliath), "Then David said to the Philistine, 'You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.'"

d) Emphasizes the sovereignty and omnipotence of God

2. NOTE: the word "host" is linked with the word "LORD" (God's personal name)

3. Prov. 15:3, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good."

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[7] Richard C. H. Lenski, X, 650.
[8] *The Zodervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, "Lord of Hosts," III, 960.

4. **Mt. 13:41-42, (41) "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, (42) "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.**

5. **Prov. 15:3, “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good.”**