



S E R M O N G U I D E

No Limits with Pastor Delman

A Transfer Of Power

James 5:1-7

NOTES INTRODUCTION In today's key passage, James warns those who have been using the levers of power to economically abuse and politically exploit God's people that their time is winding up. He wants them to know that their hold over the financial fortunes and future of the people is coming to an end. Their wealth is rotting and being eaten by moths, and their precious metals are turning to rust as they enter their last days. It was a word of inspiration for people who had been suffering at the hands of the rich and the powerful. And it is also a word of inspiration to those of us today who feel the same. So as we dive into this passage together, there are a few things I encourage you to keep in mind. **KEY POINTS** 1. Realize That Oppression Is Not Permanent It is so important that when we're in the midst of suffering at the hands of others, we hold on and be patient because the oppression that we are seeing is not permanent. This tyranny we are witnessing is temporary. It sort of reminds me of the mistreatment Joseph received from his brothers when they threw him into the pit. They looked down on him in contempt, while he looked up at them in terror. They had evil intentions in their hearts when they sold him into slavery. But twenty years later, God flipped the script and his fortune changed. Joseph went from the pit, then to prison, and then to the palace because despite his misfortune, God has something else in mind. 2. The God We Serve Is A God Of The Oppressed James says in verse 4 that the wages of the exploited workers cry out and that the cries of the defrauded workers "have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts." Don't miss that because the expression that the Lord has heard the cries of his people is a technical concept in Scripture. It is found in Psalm 34, which says, "The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry; When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears and rescues them from all their troubles. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD rescues them from them all" (Psalm 34: 15, 17, 19)

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Psalm 10:18 also says, "You will hear the cries of the oppressed and the orphans; you will judge in their favor, so that mortal men may cause terror no more." All of this and more confirms the notion that God is very much invested in the social well-being and the material plight of His people. He is a God of the oppressed.

3. Fighting Oppression Requires Our Participation

What stands out to me about this text is that we are here talking about this critique of power because a Christian leader in the church, the Apostle James, saw it as a part of his ministry, and his responsibility to call out these injustices and speak truth to power. That's very significant because many Christians and church leaders have bought into this idea that Jesus and justice are separate. That salvation is not social, but this prophetic proclamation against the immoral use of power, and wealth, and the government is known to us because the man of God saw it as his assignment to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable. James understood that you can't have good theology without a conscious sociology. Fighting oppression required his participation, and the same is true for us.

NOTES

MOTEO

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1.	Have you ever felt oppressed before? How so?
2.	How do James's words from today's key passage encourage you and give you hope?
3.	What is one way you can participate in the fight against oppression?

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