



8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.
9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. 10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11 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. (James 5:8-11)

We take up the subject of patience counselled in verse 7 of yesterday's devotion on chapter 5 of James. Patience is of vital importance in the work of the Lord for all things must be done in good order and at the proper time. It is even a component requirement of the message of the Advent Season of recent observation. Patience and watchfulness are always integral to the Christian life, but especially so at Advent. The Lord expounded in detail of the graces of patience and watchfulness throughout His Sermon on the Mount of Olives. Patience is a particularly precious commodity in the days of our youth when lively exuberance often precludes the temperance of patience. As we grow more mature, we have witnessed the season come and go, and we learn to wait with patience and watchfulness. But these two characteristics of the spirit often grow too slowly while the days of man pass too quickly.

8 *"Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."* The only means by which mortal man can "*stablish his heart*" is by turning those hearts over to the Lord Jesus Christ who made those hearts and can maintain them in perfect state. We may learn a great lesson from Paul in support of the value of patience: "*For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*" (1 Cor 4:4-5) We grow impatient to see the end of a matter while we most often should spend more time in studying the details of the means to achieve that end. If God had not been immeasurably patient in overlooking our offenses while we tarried in coming to Him in repentance, perhaps all of mankind would have been lost.

How you ever stopped to consider deeply the value of a single soul? If not, it is time that you did take that time. The soul is eternal and invaluable. Every thought and deed that passes through the soul bears eternal consequences. Every word of condemnation and persecution spoken against the soul of another will be carried into the eternal future. Do we desire to hear these grudgeful words echo through all future time as we endure the self-made Hell we shall see without a forgiving spirit? 9 *“Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.”* Every Christian reader of this devotion has taken an oath to forgive others in the same way we desire that God will forgive us. Do you ask when you made such an oath? Please do not tell me that, as a Christian, you have NEVER repeated the Lord’s Prayer which we recite every worship service in the Anglican Church. *“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”* (Matt 6:12) The Judge stands at the Door. The Holy Spirit is privy to every evil thought and deed that crosses our mind and is acted upon by the soul. He stands at the Door of our Heart.

10 *“Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.”* There are few, if any, recorded lives of prophets that do not reveal their patience and long suffering. Not only did the kings, princes, and rulers doubt the veracity of their prophecies, but actually rejected the prophets intentionally because they did not like the message. *“And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented.”* (Heb 11:36-37) Reader, have you reached this level of patience and forbearance? The simple calling to the office of prophet immediately labelled one as an enemy of the established powers – **both political and religious**. Jesus gave dire warning to the rulers of Judah for their wickedness in murdering the prophets: *“Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.”* (Matt 23:34-35) If your patience seems frail and weak, think on the fate of these prophets, and the patience they exercised in trying to awaken the apostate minds of their listeners.

11 *“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.”* There is a gratification of the soul that emerges from depriving the body of harmful appetites and desires. As we exercise restraint in spending money for the desires of the present, we are overjoyed at the large savings that allow us to make purchase that are enduring. When a young boy or girl dedicate their hearts to saving their virginity for the chosen mate of their lives, what joy in marriage is made possible thereby. Such patience is not easy – it requires self-discipline and a determination to wait for the future right and deny the present wrong.

1 *“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.”* Do you ever wonder at the seeming injustice endured by Job? Was it not for the purpose of our learning? Do we not learn from Job that Bad things can, indeed, happen to good people? We learn that Job endured a terrible onslaught of the devil, yet, he did not succumb to evil. If such things can happen to Job, do we doubt that they may happen to us. When grief and sorrow arise in the life of a Christian, they may remember Job. God allowed these things to happen to Job as a testimony for us to know that we,

too, may suffer. Remember, though, that Job was given twice as much as the devil too away in the end. Jesus healed a blind boy once which elicited a question from the disciples. *“And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? 3 Jesus answered, **Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.**”* (John 9:1-3) The answer Jesus gave is very telling concerning the patience and endurance of the saints for the sake of the glory of God.

Have you exercised long suffering patience?