

The Patience of Job

James 5:1-11

James tells us a lot about how faith overcomes.

- **James One:** Overcome earthly trials / testings with heavenly powers.
- **James Two:** Overcome dead faith with divine faith.
- **James Three:** Overcome a dangerous tongue with a devout heart.
- **James Four:** Overcome a frustrated worldly romance with a humble love for God.
- **James Five:** Overcome the world's evil with God's character and promises.

James 5:11 mentions "the patience of Job." Other translations call it the "endurance" / "perseverance" / "steadfastness of Job". This quality that Job had – that James says we all have heard about: What did it look like? Well, a book of 42 chapters is not easy to survey in a sermon! So, let's get a few highlights:

Job 1:1 – Job was consistent in all areas of his life. "Perfect" / "blameless" does not mean sinless. We may say that Job was not hypocritical. He stood against evil and sought to live out his faith in God.

Job 1:5 – Job was attentive to the spiritual lives of his family. He interceded to God on their behalf. His faith was not mere religious philosophy and theory. His passion for God created compassion for others.

Job 1:6-12 – Job's life was of interest to God and Satan. Satan wanted to destroy Job's life and testimony. God would make Job stronger than ever. Using (and limiting) Satan's malignant efforts, God would exercise Job's faith.

Job 1:20-22 – Satan suddenly brought intense death and destruction into Job's life. When tremendous disaster struck, Job immediately responded by considering what this meant concerning his relationship with God. His faith caused Him to **respond** to God, rather than **react** to the events and the people that were involved.

Job 2:1-8 – Satan was not finished. Neither was God. Satan was allowed to attack the physical health of Job. People often refer to "Job's Day," but Satan often works in "seasons." It can appear that God's providence contradicts His promises. Like aftershocks of an earthquake, more affects of the testing of Job's faith are yet to manifest themselves.

Job 2:9-10 – Job now must deal with the weaker faith of his wife. She has reacted to all of this with despair and is ready to give up. Job responds to his wife with patience and shows a profound trust in God. He does not direct his conversation to the subject of Satan. His heart and mind are focused on God, who is truly in charge of what happens in Job’s life. Observe two great statements that will immerge from this story:

- *“Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him...”* (Job 13:15a)
- *“But He knows the way that I take; When He has tried (tested) me, I shall come forth as gold.”* (Job 23:10)

These two statements are imbedded in a dialogue, revealing that Job’s faith needed to grow. He is struggling, but there are pillars in his faith, holding him up, keeping him from giving up.

Job 2:11-13 – Job’s life of faith was not internal and isolated. Job had friends who cared. They came to minister to him. Unfortunately, they were not prepared to counsel Job well (Job 6:24-27; 16:1-3; 32:1-12; 42:7). They tried to accuse Job of some secret sin that had brought down God’s wrath upon him. The more they accused, the more Job defended himself and then began to get angry and accuse God of doing these things without explaining why.

Through a long and difficult dialogue, they will all be corrected by God and benefit from this trial of faith that Job experienced. Through this trial of faith, Job found out things about himself that he did not know before. Job gained a deeper understanding of God and was humbled before Him. God sent other comforters to him and restored his losses, making him stronger than ever. Job also now had a ministry to others. He was able to minister to his friends who had failed to minister to him. Read Job 42:1-17.

James 5:1-11 – Back to James’ Application

James 5:1-6 – The world is full of people who strive only for material prosperity. They are predators, victimizing others for the sake of riches. Righteous people are not fighting back with a similar agenda. Yet, the wicked don’t seem to notice the striking contrast. They think they are winning. They need to repent.

James 5:7-11 – We need patience / endurance like what we learn from Job’s story. The Lord is coming to settle all accounts (II Thessalonians 1:7-12). In the meantime, He is growing our faith through a process of events in our lives (“early and late rains”). Don’t get caught-up in the groanings and grumbings which too easily beset God’s children. Consult the Scriptures to get your perspective on life. Look for the grace and mercy of God which is taking place in your life.

See Psalm 1:1-3; 34:1-22; 37:1-40; 40:1-17; 56:1-13; 73:1-28; 139:1-24; Romans 15:1-7; I Corinthians 12:12-27; Galatians 6:1-10; Ephesians 3:14-21; Philippians 2:1-16; Jude 1:20-25.