

THE BEREAN

"...EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY..." (Acts 17:11)

"THE LORD IS FULL OF PITY, AND MERCIFUL"

A STUDY OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES
PART FIFTY SEVEN OF SIXTY FOUR

Twice James encourages believers to be patient (James 5:7,8). Throughout the epistle he speaks of the need for patience (James 1:3,4; 5:7,10,11). Patience is a much needed quality, but sometimes difficult to attain. James gives us examples, "the prophets who spake in the name of the Lord" (James 5:10) and "the patience of Job" (James 5:11). James says that in the story of Job we can see "the end of the Lord." Two thoughts have been suggested from this reminder. "The end" reminds us of the conclusion of Job's life. He regained more than he lost physically, but above that he gained a deeper understanding of God. "The end" also reminds us of God's purpose in allowing Job to suffer. It is through His allowance of trials and difficulties in life that we learn to "rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness; and stedfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope" (Romans 5:3,4). James then reminds us that Job's story reveals the majestic truth "that the Lord is full of pity, and merciful" (James 5:11). We can maintain our patience when we trust in the Lord for He will ultimately make clear in His response to our situation the presence of His pity and mercy. "The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower." Jesus cares.

Being familiar with the Old Testament, James would remember what the psalmist said, "Jehovah is merciful and gracious, slow to

anger, and abundant in loving-kindness" (Psalm 103:8). The psalmist refers to God's mercy and lovingkindness in application to man's spiritual difficulties. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us after our iniquities" (Psalm 103:10). If God gave us what we have earned, it would be eternal separation from Him in the devil's hell "for the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Since we are guilty, it is not justice we want, but mercy. "For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his lovingkindness toward them that fear him" (Psalm 103: 11). His mercy is not without conditions. We must respect Him and show that respect in submission to His will. To those who killed His Son, He said, "Repent ye, and be baptized...unto the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38). "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us (Psalm 103:12).

There is no way we can atone for our sins. There are not enough good things we can do that will remove one sin, much less all of our sins. There is not enough money in the world to purchase remission of one sin. We must rely on His pity and mercy as we submit to Him in full obedience for He is "unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9). "Why tarriest thou...?" (Acts 22:16). "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden..." (Matthew 11:28).
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