

THE BEREAN

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

BLAMING OTHERS

A STUDY OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

PART FIFTY EIGHT OF SIXTY FOUR

Do you remember when your English teacher spoke of onomatopoeia? It refers to a word that imitates the natural sound associated with the object or action. As an example we refer to something falling with a plop. James uses a similar word that fits the description. "Murmur not, brethren, one against another, that ye be not judged" (James 5:9). You have heard people speaking just loud enough to be heard, but with a low, indistinct mutter. While one could murmur a prayer, James refers to grumbling and complaining. He forbids our directing our half-spoken complaints against our brethren. He had been speaking of troublesome times which can make the impatient complain against others who are not at fault. Whatever the cause, James says, "Murmur not." Paul taught the same using Israel as an example. "Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer" (I Cor. 10:10).

Another translation of James says, "Do not make complaints." When Israel left Egypt and crossed the Red Sea, there was great rejoicing. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto Jehovah... Thou in thy lovingkindness hast led thy people that thou hast redeemed..." (Exodus 15:1,13). It

wasn't long, however, until they had forgotten His lovingkindness and were murmuring when they didn't have as much to eat as they wanted, or the type of food they desired. They began to blame Moses and Aaron. This is one of the dangers of a complaining spirit. We begin to speak against the person who is conspicuous. It is easy to blame all our problems on others. The reality is that sometimes we bring them on ourselves. At other times problems come from events beyond any man's control or ability to foresee.

It is sad when we murmur against one another whether in the family or in the church. To continue in such will lead to strife, division, heartache, and judgment. The underlying cause of murmuring is often pride. We think we are too good or high to have to endure, especially when we did nothing to bring our distress upon us. Someone else must be at fault. Someone else must relieve us. Thus James teaches us not to murmur "that ye be not judged." The judgment he has in mind must be avoidable. Thus he means we will be condemned by God. No wonder he tells us to be patient (James 5:8).

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