

THE BEREAN

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

"LET HIM PRAY"

A STUDY OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES
PART SIXTY TWO OF SIXTY FOUR

One of the unavoidable realities of life is suffering. We may suffer pain in body caused by disease, accident, or the conduct of others. We may suffer mental anguish over numerous tragedies that may come to us or those we love. Life is replete with suffering.

While we may learn valuable lessons from suffering, we prefer to be educated in a less painful way. James tells us two ways to respond to suffering; both are positive! "Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations: knowing that the proving of your faith worketh patience" (James 1:2,3). Certainly patience is a worthy goal, but most of us need help in following James' teaching. Therefore we need to give heed to his other counsel. "Is any among you suffering? Let him pray" (James 5:13).

The answering of our prayers, however, is not unconditional. God has not given us a blank check whereby we may ask for anything under any conditions. James gives a vital condition to having prayers answered. "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (James 5:16). A righteous man is one who is godly and upright. God listens to those who walk in His ways. "The eyes of Jehovah are toward the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry" (Psalm 34: 15). "Jehovah is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth" (Psalm 145:18). Jesus gave a

unique condition that was not required in the Old Testament. "If ye shall ask anything in my name, that will I do" (John 14:14). To ask "in His name" means in harmony with His authority. It is not the recitation of a formula of words. While the promise in this context is limited to the apostles, the same principle is expressed in I John 5:14,15 where the promise is that all who are in Him will have their requests if they ask "according to His will".

It is easy to feel sorry for yourself when things are difficult, It is easier to grumble and complain. Instead of these, pray! If you are suffering, God does not promise that He will remove your suffering. Remember, we are all terminal. What He will provide is comfort in the midst of difficulty and strength to endure in a way that is worthy of our relationship to Him. If you are in His spiritual family, you can find strength in His promise of a land that is fairer than day. If you are not in His spiritual family, don't live the rest of your life without the assurance of His promises. Accept His invitation. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt. 11:28,29). Obey His commands (Mk. 16:16; Acts 22:16).

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