

The Rain

“Be Patient & Establish Your Heart”

I. SCRIPTURE

James 5:7-8 – “Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of YAHUAH [the Lord]. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of YAHUAH [the Lord] is at hand.”

II. RAIN

YAHUSHA [Jesus] tells you and me that as His disciples, that when we hear His words, that we should “do them”. That you and I, if we do “them, He will likened [us] unto a wise man who built his house on the rock, [where] the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on ‘The Rock’” (Matthew 7:24-25)... Who is none other than YAHUSHA [Jesus] Himself: our Cornerstone and Foundation.

Those of you who live here, know our local climate conditions... you know that we are located on the arid high Nevada desert, where the strong winds blow and beat on our houses all the time, but that there is hardly any rain and our sandy soil is not conducive to growing the earth’s precious fruit spoken of in today’s scripture. However, early on this week... in addition to some of our very strong winds, we actually had a couple days of the sweet, blessed rain for which our church father Robert prays, and we wait so patiently wait to receive.

Water is essential to our lives. It nourishes us when we drink it, cook with it, or use it to irrigate our crops. Water surrounded the world when ELOHIYM [God] created the earth; it surrounds a fetus as it grows in its mother’s womb. Plants depend on water to produce energy in photosynthesis. That is why plants spring up around water. Just look at a satellite map of any river and you will see a lot of green vegetation on both banks of the river. So, we pray that the Divine will bring rain to nourish our crops and fill our reservoirs, especially in the high Eastern Sierra mountains located to the West of us. Yes, we pray for rain, to be plenty and beneficial enough to last us through a long dry summer season. We pray and wait patiently for rain, that it will arrive at just the right times, and be sufficient for our needs in a high desert.

III. TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

In today's scripture, James is telling us, as he was telling those early Hebrew Christians, what we should be doing as we wait for the "coming of YAHUAH [the LORD]". He says that we should be patient. He compares our patience to that of "the farmer [who] waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until [the fruit] receives the early and latter rain". He says very specifically that "you also [should] be patient: establishing your hearts, for the coming of YAHUAH [the LORD] is at hand".

IV. BACKGROUND

Today's scripture comes again from the book of James. Last week we focused on James 4:5, where we learned from him that YAHUAH [God] yearns jealously that we accept the RUACH HA'QODESH [Holy Spirit] that He sends to dwell in us, rather than that we would instead choose our own ruach [spirit]... with all its "passions that are at war within us" (James 4:1).

At the very beginning of his letter, James identifies himself just as "James, a servant of YAHUAH [God] and YAHUSHA [Jesus]. He was probably the brother of YAHUSHA [Jesus], as well as the leader of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15). James was one of several brothers of YAHUSHA [Jesus], probably the oldest since he heads the list of His brothers mentioned in Matthew 13:55: James, Joseph, Simon and Judas. At first, James did not believe in YAHUSHA [Jesus] and even challenged Him, misunderstanding His mission (John 7:2-5). Later, though, he became very prominent in the church, as we learn that:

1. He was one of the select individuals MESSIAH [Christ] appeared to after His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:7).
2. Paul called him a "pillar" of the church (Galatians 2:9),
3. Paul, on his first post-conversion visit to Jerusalem, saw James (Galatians 1:19), and
4. Paul did the same on his last visit (Acts 21:18).
5. When Peter was rescued from prison, he told his friends to tell James (Acts 12:17),
6. James was a leader in the important council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:13), and
7. James was so well known that Jude could identify himself simply as "a brother of James" (Jude 1:1).
8. He was martyred c. AD 62.

The intended recipients of his letter are identified, also at the very beginning of his letter: “the twelve tribes scattered among the nations”. So, we know that his letter was intended for the Jewish believers of YAHUSHA [Jesus], those Christians, who after Stephen’s martyrdom, were scattered as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Syrian Antioch (Acts 8:1; 11:19).

Thus, James is writing has a “pastor”, who had an intimate knowledge of his readers... instructing and encouraging them in the face of their difficulties.

V. THE MEANING OF “RAIN” IN SCRIPTURE

It is the outpouring of the RUACH HA’QODESH [Holy Spirit] that is being referred to when the Scripture refers to the first (or former) rain and the last (or latter) rain.

YAHUSHA [Jesus] Himself describes the RUACH HA’QODESH [Holy Spirit] in John 7:37-39 as “**living water**”... where “on the last day, that great day of the feast, YAHUSHA [Jesus] stood and cried out, saying, “**if anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water**”. ...this He spoke concerning the RUACH [Spirit], Whom those believing in Him would receive; for the RUACH HA’QODESH [Holy Spirit] was not yet given, because YAHUSHA [Jesus] was not yet glorified”. (John 7:37-39

VI. “THE EARLY & LATTER RAIN”

The planting and harvest seasons in Israel were just the opposite of ours with our first rains in the Spring; and our latter rains in the Fall. In James’ day, in Israel, the first rains fell from October to the end of December, just before the planting season. These rains softened the ground. The last rains fell from March through April, just prior to harvest; these rains ripened the harvest.

A. “THE EARLY RAIN”

Now, as we look back at YAHUAH [God]’s word, particularly at what happens in the book of Acts, we realize that the RUACH [Spirit] was received in the early rain in the upper room, at Pentecost. And RUACH [Spirit] was received exactly as YAHUSHA [Jesus] had predicted to His disciples that He would be (received) before He returned to Heaven: “Then He said to them, **‘thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the MESSIAH [Christ] to suffer and to**

rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24:46-49)

YAHUSHA [Jesus] prediction is recorded again in Acts 1, where Dr Luke says “I wrote about all that YAHUSHA [Jesus] began to do and to teach until the day He was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the RUACH HA’QODESH [Holy Spirit] to the apostles He had chosen. After His suffering, He presented Himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty (40) days and spoke about the Kingdom of YAHUAH [God]. On one (1) occasion, while He was eating with them, He gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the RUACH HA’QODESH [Holy Spirit].’” (Acts 1:1-5)

Yes, it was in that upper room, located in the southern part of the Old City of Jerusalem on Mt Zion, that this “early” rain, this early outpouring of the RUACH HA’QODESH [Holy Spirit] was given to prepare the ground, to softened the ground for the gospel seed to be sown. From Acts chapter 1, until the end of Luke’s Book of Acts, you will read of RUACH [Spirit]-filled sowers who were sent out from the Upper Room that day... into all the world: to Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth... for the purpose of teaching of YAHUAH [God]’s Kingdom, and making disciples of YAHUSHA HA’MASHIACH [Jesus Christ].

So as we look again at today’s scripture... we read about a farmer... who knows that in order to *possess* and *enjoy* the precious fruit of the earth that he so highly desires, that he must wait *patiently* for both an “early” and a “latter” rain”. He realizes that without both – an early AND a latter rain – that the earth will not bear what he desires: precious fruit.

B. ESTABLISHING OUR HEARTS

There are several places in the Holy Bible where we read of an early and a latter rain. One of the places, if not the first place, that we read about it in the Bible is in Deuteronomy 11:13-17, where we read of it inside of a conditional statement, that says: “and it shall be that *if* you earnestly obey

My commandments which I command you today, to love YAHUAH ELOHAYKEM [the LORD your God] and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, *then* [He] will give you the rain for your land in its season, *the early rain and the latter rain*, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil. And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock, that you may eat and be filled.’ [So,] take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them, lest YAHUAH [the LORD’s] anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which YAHUAH [the LORD] is giving you.”

As we read this old testament passage, read from The Torah as it were, it is good that we look back, or rather forward to today’s scripture that was written in the New Testament... where we are told that as we wait patiently for the “early and latter rain”, that we are to “establish our hearts” because “the coming of YAHUAH [the Lord] is at hand” (James 5:8).

And so, having reviewed the earlier text, we realize that we have already been told very early on in His *holy* Word... what “establishing” our hearts means! We learn that it means that we are to “earnestly obey His commandments”! ... “to love YAHUAH ELOHAYKEM [the LORD your God] and serve Him with *all* your heart and with *all* your soul”!... and that is with *nothing* less than your “all”, your “100”!

C. THE LATTER RAIN

Later in His Word, in the Old Testament, in the book of Joel, we read that YAHUAH [the LORD], Who [quote] “... has given you the former rain faithfully, and [now] He will cause the rain [both rains] to come down for you and me — the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. [That] the threshing floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil” (Joel 2:23b-24).

We know that the Joel’s promise of these rains, is before His return... before “The Day of YAHUAH [the LORD]”. And so, Joel’s description of having “the former” as well as having the “the latter” rain(s), happens prior to YAHUSHA [Jesus]’s return. And so now it gets very personal... about what we should be doing as we wait for Him, our MESSIAH [Christ] to return to us... within which we are told in today’s scripture: “you also be patient [like the farmer,

meanwhile] establish[ing] your hearts, [while] the coming of YAHUAH [the Lord] is at hand” (James 5:8). In today’s message, as I usually do, I have personalized YAHUAH [God]’s Holy Word for you. If you may be thinking that “The Day OF YAHUAH [the LORD]”, or YAHUSHA [Jesus]’s “Second Coming” is NOT immanent, then please consider what yet even another prophet wrote...

The prophet Hosea also writes in his book, located just ahead of the book of Joel, about “the latter and former rain to the earth”. He writes: “come... and let us return to EL YAHUAH [the LORD]; for He has torn [us], but He will heal us; He has stricken [us], but He will bind us up. After two (2) days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight. [So,] let us *know*... let us *pursue* – the knowledge of YAHUAH [the LORD]. [For] His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain... like the latter and former rain to the earth.” (Hosea 6:1-3)

D. TIMING – A DAY IS AS A THOUSAND YEARS

The Disciple Peter tells “but, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with YAHUAH [the LORD] one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. YAHUAH [the LORD] is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:8-9)

“But the day of YAHUAH [the LORD] will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of YAHUAH [God], because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?” (2 Peter 3:10-12)

So as Hosea says that “after *two (2) days*, YAHUAH [the LORD] will revive us [and] on the *third day* He will raise us up...”, then you should pay particular attention to the fact that the church has now seen almost 2,000 years of sowing and growing – and as the 3rd day (the 2000’s) are at hand, then you should acknowledge that it is now harvest time!

All who have died in MESSIAH [Christ] up to now represent the first fruits, or the early harvest. And the prophets of old, as well as the prophets of new, including in the testimony of YAHUSHA [Jesus], AKA “the Spirit of Prophecy” (Revelation 19:10), point to our season as a time of final harvest. Because YAHUSHA [Jesus], and YAHUAH [the LORD], have been patiently waiting for His final, mighty harvest of the earth, He is that farmer... who waits for the us, His precious fruit... waiting patiently for us to establish our hearts in Him (James 5:7).

VII. ESTABLISHING OUR HEARTS AS WE WAIT PATIENTLY

Meanwhile, we are come to repentance. We are to be *like* Him. While we are waiting patiently for Him to return to us, we are to establish our hearts in Him, and bear the precious fruits of His RUACH [Spirit].

James tells us what our precious fruit should look like: “... not grumbl[ing] against one another, brethren [and sisters], lest you be condemned. [For] behold, the Judge is standing at the door! [So] my brethren [and sisters], take the prophets, who spoke in the name of YAHUAH [the LORD], as an example of suffering and patience. [So] indeed we count them blessed who endure [patiently]. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by YAHUAH [the LORD] — that YAHUAH [the LORD] is very compassionate and merciful.” (James 5:9-11)

“But above all, my brethren [and sisters], do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No,” lest you fall into judgment.” (James 5:12)

“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of YAHUSHA [Jesus]. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and ADONAI [the LORD] will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.” (James 5:13-15)

“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)

We conclude today, by also hearing and following YAHUAH [the LORD]’s “latter rain” repentance recorded by the prophet Joel.

Yes, dear Father, as we close today, we cherish in our hearts the words faithfully recorded by your servant Joel (Joel 2:12-17). We establish them now in our hearts together with the words of James we already heard. Yes, we do this now as we patiently await the latter rain that will precede your Son YAHUSHA [Jesus]'s return:

“Now, therefore,’ says [You, our] YAHUAH [the LORD], ‘turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.’ So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to [Me] EL-YAHUAH ELOHAYKEM [the LORD your God], for [You] *are* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and [You] relents from doing harm.” ... [You tell us to:]

“Blow the shofar [trumpet] in Zion, consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly; gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and nursing babes; let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, and the bride from her dressing room. (You call us away from social distancing during this time.) [You say] “Let the priests, who minister to YAHUAH [the LORD], weep between the porch and the altar; [and] let them say, ‘spare Your people, O YAHUAH [LORD], and do not give Your heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them.’”

Yes! dear Father, we say today what the RUACH [Spirit] and The Bride say: “Come!” Yes! Dear Father, we hear you now and say again: “Come!” Yes! We are those who are thirsty for your early and latter rain, as You have promised us during this time! Yes! We accept your “free gift of the water of life”, your RUACH [Spirit] now, and again say “Come!... ADONAI YAHUSHA [Lord Jesus]!... the Root and Offspring of David, the Bright Morning Star.” (Revelation 22:16b-17) “Come!”

Credits:

- 1 “James: Introduction” pg 2074, TNIV Study Bible, 2006 Zondervan
- 2 “James 5:7-12: Patient Endurance”, Brent Kercheville, September 5, 2010, West Palm Beach Church of Christ; https://westpalmbeachchurchofchrist.com/new-testament/james/james_5_7-12.html
- 3 “The Latter Rain”, David Wilkerson, January 9, 1995, Word Challenge: Pulpit Series; <http://www.tscpulpitseries.org/english/1990s/ts950109.html>