

James 5:7-8:

“Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of 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 the Lord is at hand.”

The apostle James here compares waiting for the Lord’s return with the patience of a farmer awaiting the harvest. The farmer, despite the difficult conditions, waits for both the early rain and the latter rain to produce a fruitful harvest. This metaphor draws from the agricultural realities of Israel, a country known for its dry and arid climate.

In Israel, the early rain (also known as the spring rain) comes at the beginning of the planting season, around October and November, while the latter rain (or autumn rain) comes toward the end of the growing season, around March and April. These rains are essential to the crop’s growth, and the farmer must wait for both of them to ensure a full harvest. Without patience, there would be no harvest.

What is the meaning of the “Early” and “Latter” rains?

In the context of Israel’s geography, the early rain (spring rain) is critical for preparing the soil and enabling seeds to germinate, while the latter rain (autumn rain) ensures the crops are fully matured and ready for harvest. Israel’s desert climate requires reliance on these rains, as there are few rivers and no widespread irrigation systems.

The analogy James uses emphasizes that just as farmers endure long periods of waiting for the rains, so Christians must endure patiently in anticipation of the Lord’s return. The period of waiting can be difficult, but it is essential for the ultimate reward.

Spiritual Significance:

In a spiritual sense, Christians have already experienced the early rain—the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, about 2000 years ago (Acts 2). The Church began its mission, preaching the gospel, spreading the good news, and growing. This was the beginning of God’s harvest of souls, but it was only the first stage.

However, there is also the promise of the latter rain, the final outpouring of the Holy Spirit that will bring the Church to full maturity

and completion. This “latter rain” began in 1906, during the Azusa Street Revival, when God poured out His Spirit anew, restoring the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit to the Church. This spiritual revival has continued, bringing a renewal of spiritual gifts and ministries that were dormant for centuries.

This “latter rain” signifies the final move of God’s Spirit before the return of Jesus Christ. It is a time of powerful outpouring of grace, signs, wonders, and revival, marking the approach of the Lord’s return.

The Church in the Final Rain Season:

Brethren, we are currently living in the season of the latter rain. This season began in the early 20th century, and we are nearing its conclusion. The outpouring of God’s Spirit has never been as strong as in these recent days. Evangelists like William Seymour, William Branham, Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, and others, were part of this great revival, proclaiming loudly that the time of harvest is near!

As the end of the “latter rain” draws near, the Church’s role is to labor in the fields, bringing in the harvest of souls, with the understanding that the end is imminent.

The Theological Implication for Us Today:

The message here is clear. Just as a farmer endures the trials of waiting for the rains and patiently works in the fields until the harvest comes, we, as Christians, must endure the trials and patiently wait for the Lord's return. This period of grace, symbolized by the latter rain, will not last forever. Once the rain stops, the opportunity for salvation will come to an end, and there will be no more chances.

The coming of the Lord is near. As we see the world in turmoil, with natural disasters, wars, false prophets, and moral decline (as prophesied in Matthew 24:6-8 and 2 Timothy 3:1-5), we must recognize that these are signs that the time is close. Jesus said,

"When these things begin to happen, look up, because your redemption is drawing near" (Luke 21:28).

Urgency of Salvation:

This is a time to take the call of salvation seriously. The gospel is being preached freely and openly, and we must not ignore this opportunity.

There is a tendency to take this grace for granted, but as this season of the latter rain comes to a close, the door of grace will shut. Revelation 3:20 reminds us, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me.”

Brethren, now is the time to make sure your heart is ready for the return of the Lord. As the season of the latter rain comes to an end, let us be prepared for the harvest. The Lord is coming soon, and we must be ready. There will be no second chances once the final rain has fallen.

Shalom.

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