

¹² But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation. James 5:12 James again takes up an expression of Jesus reminding us to be honest and forthright in our speech with others. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught, ³³ *“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’³⁴ But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.³⁶ And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.³⁷ Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.* Matthew 5:33-37 The Judge stands at the door, so be honest. Give no one an opportunity to criticize our faith because we give in to the temptation to be deceptive for our personal gain whether financial or merely seeking the favor of men.

In those days people made agreements by declaring something they promised to do before witnesses. The wording could be quite clever and deceptive. It would sound one way, but when you examine the words, you could take it another way. The same tactic has been used by unethical salesmen ever since. The heart of man is the same throughout time. James is telling us that you might get away with that in this life, but the Christian will find that our heart knows the difference. The accuser will bring you under condemnation. Your testimony will be harmed. You will have been a poor witness regarding our Savior. It gives people the opportunity to criticize followers of Christ. We often hear, “They are just a bunch of hypocrites.” God help us be witnesses that speak truthfully with the love, grace, and mercy that we have received (Matthew 12:37ⁱ).

Our society is divided over what truth is. One side says it is subjective, that there are no absolute truths. It is a self-contradictory statement, for if there are no truths then their statement cannot be true.

We stand on the Word of God as the unchanging truth (Psalm 119:89ⁱⁱ). It is always wrong to violate God’s moral laws expressed in the Ten Commandments. It is always wrong to deceive others or manipulate with words to gain a personal advantage. It is always right to love God and our fellow man. There is one God and Creator of all things visible and invisible (Colossians 1:1:16ⁱⁱⁱ). The Bible is God’s Word! We owe everything to God’s goodness, mercy, and love. Jesus is the only One who could make a way for our sins to be forgiven (John 14:6^{iv}). He lived a perfect life, conquered death and hell, rose from death, and is coming back as Judge (1 Corinthians 15:3,4^v). That is the truth (Psalm 119:160^{vi})!

¹³ Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. James 5:13 Suffering is something we all experience to one degree or another. It is never welcome, but it is often necessary. We might suffer from our own mistakes, or from the sins of others, or just the consequences of living in a fallen world. But whatever the case, if you are in Christ, it is a time to draw near to God in prayer. This is contrary to the way the world would respond with complaints or bitterness or blaming God.

We delved into the importance of suffering and how God uses it in our lives two weeks ago. I will just summarize it by saying that God uses it for our good (Romans

8:28^{vii}). It is a time that we are drawn near to God and find that we experience His presence. It is often the time we grow the most spiritually.

Are you cheerful? The world tends to forget God when everything is going well. But the believer is to sing praise to God. It is the best expression of joy, for Jesus is the reason for our joy. He is the One who made us right with the Father. Without that, how could we be truly joyful? But knowing our future is secure, that we will not be condemned when we are judged but will go into His loving presence where every tear will be wiped from our eyes, well, it does not get much better than that. So, sing praise (Psalm 34:1^{viii}). Listen to praise music. He is worthy of all our praise.

I would add that even in the times of trial and testing or temptation, sing praise. Praise helps us focus on the goodness of God. Praise reminds us of who God is and all He has done for us. It can lift your spirit. And if you feel you are under spiritual attack, remember how David's songs of praise relieved King Saul from the oppression of the enemy (1 Samuel 16:23^{ix}). Demons hate praise. It reminds them that they chose the losing side.

¹⁴ 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 the Lord. James 5:14 James gives us the instruction as to what to do if we as members of Christ body become ill. We are instructed to ask the elders of the local church for prayer. It is up to the sick to express faith by asking the elders to pray for us according to James 5. Elders might suggest a person do so, but the instruction is that the person who is ill must ask.

The second thing that is required of the sick is in verse 16. There should be confession of sin. I believe that James is speaking of the conviction that the sick might have as to the reason that God has allowed them to be afflicted. If they do not know of any reason after waiting in silence and asking God to bring anything to mind, it is not necessary to try and find some trivial thing if the Spirit has not made it clear. Sickness is not always the result of sin as Jesus made clear in John 9:3^x. However, some illnesses are allowed by God to teach us. Jesus told the paralytic He healed, "Son, your sins are forgiven" (Matthew 9:2^{xi}). And to the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda Jesus said, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you" (John 5:14^{xii}). God longs to pour His grace on our lives, but if sin stands in the way, He will graciously afflict us to open a way for His grace to be received.

Of course, the call for the elders to pray for oneself should be at the leading of the Holy Spirit. Just because you caught a cold that is going around does not mean you run to the elders, unless of course God is prompting you. Nor is it something just to try to see if it works. One must have a sense that it is the Lord's direction and have faith in the promise.

The instruction to the elders is that they are to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. Again, we see the plural, "let them pray." Anointing with oil is symbolic in several ways. **Oil represents the Holy Spirit setting them apart for God to minister to the person by His Spirit.** It was used in the Old Testament to anoint priests and kings to their task. While this is not for commissioning, it symbolizes that they belong to God and are in His care. It was also used medicinally.

Why do we not see this more often? Should we ignore the instruction of Scripture or presume we have a better way? Do we believe God's Word and stand on its promises?

One problem in the church is that many churches ignore the design laid out in Scripture for oversight of the church. The apostles appointed elders in every town so that they might pray and work together to oversee the local church. Paul's instruction to Titus was to appoint elders (plural) in every town (singular Titus 1:5^{xiii}). At the time, every gathering of believers in a town was considered the town's church. The qualifications were given to Titus and Timothy as to how to select those men (Titus 1:6-9^{xiv}).

Many churches instead have adopted a CEO mentality or even worse, a kingship model. It is difficult to find the men who meet the standards in Scripture. But that does not mean we should ignore God's design and seek a worldly one. If there are genuine elders, the church body should feel comfortable coming to them and asking for prayer.

Over the years the elders of Wayside have done this with faith in God's Word. We do not always see a miraculous healing, but there are times when we do. We do not order God to act. He orders us. And this is His order. So, we obey and make the request with the authority Jesus gives us, which is "in the name of the Lord." We leave the rest up to God. He may choose to heal or not to. The healing may come later.

I can tell you of one case in which a person with macular degeneration was told they would go blind. We followed the instructions given in this passage and at the next visit with the ophthalmologist they were told the problem was inexplicably gone. Praise God. We act according to the Word and leave the results with God and His timing.

¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. James 5:15 It is the prayer of faith that takes God at His Word and acts in obedience to His instruction that saves the sick. The Lord will raise him or her up. The declaration is unequivocal. However, much of the time we do not see an immediate healing. The same was true at times in the New Testament. Paul left Trophimus sick in Miletus (2 Timothy 4:20^{xv}). Paul's assistant and church planter Epaphroditus almost died (Philippians 2:27^{xvi}). Paul prayed three times for his own healing and was told God's grace would be sufficient for him to live with the thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-10^{xvii}).

In some charismatic circles the lack of healing is ascribed to the lack of faith of the sick or of the one who prayed. We should note that in this instruction it is the men who pray (plural). That would mean none of them had faith, and that the great Apostle Paul did not have faith. We forget that God is sovereign. If our faith is in Almighty God, we can trust Him to do what is best. What if the person had more to learn from their illness? Would we deny the person that gift? What if God has numbered their days and this is when He wants them to come home? Would we make them linger in this sin sick world?

If there is a Spirit given conviction that the person will be healed, and even sometimes when we are not certain, God will heal. If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us (1 John 5:14^{xviii}). We should not forget that. Therefore, we must ask if it is God's will at that time for the individual to be healed. If the prayer is prompted by the Spirit, the Spirit will respond and you will see God's will done, whether immediately or at a later time.

But that is the lesser miracle to what follows. *If he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.* That is the most important miracle. If the illness was caused by sin, the healing will confirm the forgiveness of God.

^{16a} Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. James 5:16a James is describing a church that is a loving spiritual family

that cares for one another. If we are holding ourselves accountable to others by sharing our prayer needs, confessing where we have failed and need encouragement, the need to go to the elders will be a rarity. Instead, we will all be ministering to one another in openness and seeking to build one another up as we pray for one another. (1 Thessalonians 5:11^{xix}).

Public confession of sin is humbling and encourages others to do the same, asking for prayer from the congregation. It should not deal with specifics but rather a request for prayer of general nature, such as “I struggle with a temptation. Please pray for me.” *Real, deep, genuine confession of sin has been a feature of every genuine awakening or revival in the past 250 years. But it isn't anything new, as demonstrated by the revival in Ephesus recorded in Acts 19:17–20^{xx}. It says, many who believed came confessing and telling their deeds. This was Christians getting right with God, and open confession was part of it.*^{xxi}

Today we are too fearful that someone might find out our shortcomings. What is the root of that fear but pride! Should we keep the confidence of those who confide in us? Absolutely! But if somehow others find out, should we be humiliated. Hallelujah! Yes! Did James not tell us to humble ourselves before the Lord and He will exalt us (4:10^{xxii})? If fear of being found to be a sinner keeps you from confessing your faults, you have a greater problem, pride! If you are afraid your sin will be found out, you have thought too highly of the congregation, for we are all sinners saved by grace (Romans 3:23^{xxiii}).

Sadly, we see some sins as more heinous than others. All sin is an affront to God. It is playing God and defying Him. And sadly, we catch ourselves doing that too often. That is why we need to confess to one another and pray for one another. Not only will the person you confess to ask you how you are doing in your struggle, which helps to keep you accountable, but he or she will be praying for you. And this passage goes on to tell how powerful the prayer of a righteous person is.

But in case you have not put great stock in prayer, let me tell you what the Bible says prayer can do. It can save you and your family from the wrath of God and affect a thousand generations of your descendants (Deuteronomy 7:9^{xxiv}). It can cause the barren to conceive, even if the man is 100 and the woman is 90. It can inform you of God's calling on your life. Prayer can stop time in its tracks (Joshua 10:13^{xxv}). It can heal the sick and raise the dead (1 Kings 17:21,22^{xxvi}). It can call fire from heaven and consume our enemies or consume a sacrifice along with the stones upon which it is laid (1 Kings 18:37,38^{xxvii}). It can open our eyes to the spiritual realm. It can bring a draught to cause a nation to repent (1 Kings 17:1^{xxviii}). It can fill a temple with the Spirit so thick you cannot enter it. It can stop the mouths of hungry lions (Daniel 6:22^{xxix}). It can bring us a revelation of what is to come. It can ask and receive forgiveness of sins. It can usher the baptism of the Spirit into a believer's life (Acts 4:31^{xxx}). It can bring revival to a wayward nation! And all this and more is to say that prayer can bring God's will into this earthly realm. The only limit to what prayer can do is the sovereign will of God. And if you are God's child, you do not want to pray for anything that is not His will.

When the Scripture says we are to pray for one another, we should believe God will do great things when we pray (John 14:13^{xxxi}; 15:16^{xxxii}). The Apostle Paul said God is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20^{xxxiii}).

^{16b} The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. James 5:16b Sometimes I hear the excuse, “I am not a righteous person, so I am asking you to pray because your prayers have great power.” I am no more righteous than you. Our

righteousness is from God. When we repented of our sin, we received the righteousness merited by Christ. We cannot be more righteous in God's eyes than we already are. If you are knowingly compromising with sin in your life, that is another matter. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 3:7 ⁷ *Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.* In other words, treat your wife like Jesus treats us if you want your prayers to be unhindered. So, if you do not have anything that hinders your prayers due to knowing disobedience, your prayers are just as powerful as Elijah's prayers that we read about in the next verse (Hebrews 4:16^{xxxiv}). The glory of God is seen in His ability to work through such poor instruments as you and I. Saying you are too poor an instrument to be of use is to doubt God's ability and desire for you.

¹⁷ *Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.* ¹⁸ *Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.* James 5:17,18 Notice that James said Elijah had a nature like ours. During the days of Elijah, the northern tribes were under the evil king Ahab whose wife, Jezebel, was even more evil than he (1 Kings 16:33^{xxxv}). Elijah prayed that God would withhold from them the blessing of rain (1 Kings 17:1^{xxxvi}). It did not rain for three and a half years. When the king was desperately searching for a few remaining springs to find grass for his animals, God sent Elijah to meet him. Elijah demanded a confrontation between him and the 400 prophets of Baal. They met on the top of Mount Carmel.

They brought two bulls for a sacrifice. Elijah told the prophets of Baal to build an altar and call on Baal to consume the sacrifice. Baal was the god of the storm, and therefore of thunder as well. They danced around the altar and according to their custom cut themselves offering their blood. Elijah mocked them and told them their god might have gone to the bathroom (1 Kings 18:27^{xxxvii}). He told them they should yell a little louder. When they had worn themselves out, it was Elijah's turn.

He rebuilt the altar to Jehovah, the twelve stones representing the twelve tribes. He laid the sacrificial bull on the altar and had the people douse it with water three times until the trench around the altar filled with water. Then he asked God to show the people that the Lord is God (1 Kings 18:36^{xxxviii}). Fire came down and consumed the sacrifice, the stones, and the water. The people cried out, "The Lord is God!"

Then God had Elijah pray for rain. Elijah told Ahab to hurry, or the rain would stop him. He bowed himself in prayer seven times. After the seventh time he could see a small cloud coming up from the ocean. Soon the skies were black, and the rain drenched the land (1 Kings 18:45^{xxxix}).

I think that James added that the earth bore its fruit because he wanted the readers to realize that prayer is what brings fruit out of bareness. No matter the problem, prayer can turn what is dry and empty into what is fruitful and good.

¹⁹ *My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back,* ²⁰ *let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.* James 5:19,20 These last two verses are a challenge to apply James' message. If you see someone backsliding, pray! The way to bring them back is to hear from God and know what they need to hear and when they need to hear it. **It is God who brings them back. We are just His instruments.**

But what a joy to know that God will work through us to bring His will into the lives of those He puts on our hearts.

If we saw someone about to jump off a cliff, we would try our best to talk them out of it. Jumping into a life of sin is worse, for it is an eternal death. We should feel a great sense of urgency to let God draw them back from the edge, plead to God for wisdom knowing that James said God will generously give it to us (1:5^{xl}), for we realize what is at stake. I find it is the Word of God that is usually the tool God gives us to bring them back. They have either forgotten the Word or chosen to ignore it. But when we remind them of the greatness of God's love for them as declared in Scripture, the seduction of the enemy loses its appeal.

Perhaps James abruptly ended his letter this way because it was the very theme of the letter. He saw churches wandering from the truth and wrote this letter to turn them back. May the Lord use it in our lives to keep us in fellowship and always straining forward for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14^{xli}).

Questions:

- 1 Why should we be truthful in our speech?
- 2 What are we commanded to do when suffering? Why?
- 3 What are we commanded to do when cheerful? Why?
- 4 What are we told to do when we are sick?
- 5 What are the elders to do?
- 6 Why is this not done more frequently?
- 7 Why does God sometimes not answer our prayer as we would like?
- 8 What can prayer do?
- 9 Who is a righteous person?
10. Recount the story of Elijah's prayer power.
11. What are the effects of turning someone back to the Lord?

ⁱ **Matthew 12:37 (ESV)**

³⁷ for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

ⁱⁱ **Psalm 119:89 (ESV)**

⁸⁹ Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Colossians 1:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

^{iv} **John 14:6 (ESV)**

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

^v **1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (ESV)**

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

^{vi} **Psalm 119:160 (ESV)**

¹⁶⁰ The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.

^{vii} **Romans 8:28 (ESV)**

²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

^{viii} **Psalm 34:1 (ESV)**

¹ I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

^{ix} **1 Samuel 16:23 (ESV)**

²³ And whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. So Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him.

^x **John 9:3 (ESV)**

³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.

^{xi} **Matthew 9:2 (ESV)**

² And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven."

^{xii} **John 5:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you."

^{xiii} **Titus 1:5 (ESV)**

⁵ This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—

^{xiv} **Titus 1:6-9 (ESV)**

⁶ if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷ For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

^{xv} **2 Timothy 4:20 (ESV)**

²⁰ Erastus remained at Corinth, and I left Trophimus, who was ill, at Miletus.

^{xvi} **Philippians 2:27 (ESV)**

²⁷ Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

^{xvii} **2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (ESV)**

⁷ So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. ⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. ⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

^{xviii} **1 John 5:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

^{xix} **1 Thessalonians 5:11 (ESV)**

¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

^{xx} **Acts 19:17-20 (ESV)**

¹⁷ And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled. ¹⁸ Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. ¹⁹ And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. ²⁰ So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.

^{xxi} David Guzik, [James](#), David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible (Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik, 2013), Jas 5:15–16.

^{xxii} **James 4:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

^{xxiii} **Romans 3:23 (ESV)**

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

^{xxiv} **Deuteronomy 7:9 (ESV)**

⁹ Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations,

^{xxv} **Joshua 10:13 (ESV)**

¹³ And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day.

^{xxvi} **1 Kings 17:21-22 (ESV)**

²¹ Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this child's life

come into him again.”²² And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived.

^{xxvii} **1 Kings 18:37-38 (ESV)**

³⁷ Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back.”³⁸ Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

^{xxviii} **1 Kings 17:1 (ESV)**

¹ Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.”

^{xxix} **Daniel 6:22 (ESV)**

²² My God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm.”

^{xxx} **Acts 4:31 (ESV)**

³¹ And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

^{xxxi} **John 14:13 (ESV)**

¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

^{xxxii} **John 15:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

^{xxxiii} **Ephesians 3:20 (ESV)**

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,

^{xxxiv} **Hebrews 4:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

^{xxxv} **1 Kings 16:33 (ESV)**

³³ And Ahab made an Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

^{xxxvi} **1 Kings 17:1 (ESV)**

¹ Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.”

^{xxxvii} **1 Kings 18:27 (ESV)**

²⁷ And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, “Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened.”

^{xxxviii} **1 Kings 18:36 (ESV)**

³⁶ And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, “O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word.

^{xxxix} **1 Kings 18:45 (ESV)**

⁴⁵ And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.

^{xi} **James 1:5 (ESV)**

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

^{xli} **Philippians 3:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.