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James 5:1-5

1. “Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you.
2. Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten.
3. Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!
4. Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.
5. You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.”

I would like to dedicate this program to all the honest, hard-working men and women out there who have greedy, oppressive bosses. In this passage you will note that God sees it all and understands all you are going through. God’s spokesman, who penned these words, was James, the half-brother of Jesus. So rest assured the Lord knows your frustration.

In I Peter 2:18-21, the Scripture gives us direction on how we are to conduct ourselves as Christians when we are treated unfairly by our employers: “Servants, be submissive to your masters (or bosses) with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. If when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example for you to follow in His steps....”

Remember--life is unfair. It's meant to be this way, because life is a test. The test of your faith, and to develop Godly love--which is unconditional and never fails. But also remember this--God is fair.

In verse 4 of today's passage James asserts that the cry of those laborers who have been used, abused, and cheated by their employers “has reached the Lord of Sabaoth.” The word Sabaoth here looks like the word Sabbath, and sounds somewhat similar. But Sabaoth does not mean rest. It means “armies” in the Greek. In the Old Testament Hebrew the word indicated “war” and to wage war. So Jesus in this passage is named as “The Lord of Armies.”

The title for Jesus is consistent with such passages as II Thessalonians 1:8-10 which state: “It is only just for

God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God, and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”

James 5:5 ends with indictment to bosses who have abused and cheated their workers for their own personal pleasure. quote: “You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.”

But take heart. The Lord hears our cry. That type of people will not be in heaven--only those who treat others as they would want to be treated.

Amen, come Lord Jesus.