

### James 5:7-8

The Epistle of James was written by the James, the half-brother of Jesus and leader of the Jerusalem church, to the Jewish Christians “dispersed abroad” around AD 45; making it probably the first of the New Testament Books written.<sup>1</sup> This would have been three years after Paul’s revelation of the Rapture and before the beginning of Paul’s public ministry. However, Paul shortly after his conversion, (AD 33-34)<sup>2</sup> was introduced to James and the other Apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-30), stayed a short while, and was sent back to Tarsus. Then Paul, in his letter to the Galatians (written in late 48/early 49)<sup>3</sup> mentions specifically that he met with Peter and James on another occasion three years after his conversion (AD 36-37). All this to say, Paul had a relationship with James and could have shared his revelation regarding the Rapture with James before he wrote this epistle in AD 45. Another possibility is that the Holy Spirit could have directly revealed it to James as He did with Paul. Since it was also written with a Jewish mindset, it can be treated similarly to Matthew (although it was written within the apocalyptic time setting and with a working picture of the Church clearly in view). *Parousia* is mentioned in chapter 5, verses 7-8, where believers are encouraged to “be patient” until the *Parousia* of the Lord. Then a brief analogy is given of the farmer waiting for both the early and late rains (a vivid picture of the growing season in Palestine and possibly a prophetic inference to the two distinct *comings* of the Lord) before the produce comes. According to Vincent, this is the only such use in the New Testament. The early rains were Oct – Dec through Jan – Feb and the latter rains

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<sup>1</sup>Ryrie, 1856.

<sup>2</sup>H. Wayne House, *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 127.

<sup>3</sup>House, *Charts of the New Testament*, 127.

were in March and April. Per 1 Samuel 12:16-18, rain during the harvest was considered a miracle.<sup>4</sup> Then, another exhortation is given to Christians to be patient and to strengthen their hearts, “for the *parousia* of the Lord is *at hand*” (or *imminent*, from the Greek word *eggizo*, meaning, “to bring near, come near or approach”).<sup>5</sup> This is the same type of encouraging language used by Paul to instill the “Blessed Hope” of the *parousia* of the Lord in the Christians at Thessalonica and in Titus—The Rapture. Therefore, this use of *parousia* by James seems to be related to the Rapture (and also lays a foundation for the “imminency” of the Rapture). However, Biederwolf suggests that in view of the “judge is standing right at the door,” verse 9 indicates that the *Parousia* is the Second Coming: a day of blessing for Christians and judgment for the ungodly.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1946; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 761-2.

<sup>5</sup>Zodhiates, “eggizo,” *Dictionary*, 495.

<sup>6</sup>William E. Biederwolf, *The Second Coming Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1924; reprint, 1985), 521-2.