

**First Southern Baptist Church - August 11, 2021**  
**Rich Judged - James 5:1-6**

**Introduction:**

**Train of Thought**

1. Rich business men - chapter 4
2. Judgment on the indulgent rich - verses 1-6
  - the rich would probably not read this, so he writes to the rich, in the ear of the poor, to encourage them.
3. So... be patient - verse 7ff

**Context**

1. Old Testament rebuke of wicked wealthy:
  - A. Is. 3:14ff - the Lord enters into judgment with the elders and princes of His people...
  - B. Is. 10:1-4 - woe to you who enact evil statutes...
2. Amos depicted the wicked rich as fattened cattle ripe for judgment - Amos 4:1-3
3. Doom for the wicked rich - Amos 8:4-10
4. Others who condemn the wicked rich:
  - Job at 24:2-4
  - Jeremiah at 5:27-29
  - Micah at 2:1-5
  - Malachi at 3:5

**Verse 1 - Judgement is Coming on the Rich**

1. Note the severity and the certainty of God's judgment
2. Almost invariably false security and insatiable love of power accompany money
  - fosters a desire to control others, and get richer and richer by any means
  - wealth is a particularly strong obstacle to Christian discipleship (Mt. 19:23)
3. Terms
  - "Go to now" - "listen up!" as in 4:13 - "come now." An insistent call - Listen!
  - Get this!
  - "Weep and howl"
    - howl and shriek describes cries of frantic terror these rich people would utter when their well-deserved miseries began
    - "Weep" is "*klaio*," to sob out loud, to lament. The wailing of someone dying. At 4:9 James used this word to describe someone who truly repents.
    - "Howl" - is "*ololuzo*" and goes beyond lament to shrieking or screaming
    - Together these words picture an intense outburst of despairing, violent, uncontrollable grief.
  - "Miseries" are coming on them - overwhelming hardship, trouble, suffering or distress
4. Note the story of the rich man and Lazarus at the gate - intense judgment - hell. Luke 16:19-30.
5. Being wealthy is not evil - being wealthy is dangerous

## Verses 2-3 - They were Hoarders

### 1. Three types of wealth are mentioned

#### A. Food

“Corrupted” means rotted - oil and corn will rot if left unused

The word “riches” is wealth in general - Mt. 13:22. “Rotted” suggests food-stuffs. But think about it - many things rot. They hoarded things that would inevitably rot.

#### B. Costly garments

-the word is “himitia” technically referring to outward garments, like a robe, mantle or cloak. Sometimes loaded with jewels.

-one form of wealth

-moth eaten

#### C. Metals

“Rust” - metals in those days were not pure. Today’s gold will not rust.

“Cankered” - rusted

Will eat your flesh as a fire... will bite into your flesh. Rust will

“consume” wealthy hoarders. Rust has the property of seeming to eat away.

Rust itself is personified in 3 - it will witness against you

### 2. Hoarding:

A. Demonstrates false priorities

B. Deprives others of their very life

### 3. They store up for themselves, not riches, but judgment

Pile it up!

### 4. Money is inadequate and temporary

### 5. We are to provide for our families but beyond that we are to:

A. Use our money to advance God’s kingdom - 1 Chron. 29:3; Mk. 12:42-44

B. Use our resources to win the lost - Luke 16:9

C. Care for the needy - Gal. 2:10; 1 Jn. 3:16-18

D. Support those in ministry - 1 Cor. 9:4-14

### 6. “Last days” - is obviously a reference to judgment

## Verse 4 - They were Gotten by Unjust Means

### 1. Withheld the wages of the day laborer

-the Old Testament specifically condemned this practice. It was cruel to make the common laborer wait for his money. See Dt. 24:14-15. What could be worse, than that they who supply us with bread should not be given bread.

-Old Testament background

A. Lev. 19:13 - you shall not oppress your neighbor, or rob him. To wages of a hired man are not to remain with you all night.

B. Dt. 24:14-15 - “you shall give him his wages on his day before the sun sets”

C. Jeremiah goes so far as to pronounce a curse on those who did this - Jer. 22:13

-“kept back” wages (see Lev. 19:13; Mt. 20:8)

### 2. Their wages cry out (Gen. 4:10)

-“cries out” the word used is the one for the shrieks of a demon being expelled

(Mk. 9:26), and of the joyful cries when Jesus entered Jerusalem (Mt. 27:33).

3. "Lord of *Sabaoth*"
  - the Lord who rules all
  - the Lord of hosts/ armies - or Lord Almighty
  - he reminds the rich of their judge and His armies. The poor have a powerful ally.
  - the wealthy were not interested in the poor's complaints, but God heard them
  - will God overlook our unconcern for starving millions?
4. "Fields" - used for estate-like farms

### **Verse 5 - They lived a Pampered Lifestyle**

1. Luxury and extravagance, selfish pleasure
2. Terms
  - "*Truphao*" - is lived luxuriously - the idea is "softness"\*\*\* They lived a soft life at the expense of others. Lived delicately, indulgently.
  - "*Spatalao*" is "a life of wanton pleasure" KJV says "wasteful"
  - "*Trepho*" - they "fattened themselves"
3. Like fattened cattle for slaughter
  - beast continue to fatten themselves against slaughter
4. The delicate and self-indulgent life stood in stark contrast to the generally impoverished condition of the masses

### **Verse 6 - They Condemned and Put to Death the Poor**

1. "Condemned and killed" refer to judicial actions
  - as if the rich "own" the law courts
  - or it could mean that to take away a poor man's livelihood is to murder him
2. "The Just"
  - a general term for all the righteous - Jesus is called "Just," so is the prototype
3. The poor "do not resist"
  - could not
  - realize it's futility
  - have no means of redress, so they submit without a murmur
  - though they do not resist, God will on the judgment
4. ***God's judgment is sure, so be faithful - verse 7***

### **Wrap Up**

1. Nothing so surely reveals the state of a man's heart as his view of material things
2. Solomon frantically pursued pleasure and found his pursuit was empty - "all was vanity and striving after wind" - Eccl. 2:4-10.
3. It's hard for a rich man to go to heaven -
4. The desire to be rich is full of many devious traps - 1 Tim. 6:6-10
5. Our desire is different - 1 Tim. 6:11