



The Letter of James Bible Study Session 15 James 5:13-18

Study By
Lorin L Cranford

Greek NT

<5:13> Κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν, προσευχέσθω· εὐθυμεῖ τις, ψαλλέτω· <5:14> ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν, προσκαλεσάσθω τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας, καὶ προσευξάσθωσαν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἀλείψαντες [αὐτὸν] ἐλαίῳ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου. <5:15> καὶ ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμνοντα καὶ ἐγερεῖ αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος· κὰν ἀμαρτίας ἢ πεπονηκώς, ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ. <5:16> ἐξομολογεῖσθε οὓν ἀλλήλοις τὰς ἀμαρτίας καὶ εὐχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων ὅπως ἰαθῆτε. πολὺ ἰσχύει δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη. <5:17> Ἦλίας ἄνθρωπος ἦν ὁμοιοπαθῆς ἡμῖν, καὶ προσευχῇ προσήξατο τοῦ μὴ βρέξει, καὶ οὐκ ἔβρεξεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐνιαυτοὺς τρεῖς καὶ μῆνας ἕξ· <5:18> καὶ πάλιν προσήξατο, καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς ὑετὸν ἔδωκεν καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐβλάστησεν τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς.

Die Gute Nachricht Bibel

13 Wer von euch Schweres zu ertragen hat, soll beten. Wer von euch glücklich ist, soll Loblieder singen. 14 Wer von euch krank ist, soll die Ältesten der Gemeinde rufen, damit sie für ihn beten und ihn im Namen des Herrn mit Öl salben. 15 Ihr vertrauensvolles Gebet wird den Kranken retten. Der Herr wird die betreffende Person wieder aufrichten und wird ihr vergeben, wenn sie Schuld auf sich geladen hat.¹ 16 Überhaupt sollt ihr einander eure Verfehlungen bekennen und füreinander beten, damit ihr geheilt werdet. Das inständige Gebet eines Menschen, der so lebt, wie Gott es verlangt, kann viel bewirken. 17 Elia war auch nur ein Mensch wie wir. Er flehte zu Gott, es nicht regnen zu lassen, da fiel dreieinhalb Jahre kein Tropfen auf das Land.² 18 Dann betete er nochmals; da schenkte der Himmel Regen, und die Erde brachte wieder ihre Früchte hervor.

¹Hier und in Vers 16 klingt der Zusammenhang von Krankheit und Schuld an; siehe Sacherklärung »Krankheit«

²1Kön 17,1 spricht nur von einer Ankündigung des Propheten; zu Vers 18 siehe 1Kön 18,42-45

NRSV

3 Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. 14 Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. 17 Elijah was a human being like us, 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 the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

NLT

13 Are any among you suffering? They should keep on praying about it. And those who have reason to be thankful should continually sing praises to the Lord. 14 Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And their prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make them well. And anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. 16 Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results. 17 Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for the next three and a half years! 18 Then he prayed for rain, and down it poured. The grass turned green, and the crops began to grow again.

The Study of the Text:¹

Context of our passage:

STRUCTURAL OUTLINE OF TEXT Of James²

PRAESCRIPTIO		1.1
BODY	1-194	1.2-5.20
Facing Trials	1-15	1.2-12
God and Temptation	16-24	1.13-18
The Word and Piety	25-37	1.19-27
Faith and Partiality	38-55	2.1-13
Faith and Works	56-72	2.14-26

¹With each study we will ask two basic questions. First, what was the most likely meaning that the first readers of this text understood? This is called the 'historical meaning' of the text. That must be determined, because it becomes the foundation for the second question, "What does the text mean to us today?" For any applicational meaning of the text for modern life to be valid it must grow out of the historical meaning of the text. Otherwise, the perceived meaning becomes false and easily leads to wrong belief.

²Taken from Lorin L. Cranford, *A Study Manual of James: Greek Text* (Fort Worth: Scripta Publications, Inc., 1988), 285. **Statements** indicate core thought expressions in the text as a basis for schematizing the rhetorical structure of the text. These are found in the Study Manual and also at the James Study internet site.

Controlling the Tongue	73-93	3.1-12
True and False Wisdom	94-102	3.13-18
Solving Divisions	103-133	4.1-10
Criticism	134-140	4.11-12
Leaving God Out	141-146	4.13-17
Danger in Wealth	147-161	5.1-6
Persevering under Trial	162-171	5.7-11
Swearing	172-174	5.12
Reaching Out to God	175-193	5.13-18
Reclaiming the Wayward	194	5.19-20

The Literary and Historical Settings:

Although occasional commentary efforts attempt to see a formal conclusion to the letter of James (e.g., Peter Davids, *Commentary on James in the New International Greek Testament Commentary*, pp. 181ff), such efforts miserably fail to be persuasive. This in large part because no substantive case can be made from signals inside the text of James to support such assessments. Secondly, these efforts fail simply because they are motivated more by modern western assumptions of how to write, than by ancient patterns. A frequent additional reason is that the commentator assumes -- either overtly or subconsciously -- the pattern of letter writing by the apostle Paul in the New Testament to be the model by which to judge all other documents in the New Testament associated with the letter form. Davids (NIGTC, p. 181) is particularly subject to criticism at this point. As was noted in the very first study of the book of James, this document in the New Testament only bears the mark of an ancient letter in the Praescriptio in Jas. 1:1. Everything else moves in the direction of an ancient Jewish homily -- which had no well defined standards for composition.

Consequently, Jas. 5:13-18 does not have clearly defined connections to anything that precedes it or to the final pericope that follows it in verses nineteen and twenty. But thematically, there is a connection in a limited way via the emphasis upon reaching out to God in all kinds of circumstances, both good and bad. Prayer to and praise of God is a connecting link to a few other sections of this NT document.

Re-read the text of the book of James, especially noting passages where the emphasis is upon reaching out to God in some way, particularly through prayer. Now describe any possible connection to Jas. 5:13-18. Remember: many, if not most of the other passages, may not have any connection.

Exegesis of the Text:

1. What did the text mean to the first readers?

175 ^{5.13} **Is anyone among you suffering misfortune?**

176 **Let him pray.**

177 **Is anyone cheerful?**

178 **Let him sing praises.**

179 ^{5.14} **Is anyone among you sick?**

180 **Let him call for the elders of the church,**

and

181 **let them pray over him,**

having anointed him

with olive oil

in the name of the Lord.

^{5.15} Now

182 **the prayer offered in faith will deliver the sick one**

and

183 **the Lord will raise him up;**

and

if he has committed sins,

184 **they shall be forgiven him.**

Exegetical Questions

1) Compare Jas. 5:13 to Psalms 50:15, 91:15, and 30:1-12. Describe the possible connection of each Psalm to James 5:13.

Jas. 5:13 (NRSV). 13 Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise.

<p>Psalm 50:15 (NRSV). 15 Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.</p>	<p>Psalm 91:15 (NRSV). 15 When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them.</p>	<p>Psalm 30:1-12 (NRSV). 1 I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up, and did not let my foes rejoice over me. 2 O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. 3 O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit. 4 Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name. 5 For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning. 6 As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved." 7 By your favor, O Lord, you had established me as a strong mountain; you hid your face; I was dismayed. 8 To you, O Lord, I cried, and to the Lord I made supplication: 9 "What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness? 10 Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me! O Lord, be my helper!" 11 You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, 12 so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.</p>
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2) Compare statement 181 to Isaiah 1:6; Luke 10:34, and Mark 6:13.

181 and
 let them pray over him,
 having anointed him
 with olive oil
 in the name of the Lord.

<p>Isaiah 1:6 (NRSV). 6 From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but bruises and sores and bleeding wounds; they have not been drained, or bound up, or softened <i>with oil.</i></p>	<p>Luke 10:34 (NRSV). 30 Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. 34 <i>He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them.</i> Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." 36 Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"</p>	<p>Mark 6:13 (NRSV). 7 He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8 He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; 9 but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. 10 He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. 11 If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." 12 So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. 13 <i>They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.</i></p>
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What insights about the use of olive oil can be gleaned from these passages that help us better understand what James was talking about?

3) Compare James 5:14 to Sirach 38:1-15.

<p>James 5:14 (NRSV). Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord.</p>	<p>Sirach 38:1-5 (NRSV). 1 Honor physicians for their services, for the Lord created them; 2 for their gift of healing comes from the Most High, and they are rewarded by the king. 3 The skill of physicians makes them distinguished, and in the presence of the great they are admired. 4 The Lord created medicines out of the earth, and the sensible will not despise them. 5 Was not water made sweet with a tree in order that its power might be known? 6 And he gave skill to human beings that he might be glorified in his marvelous works. 7 By them the physician heals and takes away pain; 8 the pharmacist makes a mixture from them. God's works will never be finished; and from him health spreads over all the earth. 9 My child, when you are ill, do not delay, but pray to the Lord, and he will heal you. 10 Give up your faults and direct your hands rightly, and cleanse your heart from all sin. 11 Offer a sweet-smelling sacrifice, and a memorial portion of choice flour, and pour oil on your offering, as much as you can afford. 12 Then give the physician his place, for the Lord created him; do not let him leave you, for you need him. 13 There may come a time when recovery lies in the hands of physicians, 14 for they too pray to the Lord that he grant them success in diagnosis and in healing, for the sake of preserving life. 15 He who sins against his Maker, will be defiant toward the physician.</p>
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What insights from this intertestamental Jewish wisdom writing can we glean about first century attitudes to doctors and healing?

4) Compare Jas. 5:14-15 to the following Old Testament texts.

Jas. 5:14-15 (NRSV). 14 Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven.

<p>2 Kings 20:1-11 (NRSV). 1 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, "Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover." 2 Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord: 3 "Remember now, O Lord, I implore you, how I have walked before you in faithfulness with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." Hezekiah wept bitterly. 4 Before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the Lord came to him: 5 "Turn back, and say to Hezekiah prince of my people, Thus says the Lord, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; indeed, I will heal you; on the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. 6 I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake." 7 Then Isaiah said, "Bring a lump of figs. Let them take it and apply it to the boil, so that he may recover." 8 Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the Lord on the third day?" 9 Isaiah said, "This is the sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he has promised: the shadow has now advanced ten intervals; shall it retreat ten intervals?" 10 Hezekiah answered, "It is normal for the shadow to lengthen ten intervals; rather let the shadow retreat ten intervals." 11 The prophet Isaiah cried to the Lord; and he brought the shadow back the ten intervals, by which the sun had declined on the dial of Ahaz.</p>	<p>Isaiah 38:1-22 (NRSV). 1 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, "Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover." 2 Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed to the Lord: 3 "Remember now, O Lord, I implore you, how I have walked before you in faithfulness with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. 4 Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah: 5 "Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the Lord, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. 6 I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and defend this city. 7 "This is the sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he has promised: 8 See, I will make the shadow cast by the declining sun on the dial of Ahaz turn back ten steps." So the sun turned back on the dial the ten steps by which it had declined.</p> <p>9 A writing of King Hezekiah of Judah, after he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness: 10 I said: In the noontide of my days I must depart; I am consigned to the gates of Sheol for the rest of my years. 11 I said, I shall not see the Lord in the land of the living; I shall look upon mortals no more among the inhabitants of the world. 12 My dwelling is plucked up and removed from me like a shepherd's tent; like a weaver I have rolled up my life; he cuts me off from the loom; from day to night you bring me to an end; 13 I cry for help until morning; like a lion he breaks all my bones; from day to night you bring me to an end. 14 Like a swallow or a crane I clamor, I moan like a dove. My eyes are weary with looking upward. O Lord, I am oppressed; be my security! 15 But what can I say? For he has spoken to me, and he himself has done it. All my sleep has fled because of the bitterness of my soul. 16 O Lord, by these things people live, and in all these is the life of my spirit. Oh, restore me to health and make me live! 17 Surely it was for my welfare that I had great bitterness; but you have held back my life from the pit of destruction, for you have cast all my sins behind your back. 18 For Sheol cannot thank you, death cannot praise you; those who go down to the Pit cannot hope for your faithfulness. 19 The living, the living, they thank you, as I do this day; fathers make known to children your faithfulness. 20 The Lord will save me, and we will sing to stringed instruments all the days of our lives, at the house of the Lord. 21 Now Isaiah had said, "Let them take a lump of figs, and apply it to the boil, so that he may recover." 22 Hezekiah also had said, "What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?"</p>
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What insights about healing and the use of individuals as mediators of healing in these Old Testament passages can be gleaned to help better understand James?

5) Compare James 5:14-15 to the following New Testament texts.

Jas. 5:14-15 (NRSV). 14 Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven.

<p>Mark 2:1-12 (NRSV). 1 When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. 2 So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. 3 Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk'? 10 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — he said to the paralytic — 11 "I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home." 12 And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"</p>	<p>John 5:1-15 (NRSV). 1 After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. 3 In these lay many invalids — blind, lame, and paralyzed. 4 5 One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" 7 The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me." 8 Jesus said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk." 9 At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.</p> <p>Now that day was a sabbath. 10 So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, "It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." 11 But he answered them, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" 12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take it up and walk'?" 13 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there. 14 Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you." 15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.</p>
<p>John 9:1-7 (NRSV). 1 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. 4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, 7 saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.</p>	<p>1 Cor. 11:27-32 (NRSV). 27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves. 30 For this reason many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. 31 But if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.</p>

6) Compare Jas. 5:16 to the following texts.

James 5:16 (NRSV). 16 Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

<p>Lev. 26:40-42 (NRSV). 40 But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their ancestors, in that they committed treachery against me and, moreover, that they continued hostile to me — 41 so that I, in turn, continued hostile to them and brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity, 42 then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; I will remember also my covenant with Isaac and also my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land.</p>	<p>Num. 5:5-7 (NRSV). 5 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 6 Speak to the Israelites: When a man or a woman wrongs another, breaking faith with the Lord, that person incurs guilt 7 and shall confess the sin that has been committed. The person shall make full restitution for the wrong, adding one-fifth to it, and giving it to the one who was wronged.</p>	<p>Psa. 32:1-5 (NRSV). 1 Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. 3 While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. (Selah) 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the guilt of my sin. (Selah)</p>
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<p>Prov. 28:13 (NRSV). 13 No one who conceals transgressions will prosper, but one who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.</p>	<p>Dan. 9:4-19 (NRSV). 4 I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, “Ah, Lord, great and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love with those who love you and keep your commandments, 5 we have sinned and done wrong, acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and ordinances. 6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land. 7 “Righteousness is on your side, O Lord, but open shame, as at this day, falls on us, the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. 8 Open shame, O Lord, falls on us, our kings, our officials, and our ancestors, because we have sinned against you. 9 To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him, 10 and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by following his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. 11 “All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. So the curse and the oath written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against you. 12 He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers, by bringing upon us a calamity so great that what has been done against Jerusalem has never before been done under the whole heaven. 13 Just as it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us. We did not entreat the favor of the Lord our God, turning from our iniquities and reflecting on his fidelity. 14 So the Lord kept watch over this calamity until he brought it upon us. Indeed, the Lord our God is right in all that he has done; for we have disobeyed his voice. 15 “And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and made your name renowned even to this day — we have sinned, we have done wickedly. 16 O Lord, in view of all your righteous acts, let your anger and wrath, we pray, turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain; because of our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors, Jerusalem and your people have become a disgrace among all our neighbors. 17 Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his supplication, and for your own sake, Lord, let your face shine upon your desolated sanctuary. 18 Incline your ear, O my God, and hear. Open your eyes and look at our desolation and the city that bears your name. We do not present our supplication before you on the ground of our righteousness, but on the ground of your great mercies. 19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, listen and act and do not delay! For your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people bear your name!” 20 While I was speaking, and was praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God on behalf of the holy mountain of my God — 21 while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen before in a vision, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice.</p>	<p>1 John 1:9 (NRSV). 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.</p>
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What insights about confession of sin can be gleaned from these passages that will help us better understand James?

What is the connection between physical problems and confession of sin?

7) Compare the reference of Elijah in James 5:17-18 to 1 Kings 17:1-6 and 1 Kings 18:42-45.

Jas. 5:17-18 (NRSV). 5:17 Elijah was a man of like nature with ourselves and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. 5:18 Then he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit.

<p>1 Kings 17:1-6 (NRSV). 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." 2 The word of the Lord came to him, saying, 3 "Go from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 4 You shall drink from the wadi, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there." 5 So he went and did according to the word of the Lord; he went and lived by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the wadi. 7 But after a while the wadi dried up, because there was no rain in the land.</p>	<p>1 Kings 18:42-45 (NRSV). 41 Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of rushing rain." 42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; there he bowed himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees. 43 He said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." He went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." Then he said, "Go again seven times." 44 At the seventh time he said, "Look, a little cloud no bigger than a person's hand is rising out of the sea." Then he said, "Go say to Ahab, 'Harness your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.'" 45 In a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind; there was a heavy rain. Ahab rode off and went to Jezreel. 46 But the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; he girded up his loins and ran in front of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.</p>
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James 5:17 relates to which passage in 1 Kings? 5:18?

2. What does the text mean to us today?

1) When life gets tough for you, where do you turn?

2) When everything is flowing smoothly in your life, how much praying do you do?

3) What is your first reaction to illness?

4) How do you view doctors and modern medicine?

5) How important is praying to you?