

23. That contrast is the progressive present active participle of **παρακαλέω** (*parakalēō*) whose basic meaning is “encouragement,” but the imperatival participle amplifies it to an “exhortation.”³ Thus, the writer’s language is intended to incite and encourage through exhortation.
23. The active voice means you will produce the action of the verb by not only showing up to hear the communication of the Word of God, but you will be an encouragement to others by consistently gathering together with them for the spiritual advance.
24. The participle is instrumental and therefore is translated, “but by being an encouragement.” This word has a silent impact on the congregation at large. This person does not need to say anything. What he says is his silent but consistent appearance at Bible class.
25. During his time spent at the *ekklēsia*, his presence is a consistent reminder of the value of showing up at Bible class. His confident demeanor, his grace orientation, his wise commentary is testimony to the doctrine he has acquired while quietly concentrating in Bible class.
26. The spiritual growth acquired by the consistent attendee is reflected by his confident persona while mixing with others. In both environments, he is an ongoing encouragement.
27. At this point the writer of Hebrews briefly abandons Koiné Greek and switches to Attic Greek phrase, “and all the more”: **καί τοσοῦτος μᾶλλον** (*kaí tosoútos mállon*): “even so much more.”
28. For the writer of Hebrews to dramatically switch languages grabs the attention of the reader. The overall importance of assembling at Bible class is to “make hay while the sun shines.”
29. The sudden change of languages indicates the writer’s desire to grab the attention of the reader. The writer is going to dramatically remind the group that they are only one yoctosecond away from being raptured away into the third heaven with a certain appointment before the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ.
30. The point: The overall meaning and inherent power of assembling for Bible class is to accrue the thinking of God since gradually encroaching with each passing day is the prophesied transfer from time into eternity.
31. Now is the time and now is the hour to accumulate doctrine in your soul so that on any given day you are as prepared to meet your Maker as possible.

³ “To incite by argument or advice: urge strongly. To give warning or advice: make urgent appeals (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2014), s.v. “exhortation.”



32. By doing so you profit from your biblical inventory in time and in so doing you accumulate the doctrinal capital that prepares you for the change of station from time into eternity.
33. The younger a person is the less emphasis he naturally has with regard to his eventual death. But that is not the focus the writer of Hebrew wants the reader to have.
34. Instead, he wants positive volition toward the teaching of Bible doctrine to be a constant motivation to move forward in the plan of God. Why? Since we do not know when we shall leave this earth, and because we do not know, is the reason for the necessity to assemble ourselves together.
35. The real attention getter here is not rally one's physical death, but one far more imminent, the Rapture of the church, indicated by the phrase, "as you see the day drawing near."
36. The verb "to see" is the aoristic present active indicative of **βλέπω (blépō)**. The present tense is a retroactive progressive present denoting what has begun in the past and continues into the present.
37. Those who have studied doctrine and retained it are aware of the immanency of the Rapture. The active voice indicates that those who have grown spiritually produce the action of knowing the Rapture could occur at any moment.
38. Consequently, they realize the urgency of consistent attendance in the local assembly and the consistent pursuit of truth within the environment of the church auditorium in concert with other believers.
39. The indicative mood is declarative and views the action of the verb from the viewpoint of absolute reality—the Rapture event could occur at any time on any day.
40. The lie is then proclaimed as the truth and those who stand fast in opposition are accused of committing sins against individual, societal, and cultural absolutes.
41. The believer's duty is to maintain and stand firm from his fortress of truth. To live by it. To uphold it. To proclaim it. And do so until his physical death or the Rapture of the Church.
42. James concludes verse 8 with this, "for the coming of the Lord is near." The word that begins this final clause is the noun **παρουσία (parousía)**. Its basic definitions are, "a state of being present," "coming to a place," "coming or arrival."

(End JAS3-84.Rev. See JAS3-85 for continuation of study at p. 301.)



43. In several New Testament passages, it is used to designate prophetically the Rapture of the church initiated by the arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ in the atmosphere of the earth accompanied by the elect angels, and by Church-Age believers who had previously died physically, but returning to exchange their interim bodies for resurrection bodies.
44. James concludes the verse with the perfect active indicative verb, **ἐγγίζω (engízō)**. The perfect tense is intensive indicating that the Rapture is getting closer and closer with each passing day.
45. James, writing in the decade of the A.D. 40s, presents the prophecy, the “coming of the Lord is near” (James 5:7–8). That was almost two-thousand years ago and still there is no **parousía**. How are we to evaluate this two-millennia delay?
46. Principle: Since there is no unfulfilled prophecy during the course of the Church Age, we may confidently conclude that the next prophetic event will be the Rapture.
47. Since this is true, the first-century church anticipated the Rapture under the principle of imminency. Paul wrote about this conclusion in:

1 Corinthians 1:6 The testimony concerning you [plural pronoun **σὺ (sú)**: believers in Corinth] was confirmed among you.

v. 7 You are not lacking any spiritual gift. You should be eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ [Rapture],

v. 8 Who will also confirm you to the end [of the Church Age with the imputation of a resurrection body], blameless in the day [Rapture] of our Lord Jesus Christ. (EXT)

48. From this passage, it is apparent that Paul understood the imminency of the Rapture and, because of this, anticipated it to occur in his lifetime.
49. It was reasonable for Paul to conclude this since there was nothing in Scripture to indicate another prophetic event would precede it.
50. However, after almost 2,000 years since Paul wrote, we find ourselves with the same conclusion: “Why not now?” Because of the testimony of the farmer:

James 5:8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord [the Rapture] is near. (NASB)

51. We have no more information regarding the day of the Rapture than he did. He was comfortable to remain patient. The seeds were in the field. He anticipated the early and late rains. He was prepared to harvest his crops at the appropriate time.



52. Although the prophecy of the Rapture indicates it is imminent, it does not reveal any catalyst for the event. This is known only to the Father (Mark 13:32d). Its execution is in the divine decree about which we are not aware.
53. Therefore, to what conclusion are we forced? The Rapture, being eminent, may occur in our lifetimes, but it may not. Consequently, we are to use its imminency as a motivation to grow in grace, advance to spiritual maturity, and make spiritual growth our top priority.
54. In James 5:8, the coming of the Lord at the Rapture is indicated by the noun *parousía* [pär-ü-sē-ə].
55. It has been transliterated into the English dictionaries and capitalized, “Parousia,” and defined as the Second Coming. In some contexts, it does, but in others, which we are noting, it refers to the Rapture of the Church.
56. What follows is an interesting and insightful synopsis of the words *parousía*—“coming”—and *engízō* —“near”—regarding James’s comments on the Rapture:

In [James 5] verse 7, James urged believers to be patient in view of the fact of the Lord’s coming. Now he bases his exhortation to patience and spiritual firmness on the nearness of the Lord’s coming. The verb James uses, *engízō* (“is near”), occurs elsewhere in the New Testament in similar eschatological contexts.

We need to say something about the “nearness” idea as we find it here in James. Not much is gained from a consideration of the verb *engízō* itself—it denotes simply “nearness” in space or time. But what is crucial is to understand this “nearness” in the appropriate temporal framework: salvation history. With the death and resurrection of Jesus and pouring out of the Spirit, the “last days” have been inaugurated. This final age of salvation will find its climax in the return of Christ in glory. But—and here is the crucial point—the length of this age is unknown. Not even Jesus knew how long the “last days” would last (cf. Mark 13:32).¹ What this means is that the return of Christ, as the next event in the salvation-historical timetable, is, from the time of the early church to our own day, “near,” or “imminent.”

¹ “But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”