

WAITING ON GOD SERIES

THE PURPOSE OF WAITING

We will look at waiting on God. What does it mean to wait on God and why do we need to wait on God.

Isa. 40:28-31 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

In verse 30 he speaks about how that even natural strength cannot compare to the strength that people will receive when they wait on God. The youths shall fail. Young men shall also fall. But those who wait on God, God seems to give them a supernatural strength.

Notice here that there is a cycle when we look at waiting on God. It says in verse 31 that those who wait on God shall mount up with wings like eagles. Then you shall run and not be weary. You shall walk and not be faint. Wait, mount, run and walk, these 4 are a cycle by itself. It starts with waiting.

Waiting speaks about being stationary, not doing anything but just waiting on God. Then from that stationary position suddenly you take off like an eagle. You are

flying under the wings of the Holy Spirit.

Then your actions slow down. From flying you go to running. Running is slower than flying. Then afterwards you go to walking. Which is slower even than running.

There are different speeds involved in this particular verse and all are important. If an eagle wants to catch a prey, the eagle would have to slow down and then swoop and then catch the prey under his talons and go off. Any of you tried to drink a cup of tea while you are running would fail. Does anybody eat sandwiches while doing the marathon race? When you want to eat you have to station yourself in one place to really enjoy your meal.

Then we talk about walking that is different from running. When you are running you cannot be a tourist. When you do your shopping you have to slow down to examine those items. So there are various speeds that we move along in life according to the need of the situation.

Sometimes you need an eagle's vision. But looking will not feed you. You need to come down and look around and pluck the different fruits from those trees etc. There need to be different speeds in our life. What the bible is giving here is a cycle. From waiting you go to flying. From flying you go to running. From running you go to walking. And let me connect it from walking you go back to waiting. It's a cycle that you repeat over and over again in life. That from time to time God calls on you to wait. And after you wait you receive an impetus where you fly. Then as you fly you need to do something. Sometimes you need to come down to run. Then sometimes you need to walk. Then from walking you need to wait again. The cycle keeps going on over and over again in our lives.

If you are sensitive to that cycle in your life then you will know when to wait, when to fly, when to run, when to walk. Sometimes the Holy Spirit say fly, sometimes the Holy Spirit says wait. Some times the Holy Spirit says run and if you don't run you are finished. Sometimes the Holy Spirit tells you stand, that's waiting on God.

Standing on the promises of God. We need to be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is telling us to do. Sometimes He gets us into a position where we have to do what He wants us to do quickly. Other times He tells you wait. Sometimes there is an urgency of matter, where He may send you to do something and He may say to you to speak to no one along the way.

These are cycles that are repeated in our lives. When I preach I don't run. If I fly when I preach you can't see me. We slow down at different areas. That's the reason why God tells us to wait.

Waiting for God's Cycles and Dispensations

The first reason I bring before you is that God has planned things by dispensation. God has a cycle in history. Sometimes you are born at a moment where you have to do your part in that cycle and wait on God for the other cycles to take place. In the first category you are ready. God is ready but the timing is not right.

Let me give an illustration of people waiting on God.

Lk. 2:25 *Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, (What was he doing? He was waiting like an eagle. And it was a long wait.) looking for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Spirit was upon him.* Let me assure Simeon was living in the perfect will of God. Simeon was doing all the right things. He was righteous and devout. Simeon knew the timing of God. He knew that God was going to restore Israel. God was going to send the Messiah. Simeon knew all these things. The Holy Spirit was upon him; the anointing was upon him. But I don't think many people know about him in those days. He may have lived and died and nobody knew he existed. He lived at a time when the Messiah was not yet to be manifested. He lived just before Jesus was born. He had his part to do. I believe he did his part in intercession. Probably before Jesus came on the scene, before John the Baptist came on the scene there were a lot of devout men and women whom God called to pray for the nation of Israel. Among them

would be Anna the prophetess. Among them would have been Simeon.

What was wrong at this moment? Nothing wrong except that the dispensation and the timing of God was such that the Messiah was to come at around zero A.D. or actually about 4 B.C. That was the time of the manifestation of the Messiah coming forth. And Jesus died at about A.D. 27. Our calendar was slightly messed up. It was not exactly zero A.D. that Jesus was born. All historians point to about 27 A.D. And here was Simeon he was living in the B.C. He was born in the B.C. living in the B.C. looking forward to Jesus coming. In fact if he had lived as an adult around Jesus' time, he would probably qualified to be a disciple of Jesus. If he had lived in the time of Samuel under king Saul, he would have been qualified to be a prophet. He was born for a destiny. He was born for a purpose. And his purpose was to just welcome the Messiah. When Jesus was born the Holy Spirit was upon him who told him, "Go to the temple today." And in the temple there was Mary and Joseph dedicating Jesus on the eighth day which is the day that the Jews dedicated newborn babies. It was a day that the newborn babies were circumcised.

See how perfect his timing was. His role was very simple. He was just to come in and welcome Jesus. Jesus couldn't talk yet. He even couldn't say to Simeon, "Come and follow me and I will make you a fisher of man." And when Jesus was there Simeon saw the child and the anointing fell on him. He got hold of Jesus and started prophesying.

Anna the prophetess was another woman who was perfect in the will of God. They lived in the perfect will of God. Let me assure you that it is not how demonstrative or how public God wants you to be a disciple. The most important thing is to do the perfect will of God. Simeon and Anna may not have a chance to be disciples of Jesus. Simeon and Anna may not have a chance to be one of those great prophets of the Old Testament. But Simeon and Anna lived in the perfect will of God.

I read about the gospel of Nicodemus. What was the response of Nicodemus? You remember when Jesus Christ died on the cross. And the tomb was opened and Jesus was raised up and all the dead rose up also. Then those dead who believed in Jesus

woke up and they went about Jerusalem. One of them was Simeon. That is in the gospel of Nicodemus. After welcoming Jesus, the first thing he said was, "Lord let me die now." Jesus was just only 8 days old and he just saw Jesus and he said, "Let me die now."

I guess when he went down into Hades he saw David there. He saw Samuel the prophet. He told all those guys and said I saw baby Jesus. In Hades I could imagine he said to all those waiting there with him, "Just wait a little while long. Wait till He grows to be 30 years old and then He got 3 years' ministry and then He will come down for us." But the fact of it is God has His timing in the way things take place in the events of life.

Jesus was born in what we called the fullness of time. Jesus was not born later or earlier. Just as He was about to come forth from Mary's womb God ordained a census. In that census it caused Mary who was pregnant to come into Bethlehem and that's where Jesus was born to fulfill the prophecy in the Old Testament. This is where we see the hand of God on the events of this world. God is controlling world events. God is in control right behind the European scene. Causing it to come to pass of what He wants in the prophecy of Daniel. Causing the rising of those 10 nations to come forth in the fullness of time. God has His timing.

That's the first reason why we had to wait on God. We had to wait on God and flow in what God is doing in any generation. If you and I were living in Martin Luther's time. the reformation was the move of God at that time. They haven't exercised the gifts of the Spirit yet. Why, because they didn't even know what it means to be born again. So when those things happened you will move in to the move of God when you were there. God has His timing and His dispensation. That He is doing things all over the world. You have to discern the timing of God. We may be ready; God may be ready, but the timing of God was not yet ready.

When we were praying about starting a church, one of the things the Lord spoke was it's not the time yet to manifest this kind of ministry. God was saying in my heart and saying that the 1950s was the decade of the evangelist. The 1960s was the

decade of the pastors. The 1970s was the decade of the teachers. The 1980s is the decade of the prophet. And the 1990s is the decade of the apostles. So God said wait until that decade come. We could say we got the technology. But without God you will utterly fail.

King David had the technology. He could have built the temple. God said I didn't choose you to do that. He flowed with the dispensation of God. He didn't argue with God. He knows where God has placed him. So we must know the dispensation of God and flow along. We are signs and wonders to the world. We are to fulfill our part on the historical face of this planet. Everything we do must flow with God's perfect timing, His dispensation that He has ordained. That is the first thing why we must wait on God. God has His dispensation. He who is wise in the Lord discerns the times of God. Don't get in a hurry. Just learn to wait on Him.

Waiting to Get Ready Ourselves

The second reason why we have to wait on God is sometimes the time is ready but we are not ready. We are not ready because our faith level is not there to do the work of God. We are not ready because we are not trained and prepared to do the work of God. There is some thing interesting about the law of faith. The law of faith has to do with the law of patience. Faith works with patience. The reason is that faith has an incubation period. When you exercise faith for some thing you will find that it has a period of pregnancy and a period of incubation. Even when you sow the seed, the seed that you sow needs time to grow in the ground before it can be harvested. There is a sowing time. There is a waiting time like a farmer. And there is time to receive.

Jesus has always illustrated faith as a mustard seed. Jesus said that if you have faith as a mustard seed you can say to this mountain move into the sea and the mountain will move. He mentioned that in Matt. 17 and in Mk. 11. Why does He have to compare that to a mustard seed? A mustard seed has to be planted to be a great plant. Faith needs to be planted and it needs an incubation period.

That is why some cases of healing and miracles there are 2 streams that you can receive. You can either receive by the anointing or you can receive by faith. If you want to receive by the anointing, you need to hear the voice of God. We call that the *rhema* of God. If you want to receive by *logos* which is by faith, you must be sowing the *logos* before the crisis occur. You don't wait until the crisis occur and start planting the seed. You don't have enough incubation periods to harvest what you need in that crisis. For that reason we should be sowing the word of God in times of plenty. So that when the times of need come you have the right to make a withdrawal from the deposit that you have placed into the spirit realm.

The spirit realm operates in symbolic form as you can see in the natural realm. You don't go to the bank to draw money unless you have deposited the money in. In the same way you have no right to withdraw something you have not sowed. The harvest needs time to grow and to ripen. So right now if you could see in the future, God began to show it to your spirit a crisis or a need coming. You have to start sowing now. You don't wait until that thing comes and hits you and you start sowing. It's too late.

So the second reason we have seen is that the world may be ready. The call is there. God is ready but we are not ready. So God tells you to come into His presence to learn of Him. To be trained of Him. To be prepared by His Spirit. The reason behind that is that your faith is being built. Faith works with patience. Paul says in II Thes. 1 your faith grow exceedingly and then he goes on and say that your patience have been made known to all men. Faith and patience goes together. Heb. 6 He talks about following the man of God. The man that goes before you who has set an example who through faith and patience obtained or inherit the promises of God. Faith and patience goes together. You exercise faith with patience. Faith has an incubation period. Give time for that. Learn to wait on God and let faith sink into you.

One of the wonderful thing about faith is that how it gets into you; how it gets a hold of you; how it grows all these are mysterious. We know faith comes but we don't understand the fullness of how it grows within you and at which point faith

takes place. If you give it enough time it does take place and grow. The bible call that the mystery of faith.

In the qualification of the deacon he mentioned that they are to hold the mystery of the faith. Why does he call with a good conscience? Why does he call he mystery of the faith? Sometimes mentally you think you have faith. But in reality it is not in you yet. All you have is information and knowledge. It is not going to produce anything. It is not just mental ascent.

So the second reason why we should wait of God is we are not ready. Sometimes we are not ready not only because of faith but because of character. So God never trust you in the limelight. Sometimes man does. It's very seldom that you are ready and there are no doors open. But there are sometimes when you are not ready and the doors are opened. Man knows how to open doors for you.

Early in my ministry I was only about 20 and I started operating the gifts of the Spirit and those people who are interested haven't seen that in those days. So when they saw the gift of God operating, they began to take me around and bring me to big meetings. Doors began to open all over in this country. The only problem was the gift was there. The people saw the gift but I was not mentally and socially and character wise prepared for that kind of pressure, that kind of fellowshipping, that kind of relating with people yet. All I knew was how to operate the gifts and the word of God. But it was insufficient. My character was not prepared and ready to move into the public realm. All I know was preach the word and that's it.

But there is more to ministering to people than just giving the word and operating the gifts. You have to have an understanding of human relationship and how to relate to other human beings and different types of Christians. What happened was that human beings open the door for me and throw me into the limelight. I was not ready to face it. And as a result of that I went through things that I should not have gone through. My character was not prepared. Now I am ready to face the limelight. I am better able to deal with human relationship than I was before. Young people usually have the ability but have no art in diplomacy. As you grow older

you get mellow. You learn how to say no with a smile. When you were young you say no with a grunt. That is the difference in whether you are young or old. I was like a Roman soldier attacking the walls. There was no art to relate to another human being. What was happening was that I was not ready.

There are very few times when you are ready and the doors are not opened. Usually when you are ready the doors are opened. But there are many times when you are not ready and the doors are opened. Human beings could open the door. Doors were opened all over the world five years ago to me. But I have learned my lesson and I said no. So that's the second reason for waiting on God. God is ready, the world is ready for you, you are not ready. So you wait on God; you prepare yourself for the timing of God.

Gal. 1:14-18 And I advance in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles. I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas.

Paul who was more educated than Peter. But as far as the things of the Lord was concerned he was a baby when he was born again. As far as the natural things were concerned he was probably ahead of Peter. Peter was a fisherman. Gamaliel never brought him up. Paul was; Paul was a scholar. When Paul was born again on the road to Damascus, God told him about his call. He knew he was not ready. He went away for 3 years. He didn't go to a bible college. There was none in those days. He went to Arabia. That is why in Acts 9 between verse 25 and 26 he slotted Galatians 1 in. Look at Acts 9 in verse 25 it says that at Damascus they let him down in a basket. Verse 26 and when Paul had come to Jerusalem. It looks as if he was let down in a basket and he went straight to Jerusalem. But in Galatians 1, it tells you that when he was born again and God revealed his Son to him, he did not go to Jerusalem. He did not meet the apostles. He did not meet Peter at all. He went to Arabia. If you accept Galatians 1 you have to slot that verse there. Between Acts 9 verse 25 and 26 is Galatians 1 verses 14 to 18. And after 3 years then only he saw

Peter. So by the time verse 26 has taken place between verse 25 to 26 is a period of 3 years. That is the second reason why we should wait on God. We are not ready. And it takes maturity to say no. One of the things that you learn to say when you grow up is to say no with a smile. Do you know there are men of God have worked themselves to death because they never learn to say no.

The first is the dispensation of God, or the cycles of God. Everybody is ready but God says the timing is not ready. You are ready the world is ready but God says His timing. There is a timing and season for nations to come and to go; for manifestations to come and to go. The second reason is when the world is ready, God is ready, but you are not ready.

Now the third reason you are ready, God is ready but the world is not ready yet. One example we can have is Jesus. You can see that Jesus was ready when He was twelve. He knew the Holy Spirit. He knew the scriptures. He could ask and answer questions which the Pharisees could not understand. They were astonished, surprised at His answers. Jesus was waiting on the timing of God. And the timing of God was not so much because of God. It was also partly to do with the dispensation that was there. God knew the time to manifest Jesus to Israel. Now in Jesus manifesting as a Messiah also has a little bit to do with the first reason. The 70 weeks of Daniel has to be fulfilled exactly. If God fulfill earlier you will miss one year. If God fulfill later the last 7 years of Daniel will become less. So the Messiah has to be manifested on the 69th week. So the timing of God was such.

Here is another example where God is ready, we are ready, the world is not ready.

Acts 16:6-8 And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so passing by Mysia they went down to Troas.

They tried to go to two places Bithynia and Mysia. The Holy Spirit said no. Paul

and Silas could have said but the Lord Jesus said go. Remember Jesus had already sent, God was already ready. Jesus had given the great commission in Matt. 28:19 - 20 and Mk. 16:16-18. Jesus had said in Matthew go and preach to all nations which includes Bithynia and Mysia. In Mk. 16 He had said go and preach to every creature. The commission had been given. God was ready. Paul and Silas were ready. This is their second missionary journey. But Mysia and Bithynia were not ready. There is a time and a season for all things. What did Paul do? They went to Troas and waited. And instead of sending them to Mysia and Bithynia he sent them over to Philippi in Macedonia. God knows the hearts of men. There is a time and a season to harvest them. So sometimes you are ready. God is ready but the world is not ready. Do you know you still had to wait. And sometimes while you are waiting He asks you to do some other things. Like He told Paul how long you have been in Mysia. Don't go to Bithynia. Go over here to Macedonia. That is God's instruction to them. Apparently later on the gospel did go to Bithynia and Mysia.

In Acts 19:10 *This continued for 2 years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.* Did you know that in Acts 19:10 included Mysia and Bithynia. All of Asia included the mainland. Bithynia and Mysia are part of the continent of Asia. Not Asia today but Asia in those days. Now all these were pointing to the fact that there was a time and a purpose for God to minister to Bithynia and Mysia. Paul was ready, God was ready but it was not ready for Asia.

Finally in his third missionary journey headquarters in Ephesus he ministered to all of Asia. This explains the third reason why we have to wait on God. That you are ready, God is ready but the people are not ready. You have to learn to wait on God. It takes great patience when you know the truth and you want to give the truth but people are not ready. There is a time and a season of God for your life. Flow with the times and the seasons of God. We are all like trees planted by the river of water which will bear its fruit in its season, Ps. 1 whose leaves also shall not wither. There is a season for bearing fruit. There is a season for God to do something in your life. There is a season to be prepared.

I remember when we started a church in 1981 God said for 3 years you don't go anywhere. But in the fourth year God said I am going to send you to another

country just for a while. And God open just one door. Before that we had a few invitations that we just ignored. Right now I have never been to East Malaysia yet. I have many invitations there. But I wrote back to them and said I will wait on God's timing. It is important for us to search the seasons of God. His general presence may be with you. But you can't do much with His general presence.

We follow the pillar of cloud and where the pillar of cloud goes you go. When the pillar of cloud does not go and you go you are by yourself. And sometimes the pillar of cloud goes and you said no not again. The Old Testament folks in the wilderness live by the Spirit. Everywhere where the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night move they got to move. That means that if today it moves you got to move. Sometimes the pillar of cloud will stop in a place for a month. Sometimes one day. Sometimes two months. So every morning the first thing you do when you rub your eyes you look up to see if the pillar still there. If you see it begins to move you got to say guys get packing we are moving again.

There is a time and season of God in our life. Follow the cloud of pillar; follow that fire. Where is it now? It is not on the top of your head. It is inside your spirit man. That same Holy Spirit is now placed in your spirit. You can follow the leading of the Spirit in your life there is a season and a timing of God. Now all this also has to do in the business realm as well as in the ministry. There is a time and a season to do something. There is a time and a season for God to publicly show you and promote you.

See Paul was hidden for the first 10 years of his life. He was born again in Acts 9 he was commissioned in Acts 13 as they fasted and ministered to the Lord. The Lord said separate Paul and Barnabas for the work which I have called them. Between Acts 10 to Acts 13 is a period for about 10 years. Acts 9 when he was born again it was about A.D. 35 and Acts 13 was about A.D. 45 ten years have passed by. God has His time. God has a season and time to promote you whether in the ministry or in the secular realm. God has His time and purpose. Learn to wait on God; don't go ahead of what God did not ask. Examine it in your heart and in your life. There is a time and season to do things. I know what the Holy Spirit tells me to do year by year. I focus on that. And I know if I don't do these things I will be disobedient. We have to discern the times and seasons of God. We are all taking orders from Him.

So God will tell you if you have a company or a business God will say this is what you will do for this year. Sometimes the worldly opportunities tell you something else. But if God tells you something else you follow God. God is always right. And all the time learn to do it; He is smarter than us.