

## Wait on the Lord

In life we can learn from others. God can and does speak to us through the lives of those around us. He speaks to me through my children at times. Yes, sometimes they are like a mirror that reveals my weaknesses and shortcomings, my humanity so to speak. Sometimes they speak incredible wisdom. I have been learning about waiting on the Lord from one of my children in particular. He has gone through a season of waiting recently and I have watched him handle it with grace, patience, “composure” to use his word, hope and peace. There is a particular sport that he loves and is good at. He usually makes the A team. About 2 months ago the school had trials and new coaches that didn’t know him overlooked him and sent him to play with the C and D teams at trials. Long story short, he was over to the B team, but never made A team. The school started playing matches and he was left out of the A team. The A team went on school camp and he wasn’t invited. The A team was sent to Provincial try outs. He was excluded. This was all over a period of about 2 months. Bear in mind, this is his favourite sport, and some of his friends (who are important to him) made A team. When we asked him how he was doing and how he was feeling, he was consistently peaceful and kept saying, “it’s ok”. Even though we knew he really wanted to be involved in all of those things. This was over a period of week and weeks. He kept saying, it’s ok mom. It’s about composure. You have to keep hoping. There will be another chance.

I find myself in a season where I have to fight to keep the hope alive, so I asked him how he keeps hoping. He said something so wise. He asked me what use it would be to lose hope. What good could come of that? That really spoke to me. What brilliant logic! What wisdom! Of what benefit is it when we lose hope?

I observed in him such a composure and peace in the waiting. I believe that if it was a test from the Lord for him, he passed with flying colours. Last week he heard from the coaches that they are moving him to the A team. He played his first match in the A team this last week, and did so well!

In life, there are seasons of waiting. Waiting for the breakthrough. Waiting for the door to open. Waiting for the vindication. Waiting for the relationship to be restored. Waiting for the promise of God to be manifest in or through you. Waiting for the

answer to your prayer to manifest. Waiting to be seen. Waiting for clarity. Waiting for healing. Waiting.... Who likes waiting? Not many of us. I hate queues. I hate waiting. In fact I avoid the shops and malls when they are busy. I am task-oriented. I like to go in, get what I need and leave. But there is something about waiting which God likes. He likes to help us to wait. He uses the waiting to shape us and mould us. You see, faith is important. Without faith it is impossible to please Him. When we wait and wait on Him in hope, faith grows, endurance and patience grow,...we mature.

*Jas 1:2-4 (AMP) Consider it wholly joyful, my brethren, whenever you are enveloped in or encounter trials of any sort or fall into various temptations. [3] Be assured and understand that the trial and proving of your faith bring out endurance and steadfastness and patience. [4] But let endurance and steadfastness and patience have full play and do a thorough work, so that you may be [people] perfectly and fully developed [with no defects], lacking in nothing.*

*Jas 1:2-4 (MSG) Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. [3] You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colours. [4] So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.*

**Our God is a potter** who knows what He is doing:

*Jer 18:1-6 (NIV) This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: [2] "Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you my message." [3] So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. [4] But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. [5] Then the word of the LORD came to me. [6] He said, "Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?" declares the LORD. "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel.*

Sometimes the image we have in our minds may not be the same as what is in God's mind.

**Our God is an author** who knows the end of the story he has written:

*Psa 139:15-16 (NKJV) My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skilfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. [16] Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.*

Our God is a **prepared creator** who has already prepared works for us:

*Eph 2:10 (NKJV) For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Sometimes in the waiting, I think we begin to believe our circumstances: that God has forgotten about us, or can't see us, or simply can't or won't break in and help. But what else could be true? Like my son, we can't and mustn't lose hope. We must endure the waiting. We must wait in fact to grow mature. It is a known fact that delayed gratification is a mark of maturity. I believe that God is wanting to impart an endurance to His church. A perseverance. A fortitude. An unwavering faith. These things are not forged overnight. These are tested in the fiery furnace of affliction very often. These are tried in the battle for our hope and our faith. If we are going to mature, we are going to have to learn to wait, and wait on the Lord.

Do you have something you are trusting God for? An answer, a relationship, a breakthrough, provision, a way, a door, a change of season, healing, whatever it is? I want to encourage you to wait on the Lord. Wait on the Lord.

*Psa 27:14 (NKJV) Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!*

When we wait on the Lord, it is active. It is not passive. It's waiting in confident expectation and faith. The Amplified Bible conveys this connotation well:

*Psa 27:14 (AMP) Wait and hope for and expect the Lord; be brave and of good courage and let your heart be stout and enduring. Yes, wait for and hope for and expect the Lord.*

I am going to look at 5 aspects of waiting on the Lord today, to encourage us in the waiting.

## 1. It requires courage

*Psa 27:14 (NKJV) Wait on the LORD; **Be of good courage**, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!*

Courage is not the absence of fear. It is choosing to stay the course despite the fear. In the storm it is choosing peace, or at least choosing to live like there is peace on the inside. It is refusing to make a decision based on emotions and circumstances alone. It is standing and facing that which you and/or everyone else fears the most.

*Example: David*

1Sa 17:22-51 (NIV)

*22 David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brothers how they were. 23 As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. 24 Whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear.*

David enquired what would be done for the man who defeated Goliath.

*31 What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him. 32 David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him."*

David had been with the Lord. He wasn't influenced by popular opinion or the culture and thinking of the army. He viewed the situation from heaven's perspective: he sees Goliath as defying the armies of the living God (v36 see below)

*33 Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth."*

One of the challenges we face in the place of waiting, the place of being courageous and trusting God, is the multitude of voices telling us exactly why it won't work. They may be internal and/or external. They may be factually correct. Saul was factually correct in his summation and perspective (v 33 above). However, Saul forgot about

the God factor. It's really important we don't lose heart or courage, and we don't agree with those voices, but we maintain heaven's perspective.

*34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, 35 I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. 36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. 37 The LORD who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you."*

Some of the battle we face today are preparation for bigger giants we will face later. The Lord is preparing us and actually being kind to us in allowing us to face these challenges. As we overcome and are victorious, they will become a road map, a faith activator, for the later battles that are critical for our destiny.

*38 Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armour on him and a bronze helmet on his head. 39 David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off.*

It's important we don't put on someone else's armour, try on someone else's giftings/callings, pursue someone else's lane or race just because the battle we face is bigger and harder than anything else we've faced. We must trust God that what He has placed in our hands and in our lives will be enough today with Him, even as it has been before.

*40 Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.*

*41 Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David.*

*42 He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him.*

*43 He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!" 45 David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. 47 All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands." 48 As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. 49 Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground. 50 So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. 51 David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the sheath. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran.*

I don't believe David had any intention of fighting the Philistine on his terms. He didn't intend to fight how people expected him to. He didn't even have a sword! He approached the situation with what was in his hand, successful experience with using it, and faith that his God would be enough. That was enough.

## **2. It requires patient endurance**

*Psa 27:14 (AMP) Wait and hope for and expect the Lord; be brave and of good courage and **let your heart be stout and enduring**. Yes, wait for and hope for and expect the Lord.*

*Jas 1:12 (TPT) If your faith remains strong, even while surrounded by life's difficulties, you will continue to experience the untold blessings of God! True*

*happiness comes as you pass the test with faith, and receive the victorious crown of life promised to every lover of God!*

*Jas 1:12 (NIV) Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.*

As my son says, it is about “composure”.

*Rom 5:3-5 (AMP) Moreover [let us also be full of joy now!] let us exult and triumph in our troubles and rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that pressure and affliction and hardship produce patient and unswerving endurance. [4] And endurance (fortitude) develops maturity of character (approved faith and tried integrity). And character [of this sort] produces [the habit of] joyful and confident hope of eternal salvation. [5] Such hope never disappoints or deludes or shames us, for God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us.*

*Example: Joseph (Genesis 37-45)*

Here's a young man who was treated terribly by his own brothers, sold into slavery, and experienced one challenge after another. Yet he remained faithful and true to the Lord throughout injustice, false accusation, abandonment, rejection, apparent hopelessness and so forth. (See Genesis 37-45). After so many (13+) years of patiently enduring troubles, Joseph's patience was rewarded when he became Pharaoh's second-in-command. Years later, when Joseph was re-united with his brothers, this is what he said:

*Gen 45:4-8 (AMP) And Joseph said to his brothers, Come near to me, I pray you. And they did so. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt! [5] But now, do not be distressed and disheartened or vexed and angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to preserve life. [6] For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years more in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. [7] God sent me before you to preserve for you a posterity and to continue a remnant on the earth, to save your lives by a great escape and save for you many survivors. [8] So now it was not*

*you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.*

Poem painting a picture of God's processes the lives of man:

The poem as quoted in Oswald J. Sander's (not to be confused with Oswald Chambers (1874-1917)) *Spiritual Leadership* (1967) credits it to an "Author Unknown". The poem as he quotes it is as follows:

When God wants to drill a man  
    And thrill a man  
    And skill a man,  
When God wants to mould a man  
    To play the noblest part;  
When He yearns with all His heart  
    To create so great and bold a man  
That all the world shall be amazed,  
    Watch His methods, watch His ways!  
How He ruthlessly perfects  
    Whom He royally elects!  
How He hammers him and hurts him,  
    And with mighty blows converts him  
Into trial shapes of clay which  
    Only God understands;  
While his tortured heart is crying  
    And he lifts beseeching hands!  
How He bends but never breaks  
    When his good He undertakes;  
How He uses whom He chooses  
    And with every purpose fuses him;  
    By every act induces him  
To try His splendour out--  
    God knows what He's about!

(Author Unknown)

It requires patient endurance to inherit and take hold of the destiny and promise of God.

### 3. It requires expectation

*Psa 27:14 (AMP) Wait and hope for and **expect the Lord**; be brave and of good courage and let your heart be stout and enduring. Yes, wait for and hope for and **expect the Lord**.*

What is your expectation? Our expectation stems from our understanding of God and His nature, his heart.

*Example: Abraham*

God gave Abraham a promise that involved a multitude of descendants. The only problem was, Abraham and his wife, Sarah, couldn't have children. A major problem, yes, unless you are God and want it to be known without a doubt that you were the one who fulfilled your promise! And so Abraham waited 25 years for the promise to be fulfilled. He wasn't in hope and faith for all 25 years either, - he had his ups and downs. But at the end of the day, God fulfilled His promise. When the son, the symbol of this fulfilled promise was about 12 years old, God tested Abraham. This is where we pick up the account:

*Gen 22:1-14 (NKJV)*

*1 Now it came to pass after these things that **God tested Abraham**, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 Then He said, "**Take now your son, your only son Isaac**, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and **offer him there as a burnt offering** on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." 3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.*

*4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." 6 So Abraham took the wood of*

*the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.*

*7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" 8 And Abraham said, **"My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering."** So the two of them went together.*

He did not know the answer. He had confident (maybe desperate?) expectation that God would provide. Who knows what was going through his heart and mind as he walked on to the place where God was requiring him to offer up the very miracle which was the fulfilment of the promise. Sometimes these are the tests we go through. Are we willing to trust God when it looks like the very of life of the promise is about to be snuffed out? Can we trust God when He wants everything, especially the thing we hold most dear? Can we remain in hopeful expectation of our God, His nature, His faithfulness, His promise?

*9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." 12 And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." 13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."*

Abraham had to be willing to let go and let die, the miraculous provision, the dream, the thing he had waited for 25 years. He could do this because he had a certain expectation that the Lord would provide and make a way. Very often we have to pass the test to see the provision of the Lord. We need expectation to pass the test.

#### 4. It requires hope

Psa 27:13 (NKJV) I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living.

Psa 27:13-14 (AMP) [What, what would have become of me] had I not believed that I would see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living! *Wait and hope for and **expect the Lord**; be brave and of good courage and let your heart be stout and enduring. Yes, wait for and hope for and **expect the Lord**.*

What is the confession of your hope?

Heb 10:23 (NKJV)

*23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.*

*Example: Caleb, Joshua, and the spies*

The Israelites have reached the edge of Canaan. They were positioned to enter and take the land. God had promised them the land. Before they could do so, the Lord commanded Moses thus:

*Num 13:1-3 (NKJV) 1 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, everyone a leader among them." 3 So Moses sent them from the Wilderness of Paran according to the command of the LORD, all of them men who were heads of the children of Israel.*

*Num 13:17-20 (NKJV) Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up this way into the South, and go up to the mountains, [18] and see what the land is like: whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, few or many; [19] whether the land they dwell in is good or bad; whether the cities they inhabit are like camps or strongholds; [20] whether the land is rich or poor; and whether there are forests there or not. Be of good courage. And bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.*

*Num 13:27-33 (NKJV) Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. [28] Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. [29] The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan." [30] Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it." [31] But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." [32] And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. [33] There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."*

Their confession revealed they had no hope. They lost sight of the God-factor and His faithfulness. All the spies, except Joshua and Caleb died from plague. The children of Israel then wondered in the wilderness for 40 years before they had another opportunity to enter the promised land.

Guard your hope. Your confession will reveal where your hope levels are at. Choose to remember that He who promised is faithful .

This is my challenge. What do you do when you are afraid to hope? I am looking for the door of Hope.

*Pro 13:12 (NKJV) Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.*

## **5. It produces strength**

*Psa 27:14 (NKJV) Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!*

*Isa 40:27-31 (NIV) Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause is disregarded by my God"? [28] Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. [29] He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. [30] Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; [31] but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

*1Pe 5:6-11 (TPT) If you bow low in God's awesome presence, he will eventually exalt you as you leave the timing in his hands. [7] Pour out all your worries and stress upon him and leave them there, for he always tenderly cares for you. [8] Be well balanced and always alert, because your enemy, the devil, roams around incessantly, like a roaring lion looking for its prey to devour. [9] Take a decisive stand against him and resist his every attack with strong, vigorous faith. For you know that your believing brothers and sisters around the world are experiencing the same kinds of troubles you endure. [10] And then, after your brief suffering, the God of all loving grace, who has called you to share in his eternal glory in Christ, will personally and powerfully restore you and make you stronger than ever. Yes, he will set you firmly in place and build you up. [11] And he has all the power needed to do this—forever! Amen.*

*Heb 11:11 (TPT) Sarah's faith embraced the miracle power to conceive even though she was barren and was past the age of childbearing, for the authority of her faith rested in the One who made the promise, and she tapped into his faithfulness.*

*Heb 11:11 (NKJV) By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.*

Annie J Flint:

The Life of Annie J. Flint

Few have experienced agony like Annie Johnson Flint (1866–1932). Both of her parents died during her childhood. She grew up an orphan — fortunately, in an

adoptive family that taught her the Scriptures, to read, write, and create music. But even then, Annie's childhood dream of becoming a concert pianist was quickly dissolved when she developed rheumatoid arthritis in just her early-twenties. The arthritis was so severe that by Annie's thirtieth-birthday she could no longer walk. Her hands were disfigured, her body was twisted, and she was rarely able to sleep because of the extreme discomfort she experienced throughout her joints.

Though her physical body deformed with each passing year, Christ was powerfully being formed in Annie through her agony and suffering. Despite the intense pain it brought to her contorted fingers, Annie became a prolific writer and poet. In lyric and prose, she regularly reflected upon God's Word, his promises, and his abiding presence in her life. Though most of her days were spent stuck inside her little room in a Sanatorium, she rarely complained about her condition. Those who knew her best often remarked about her bright, encouraging, and surprisingly humorous personality. And it was her heart for these friends that started her writing career as she created them cards and gift-books containing her poetry as means of encouragement.

### Poetry Born From Pain

The Lord multiplied Annie's writing ministry, and soon her works were published and widely distributed. People marveled that such beautiful lyrics could be composed by hands so compromised by constant pain. And, unlike stereotypical melancholic-poets, the dominant theme of Annie's writing was God's goodness. Her writing is filled with reflections upon his goodness in creation, his being and character, his works, and his goodness particularly amid trials and adversity. We see this in her poem, "What God Hath Promised," in lines like:

God hath not promised smooth roads and wide,  
Swift, easy travel, needing no guide;  
Never a mountain rocky and steep  
Never a river turbid and deep.

But God hath promised strength for the day,  
Rest for the labour, light for the way,

Grace for the trials, help from above,  
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

Annie was ruthlessly honest about life's difficulties. She refused to gloss over pain and suffering, and in her poetry, she never minimized the experience of living in a world marred by sin. But Annie also resisted the equally perilous tendency to become cynical and pessimistic. She, better than most, wrote with one eye on the present hardships and the other on God's eternal goodness and purposes in them. By doing so, she lifted her readers' hearts above their present misery to catch glimpses of God's steadfast love and sovereign wisdom in their trials as well as offering assurance of the nearness of Jesus in every tribulation.

Hymn:

He giveth more grace as our burdens grow greater,  
He sendeth more strength as our labours increase;  
To added afflictions He addeth His mercy,  
To multiplied trials He multiplies peace.

2. When we have exhausted our store of endurance,  
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,  
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources  
Our Father's full giving is only begun.

3. Fear not that thy need shall exceed His provision,  
Our God ever yearns His resources to share;  
Lean hard on the arm everlasting, availing;  
The Father both thee and thy load will upbear.

4. His love has no limits, His grace has no measure,  
His power no boundary known unto men;  
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus  
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.

## **Conclusion**

Waiting on the Lord is not a passive endeavour:

1. It requires courage
2. It requires patient endurance
3. It requires expectation
4. It requires hope
5. It produces strength

It is hard. But it is worth it.