



Be Renewed

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint"
(Isaiah 40:31, KJV).

Be renewed! That's a word from the Lord for readers of this Teaching Letter. For someone, the waiting is over. The time has come to be renewed in strength. The process has begun. Receive it by speaking it to yourself and by giving thanks to God.

God wants to strengthen His people. Renewed strength is a reward of waiting on the Lord. This verse in Isaiah is a promise: strength will surely come to those who wait upon the Lord. Though the waiting may seem—and sometimes may be—long, for those who persevere, the reward will come. There is purpose in the wait.

Most of us hate waiting with a passion. We would rather do anything than stand in a long line. If we *must* stand in line or wait through a lengthy traffic light, we fidget. We talk on the cell phone. We text. Or we fume. If something interferes with our forward motion when we are trying to get something accomplished or to get somewhere, we become angry. Waiting frustrates us and stretches our patience to its limit. Is God anywhere in this?

We all know the devil opposes us. I know that without a doubt. So anything that comes my way to hinder, delay, sidetrack or stop me is from the devil. Right? Maybe. Sometimes God permits Satan to oppose—to accomplish God's purpose. I could tell you real-life stories in which God has stopped someone from a direction they were heading or allowed hindrances that literally resulted in saved lives or ministries. When something comes our way that makes us have to

wait or change our plans, we should pray for God's wisdom and revelation rather than pushing our way forward no matter what. Remember the story of Balaam. God sent an angel to block his path (see Numbers 22).

Even if it is simply the devil against us, what does Scripture say God can do about that? What about—"God works all things together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28)? Even the wait at the red light? Even the cancelled plans? Even the sickness that prevents me from accomplishing what I wanted to accomplish? Some may call me simple, but the Word says "all things." With God's help, we can come to view *everything* that comes against us as an opportunity for God to work. Ask Him to do it, quote His Word to Him, and believe it.

So "all things" means waiting as well. The question comes—will we look at the events of our lives with spiritual eyes? What is God going to do in this situation? What is God wanting to do in me and for me? Another question is—am I waiting *on the Lord* in this situation? Probably not until I cease fuming, fidgeting and complaining. It is possible to pass through an enforced wait and receive nothing good from it. God forbid! If I have to go through it, please let me look to God and gain something from it—from Him. Waiting is hard; I want the reward that comes when the wait has ended from having done it God's way!

To wait requires patience. The word often translated patience in our English Bibles

frequently could be interchanged with “perseverance” or “endurance.” James, the brother of Jesus, wrote in the New Testament: “Let patience have her perfect work” (James 1:4, *KJV*). In our times of waiting, God is working. James says He is testing our faith in order to produce patience (see James 1:3). This testing is not a destructive thing; it is a strengthening of our faith as when metal is placed through a process of fire and water and pounding. It’s called tempering. The metal is tried both to strengthen it and to reveal any inherent weakness. Trials in our lives may reveal weaknesses. Unlike metal that is tossed aside as unusable when tested and found weak, our faith can be strengthened in the weak places.

It is highly unlikely that many of us value patience as God does. We won’t pray for it because we know Scripture says “tribulation worketh patience” (Romans 5:3, *KJV*), and we expect to receive tribulation if we pray for patience. I must tell you, tribulation comes anyway, whether we pray for patience or not. It’s part of life. It comes to everyone. Jesus said, “In the world you will have tribulation” (John 16:33, *NKJV*). His very next words were, “But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” Tribulation does produce patience, but God also gives patience because we ask. Therefore, we need to pray for patience so we will have it when times of tribulation come.

Remember, Jesus loves you enough to die for you. He does not allow difficulties into your life to see you struggle. He does not allow times of waiting so you will be miserable. God’s wants to bless you, to strengthen you, to renew you, to draw you close to Him and to reveal Himself to you. God has good plans for your life (see Jeremiah 29:11).

Patience (endurance, perseverance) is a very valuable commodity in the Christian’s life. In fact, it and faith are necessary if we are to make it all the way to heaven. Paul wrote, “He who endures to the end shall be saved” (Mathew 10:22, *NKJV*).

Some people give up and turn away from God when trouble comes. They were not rooted and grounded in God. They had little endurance. They did not understand what to do in times of trouble or they thought the Christian life exempted one from trouble. Maybe they tried the “grit your teeth” method of getting through tribulation, and their human strength failed—as it will. Resolve is good; however it must be combined with trust in God. We make it through tribulation and times of waiting and receive the reward by looking unto Jesus. It comes by clinging to Him who is the Author and Finisher of our faith (see Hebrews 12:2).

Patience (endurance, perseverance) is necessary if we are to receive all God wants for us and all we need to live victoriously in this life. Many of God’s provisions and blessings are missed if we do not learn to wait upon the Lord. So God is faithful to provide times of waiting. Through such times we can develop endurance and receive renewed strength—such strength by which we will “run and not grow weary” and we will “walk and not faint.” If we want to let patience have its “perfect work,” we must not bail out before we receive the goal of our waiting. This “perfect work” will cause us to be complete and to lack nothing in our spiritual maturity (see James 1: 4).

So, I say again—be renewed! Let this day be one of rejoicing. God is renewing your strength. If you have been waiting on Him—He SHALL renew! And you will have the ability that God gives to persevere. **SH**

GOD’S WORD FOR TODAY

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