

## The Importance of Waiting

Text: Luke 24:49-53; Acts 1:1-9

Please take note of two words found in our respective texts this morning, “tarry” and “wait.” Luke 24:49: “And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” Acts 1:4: “And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.”

God spoke to Elijah to go to Ahab and tell the king that it will not rain for three years. Then God said in I Kings 17:3: “Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.” It was in this place of respite and rest that God quenched Elijah’s thirst by the Brook Cherith and miraculously fed him bread and meat by the ravens. In I Kings 18:1, God informs us, “And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.” This miracle was chronicled in James 5:17,18. The Lord tells this man of like passions that there is a time of waiting on the Lord before and during the times of God’s moving.

Last week we discussed the glorious ascension of our Lord. I was ready to go directly to the Day of Pentecost, but I could not escape the significance of the ten days following Ascension before the coming of the Holy Spirit in power. What a time to be living in those days! Our Lord has been crucified; He has risen from the grave and brought saints around Jerusalem out of their graves; for forty days He was showing up all over Israel teaching and proving that He was indeed alive! Then He gives one more set of instructions to evangelize and teach from Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth. Just before Christ is taken to the third Heaven, He tells His disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait. They went with rejoicing and celebrated, but then settled down to waiting on God, the Holy Spirit. The word “tarry” comes to us from the Greek word καθίζω (kathizō). Literally rendered, it means “to sit down.” Acts 2:1, 2: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.” As we have just seen in our text, the Holy Spirit filled the disciples where they were gathered in the upper room in the very relaxed posture of sitting. Unlike the ungodly followers of Baal, when attempting to get their foolish false god Baal to answer them, “...they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them” (I Kings 18:28). No matter what they did, no matter how much they hurt themselves, they could not get this worthless god to pay them any attention. I would be remiss not to mention the fact that our God pays respect not to the shedding of our blood, but rather, as Hebrews 9:12 reminds us: “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Hebrews 10:19, 20).

With these thoughts in our mind, let us not neglect the silence of those 10 days before Pentecost, but let us see the importance of the silence of God and our part of the equation, i.e., of “waiting.”

## **1. GOD HAS PREPARED PLANS FOR THOSE WHO WAIT ON HIM**

Isaiah 64:1-4

Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." God has pleasant thoughts of you and intends to put those pleasant thoughts into action, but they will only come to those who wait. I have said before what others have said before me. What I think about when I think of God is the most important thought that can come to mind. It is truly humbling to know that God has wonderful thoughts concerning us! Psalm 33:11: "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." God is not limited to time and He has great thoughts for all of His children in any age or any place upon the earth.

## **2. GOD HAS PREPARED STRENGTH FOR THOSE WHO WAIT ON HIM**

Isaiah 40:28-31

Zechariah 4:6: "Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Psalm 27:14: "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

## **3. GOD HAS PREPARED VICTORIES FOR THOSE WHO WAIT FOR HIM**

Psalm 33:17-20

Psalm 20:7: "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." The Psalmist is saying we are not trusting in man (the one who drives the chariot) or in horses (the supplier of strength).

Isaiah 30:15: "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not." The Lord went on to say: Isaiah 30:16: "But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift." So because the people of God chose to trust in their own chariots and horses, God allowed the enemies' horse and chariots to be faster. It is summed up in this verse: Isaiah 30:18: "And therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for Him." Proverbs 20:22: "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee."

## **4. GOD HAS PREPARED WAITING TO BE A LIFESTYLE**

II Samuel 5:18-25

Here is a perfect example of what this sermon is talking about. David asks God if he should attack the Philistines and God gave David the "go-ahead." David inquires again and God says no, go behind them. Then the Lord explained that when it is time to fight, He will send the wind through the mulberry trees and you'll know it is I. David waited on the Lord for the confirmation of the wind. The wind came and so did David's victory!

The Lord Jesus told His disciples to go back to Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit to come. And the Holy Spirit came in the form of a mighty rushing wind! Acts 2:2:

“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.”

Before I take on service for the Lord, I do not take anything for granted. I ask the Lord to reveal His plan for me. Like the Holy Spirit who moved as a mighty wind upon the disciples, I pray for His notifications to be loud and clear. Then upon hearing, I take my “proverbial” marching orders from Jesus.

We observe that the days before Pentecost are very important to the coming of the Holy Spirit and the work of the Holy Spirit.

-Pastor Pope-