

Daily Devotional, April 24, 2020 Patience--Wait on God

I waited patiently for the LORD to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. - Psalm 40:1

If we didn't know it before, we certainly do now--people aren't all that tries our patience. Situations do too. We find ourselves stuck in places we don't want to be--our own homes! Over and over we're doing things we have no desire to do, in circumstances we're not at all happy about, and there's little or nothing we can do about it. So we smolder and agitate, and our frustrations intensify as we consider another 30 days of self-containment.

David knew all about this. He was God's man, he would eventually sit on the throne, but beforehand he spent far too much time on the run from his enemies. Right now you may be thinking, "yeah, but at least he got to roam around freely!" But the wilderness was where he spent many a night. At least you have a bed to sleep in and a roof over your head. He said, "*For troubles surround me—too many to count! My sins pile up so high I can't see my way out. They outnumber the hairs on my head. I have lost all courage. Please, Lord, rescue me! Come quickly, Lord, and help me.*" (Psalms 40:12-13)

It is not surprising that David turned to the Lord for help, and it is totally understandable that he wanted it "quickly." How often we want solutions to arrive right now--if not sooner! But note how David began this Psalm: *I waited patiently for the LORD to help me*, (40:1). His instinct for quick solutions had been curbed by a great deal of experience in the way God works. David's natural desire for a quick answer was tempered by a willingness to "wait patiently." He knew from his past experiences that it would be just a matter of time before he would be able to cry, "He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along" (40:2).

God is not the God of instant renewal. Neither is He the Lord of the instant. He takes his time growing an oak from an acorn and allows the long winter to prepare the earth for the warmth of spring. But it is rightly the promise of spring that makes the winter more tolerable, and it is knowing that an oak lies hidden inside the acorn that makes it tolerable in waiting for that tree to grow.

Why, we wonder, does God take so long? No doubt God's reasons are deep and numerous, but it could be, we can only appreciate the solid ground God provides once we have fully experienced the mud and the mire. Over these next five weeks we will experience more rain, more mud, and more mire. But just beyond, I truly believe we will once again experience firm footing on solid ground. Keep the faith. Be patient. Wait on God!

Prayer: Lord, help me to be patient and to possess greater understanding, because a person who isn't and is quick-tempered, displays foolishness. I pray that here on earth, I reflect You in all ways and that Your understanding will rule my behaviour. Let patience have its way in my heart so that I can reflect a God-like patience to those around me who need it as well. Let Your understanding shape me as a person so that I can reach and understand those who need You, In Christ's name. Amen.

Psalm 40 New Living Translation (NLT) **1** *I waited patiently for the Lord to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. 2 He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along. 3 He has given me a new song to sing; a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the Lord. 4 Oh, the joys of those who trust the Lord, who have no confidence in the proud or in those who worship idols. 5 O Lord my God, you have performed many wonders for us. Your plans for us are too numerous to list. You have no equal. If I tried to recite all your wonderful deeds, I would never come to the end of them. 6 You take no delight in sacrifices or offerings. Now that you have made me listen, I finally understand—you don't require burnt offerings or sin offerings. 7 Then I said, "Look, I have come. As is written*

about me in the Scriptures: **8** I take joy in doing your will, my God, for your instructions are written on my heart.” **9** I have told all your people about your justice. I have not been afraid to speak out, as you, O Lord, well know. **10** I have not kept the good news of your justice hidden in my heart; I have talked about your faithfulness and saving power. I have told everyone in the great assembly of your unfailing love and faithfulness. **11** Lord, don’t hold back your tender mercies from me. Let your unfailing love and faithfulness always protect me. **12** For troubles surround me—too many to count! My sins pile up so high I can’t see my way out. They outnumber the hairs on my head. I have lost all courage. **13** Please, Lord, rescue me! Come quickly, Lord, and help me. **14** May those who try to destroy me be humiliated and put to shame. May those who take delight in my trouble be turned back in disgrace. **15** Let them be horrified by their shame, or they said, “Aha! We’ve got him now!” **16** But may all who search for you be filled with joy and gladness in you. May those who love your salvation repeatedly shout, “The Lord is great!” **17** As for me, since I am poor and needy, let the Lord keep me in his thoughts. You are my helper and my savior. O my God, do not delay.