

Are We There Yet?

As adults, we should know better than to question how long it takes to arrive at our destination. We know that the trip is expected to be long and that we don't usually receive a detailed explanation of the journey, but we'll still question God about not arriving at our destination yet. Wait a minute, allow me to clarify, where is this destination?

The destination could be anything on which we're waiting on God for.

For example, it could be healing from an affliction, an addiction, or a behavioral change. Maybe it's the salvation of a friend or relative or waiting for an unbearable situation or circumstance to pass. In each of these cases, we are powerless. There is nothing we can do, in our own power, to heal ourselves. We can't make someone come to know Christ (although we try) and for most of our situations and circumstances, we are hopeless in our own strength.

What is it that you are waiting/praying for? Oh, you have a list? Me too.

What are we to do in the meantime, while we wait? We have many accounts in the Word of God on which people waited on God for certain things, why don't we look at a few of them and make some observations, shall we?

Genesis 12: 1 The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. 2 I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. 3 I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

This may be one of the most well-known examples of waiting so this is a fine example.

In verse 2, God starts His promise saying that He'll make Abraham into a great nation. At the time, he was 75 years old.

Genesis 15: 1 Some time later, the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, "Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great." 2 But Abram replied, "O Sovereign Lord, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son? Since you've given me no children, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. 3 You have given me no descendants of my own, so one of my servants will be my heir."

4 Then the Lord said to him, "No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own who will be your heir." 5 Then the Lord took Abram outside and said to him, "Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!"

Are you being this honest with God, sharing your true thoughts with Him?

We are not sure how long "some time later" is, but we know it's less than ten years. We know a lot has happened since he came to the land of Canaan, so he could've been 80-85 at this point. These are such comforting words he receives from God in verse 1. But we can certainly see the frustration that Abram has in verses 2-3. He surely had his doubts, and as I can tell, he dismissed the idea of having his own son. Then in verse 4 God contradicts him and sets him straight.

That brings us to this key verse:

6 And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.

Abram was counted righteous because he believed, not because of anything he had done, but because he chose to trust in the Lord.

Genesis 16: 1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar. 2 So Sarai said to Abram, "The Lord has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her." And Abram agreed with Sarai's proposal. 3 So Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram had settled in the land of Canaan.)

Here we see the two of them, Abram and Sarai coming up with their own solution. This is their efforts to fulfill God's promise. Abram was 86 when Hagar's son was born, verse 16.

Abram's 99, are we there yet?

Genesis 17: 1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am El-Shaddai—'God Almighty.' Serve me faithfully and live a blameless life. 2 I will make a covenant with you, by which I will guarantee to give you countless descendants."

Despite Abram taking things into his own hands, God is still faithful to him. Notice the instruction given: Serve me faithfully and live a blameless life.

15 Then God said to Abraham, "Regarding Sarai, your wife—her name will no longer be Sarai. From now on her name will be Sarah. 16 And I will bless her and give you a son from her! Yes, I will bless her richly, and she will become the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will be among her descendants."

17 Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, but he laughed to himself in disbelief. "How could I become a father at the age

of 100?" he thought. "And how can Sarah have a baby when she is ninety years old?" 18 So Abraham said to God, "May Ishmael live under your special blessing!"

Abraham still doesn't get it.

He thinks that Ishmael is the promised son. So again, God contradicts him in verse 19:

19 But God replied, "No—Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son for you. You will name him Isaac, and I will confirm my covenant with him and his descendants as an everlasting covenant.

And then finally, 25 years after the initial promise, Abraham receives the promised son.

***Genesis 21:** 1 The Lord kept his word and did for Sarah exactly what he had promised. 2 She became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. This happened at just the time God had said it would. 3 And Abraham named their son Isaac. 4 Eight days after Isaac was born, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. 5 Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born.*

A lot happened in those 25 years and there were times of belief and unbelief, but God promised, and it was never about Abraham's ability to do anything or being perfect, even when he had his own solution. This is all about the greatness of God.

God delivers on what He's promised.

And then there's the story of Hannah, mother of Samuel:

***1 Samuel 1:** 2 Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not.*

... 6 So Peninnah would taunt Hannah and make fun of her because the Lord had kept her from having children. 7 Year after year it was the same—Peninnah would taunt Hannah as they went to the Tabernacle. Each time, Hannah would be reduced to tears and would not even eat.

After many years, Hannah prays this prayer:

9 Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place beside the entrance of the Tabernacle. 10 Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord. 11 And she made this vow: “O Lord of Heaven’s Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the Lord, his hair will never be cut.”

...

19 The entire family got up early the next morning and went to worship the Lord once more. Then they returned home to Ramah. When Elkanah slept with Hannah, the Lord remembered her plea, 20 and in due time she gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, “I asked the Lord for him.”

Would you devote your son to the Lord?

This is another great story of someone that waited on God and God came through for her. It doesn’t appear that God ever promised her a son as He did Abraham, but I think the key here is in her prayer. She devotes her son in advance, saying that she will give him back to God. It’s a huge sacrifice for her to make and it was done in faith. Samuel turns out to be a great man of God, which blesses the entire nation and God blesses Hannah in return:

20 Before they returned home, Eli would bless Elkanah and his

wife and say, "May the Lord give you other children to take the place of this one she gave to the Lord." 21 And the Lord gave Hannah three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord.

I think the key to Hannah's story is that she persevered and went to God in her great anguish. And because of her great devotion and sacrifice to God, He was able to use her immensely through her son Samuel.

Here's an example of what not to do:

1 Samuel: 13: Meanwhile, Saul stayed at Gilgal, and his men were trembling with fear. 8 Saul waited there seven days for Samuel, as Samuel had instructed him earlier, but Samuel still didn't come. Saul realized that his troops were rapidly slipping away. 9 So he demanded, "Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings!" And Saul sacrificed the burnt offering himself.

10 Just as Saul was finishing with the burnt offering, Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet and welcome him, 11 but Samuel said, "What is this you have done?"

Saul replied, "I saw my men scattering from me, and you didn't arrive when you said you would, and the Philistines are at Micmash ready for battle. 12 So I said, 'The Philistines are ready to march against us at Gilgal, and I haven't even asked for the Lord's help!' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering myself before you came."

13 "How foolish!" Samuel exclaimed. "You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you. Had you kept it, the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom must end, for the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart. The Lord has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord's command."

In verse 8 we see King Saul gripped with fear. This fear eroded any faith he'd had. Saul chose to focus on the enemy and what they were doing while he should've been holding fast to Samuel's instructions and waiting.

Psalms 37

A psalm of David.

***1 Don't worry about the wicked
or envy those who do wrong.***

***2 For like grass, they soon fade away.
Like spring flowers, they soon wither.***

***3 Trust in the Lord and do good.
Then you will live safely in the land and prosper.***

***4 Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you your heart's desires.***

***5 Commit everything you do to the Lord.
Trust him, and he will help you.***

***6 He will make your innocence radiate like the dawn,
and the justice of your cause will shine like the noonday sun.***

***7 Be still in the presence of the Lord,
and wait patiently for him to act.
Don't worry about evil people who prosper
or fret about their wicked schemes.***

We looked at 3 different characters in 3 entirely different circumstances and they each have their own unique lessons. I pray that God spoke to you in some way as you read this

message.

Isaiah 40:

28 Have you never heard?

Have you never understood?

**The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of all the earth.**

He never grows weak or weary.

**No one can measure the depths of his
understanding.**

**29 He gives power to the weak
and strength to the powerless.**

**30 Even youths will become weak and tired,
and young men will fall in exhaustion.**

**31 But those who trust in the Lord will find
new strength.**

They will soar high on wings like eagles.

They will run and not grow weary.

They will walk and not faint.

I know this was just 3 examples of people waiting on God. If you'd like to analyze more, would you let me know?

"Dear Lord, I will trust in you. Although sometimes I lack faith and the circumstances at times look bleak, you are good and I will rejoice in you regardless because I know that you have great plans for us and that you are preparing us for your purposes. Thank you for these encouraging and revealing stories from your Word. You are a great and loving God and I am privileged to be your servant. In Jesus' name, amen."

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