

Harmonizing with God



Waiting for God (Part 4)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing with you precious insights out of Scripture that have made the difference between success and failure in my life—and can do the same in yours.

Our theme this week is Waiting for God. In my previous talks I've pointed our four benefits of waiting for God. First, it develops stability in us. Second, it's a necessary part of the process by which we are made mature and complete. Third, it produces serenity. It deals with fretfulness, with anger and with wrath. Fourth, it results in a supernatural transformation. Isaiah tells us that those that wait for the Lord will exchange their strength in place of their own limited natural strength. They will receive an impartation of divine supernatural strength.

Yesterday, we saw how this principle that Isaiah states was illustrated in the life of Abraham and we looked at it from two aspects—from the negative and from the positive aspect.

First of all, on the negative side we saw what happened when Abraham failed—when he failed to wait for God, when he went ahead and acted on his own initiative, yielded to his own carnal impulse with the helpful suggestion of his wife, tried to help God out, and had a child by his maidservant, the result was Ishmael. And concerning Ishmael, the Scripture predicted even before he was born, he would be a wild donkey of a man. There's tremendous appropriateness in that. You see the carnal nature in us is the donkey nature. And when we yield to the donkey nature, what it produces is just another donkey. No matter how good our intentions may be, it's the expression of impatience and self-will and it's always going to be just a donkey. And I pointed out that Abraham didn't solve his problems, he multiplied them. Ishmael became the greatest problem to the descendants to whom God had made the promise, that is to Isaac and to Jacob. Today, 4,000 years later in the Middle East we see this confrontation between the descendants of Ishmael and the descendants of Isaac. If Abraham had waited for God, how different history might have been. But that's an "if" that we shouldn't speculate too much about because that's the way history has gone. Abraham made his mistake, and he and his descendants have been paying for it ever since.

However, thank God that's not the only aspect of Abraham that we looked at. On the positive side Abraham eventually learned his lessons. Thirteen years after Ishmael had been

born, God gave him the final assurance that Isaac, the promised seed, was going to be born. And so 25 years from the time God first set Abraham moving on his journey to the Promised Land and gave him the promise of the heir, that promise was fulfilled. Abraham had to wait 25 years. And I tell you one thing. I deeply respect Abraham that he waited in faith. And then came that which we've been speaking about—the supernatural transformation, both for Abraham and for Sarah, their bodies were supernaturally transformed, God restored to them the ability to have a child.

Today I'm going to develop a theme that I just touched on yesterday—harmonizing with God. Yesterday I pointed out that by going ahead and not waiting for God, Abraham got out of harmony with God. And for 13 years he had not communication, no revelation from God. It took him 13 years to get back into harmony. So waiting relates to the time element in our lives. And the Bible has much to say about this. For instance, in Psalm 31, verses 14 and 15, the Psalmist says this:

> "But as for me, I trust in Thee, O Lord, I say, 'Thou art my God.' My times are in Thy hand..." (NASB)

That's a very significant statement. It's one that I, myself, utter many times. I say to God, "My times are in Thy hand. I'm not going to get impatient. I'm going to trust you. I know you've got complete control of the time element in my life." And when I really grasp that and act according to it, there's a release from tension and pressure. You see the Bible teaches that there's a right time for every activity. This is stated very vividly in Ecclesiastes chapter 3, verses 1-8, and those are some of my favorite verses in the Bible. Perhaps there are some of you that don't often turn to the book of Ecclesiastes. Let me tell you that there are some jewels in it. This is what it says here in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8:

> "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace." (NIV)

If you analyze those verse there are there fourteen pairs of opposites. And the principle that runs all through that is that there's a right time to do a thing and there's a time not to do a thing. Everything that's mentioned there can be right, if it's done at the right time. But it also can be wrong if it's done at the wrong time. And one of our commonest problems is that frequently we try to do the right thing at the wrong time. We're concerned about whether a thing is right, but we're not concerned about the time. This reminds me a little about the theory of relativity which states basically that you cannot specify a location in space, without specifying the time, because time and space are interrelated.

And so it's the same with our actions. We can't just say an act is right. We can only say it's right if it's done at the right time. So we have to learn to wait for God's time. That's what waiting for God does—it brings us into harmony with God. You see God invites us to walk with Him. In Amos chapter 3, verse 3, we have this question:

> "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (KJV)

The two that Amos is speaking of are God and man. Can we walk together if we're not in agreement, if we're not in harmony, if we don't keep in step? So walking with God demands keeping in step with God, harmonizing with Him, being in time with Him. You see the universe is like a vast symphony, but man's part in it is discordant as a result of sin. Man is out of tune and out of time. The purpose of redemption is to bring us back into harmony. Not merely the right note, but the right note at the right time. Anybody knows in music you can play the right note, but if you play it at the wrong time there's total disharmony.

Now I want to reemphasize something that I mentioned briefly in my talk yesterday. It is this: that God's supernatural purposes require a gestation period, or the seed takes time to germinate—if you want to put it that way. When God gives a promise, when He unfolds a purpose, there is a time lapse before the fulfillment of that purpose. And the way that we can come into harmony with God is by waiting for the time for the fulfillment. This applies in God's own dealings with man and it applies both to the past and to the future. Look for a moment in Galatians 4, verse 4, with me, concerning the first coming of Jesus. It says there:

> "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman..." (NASB)

So there was a precisely appropriate moment in time for Jesus to come. And God with His perfect sense of harmony as the director of the symphony of the universe, waited for

that precise moment to send Jesus forth into humanity. But this applies also for the return of Jesus and the consummation of the present age. There is an appointed time. It's very beautifully stated in Ephesians chapter 1, verses 9 and 10:

> "And he [that is God] made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ." (NIV)

That's like the climax of the symphony. It's the bringing together of everything in the universe, in heaven and in earth, under one head, Jesus Christ. And you know how, as you come to the end of a symphony—for instance the 40th symphony of Mozart, called the Jupiter Symphony—how you get all the themes and all the instruments coming together, fitting together into one grand climax of sound? Well, that's how it's going to be at the close of this age. When the times will have reached their fulfillment, then Christ will be made King over all the universe and we will take our place with Him in the kingdom. But we have to think of ourselves, each one as some kind of musical instrument. We have to be very careful that we're in time, that we're harmony with God's purposes and their outworking. We have to watch the score, not merely for the note to play, but for the time to play that note and that requires waiting for God.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be speaking about waiting for the climax of human history.

Radio Program

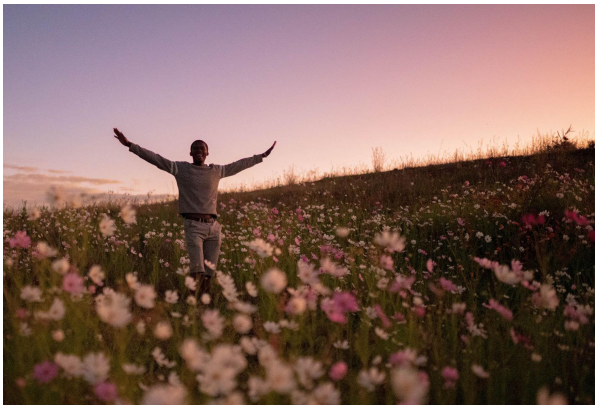
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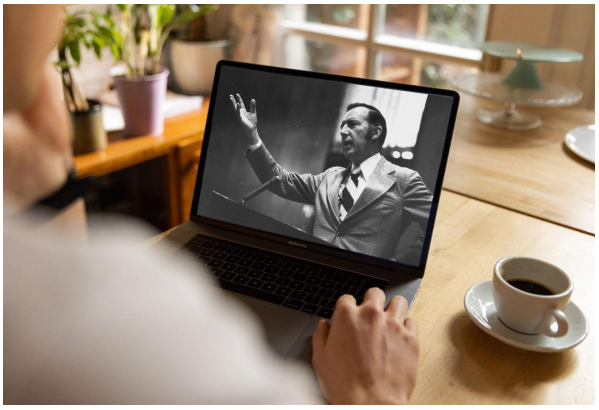
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