

## Sabbath School Lesson #13 – Wait on the Lord – 23-29 March 2024

**C**hrist says, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened” (Matthew 7:7-8). This is said to show how surely prayers to the Lord are answered. Yet many people fail to receive any answers to their prayers. Why is it? – Very often it is because they do not stay to see the door opened, but, like the mischievous boy in the street, run away as soon as they have knocked. People are in too great a hurry to be off. The instruction in the memory text: “Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord” (Psalm 27:14). And David said, “O Lord, in the morning shalt Thou hear My voice; in the morning will I order my prayer unto Thee, and will keep watch” (Psalm 5:3). May we learn to wait on the Lord.

**Sunday: The Call of Waiting** – The promise of God is: “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). What is it to “wait on the Lord?” Is it simply to spend a certain amount of time in prayer to God? or does it mean vastly more? The very word “wait” suggests continuity, and not intermission. The one who gets impatient does not wait. This idea of something constant is conveyed in Psalm 25:5: “Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me; for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day.” This means not merely one day, but every day. So, in verses 20-21 it says: “O keep my soul, and deliver me; let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in Thee. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on Thee.” The preservation is a result of waiting on the Lord; one is preserved so long as he waits on the Lord, so that the waiting must be continuous, without intermission. But, the word “wait” contains more than the idea of expectation; it involves the idea of service. A waiter is one who serves. “Unto Thee do I lift up Mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our until that He have mercy upon us” (Psalm 123:1-2). Now it is true that in the Hebrew there is no verb expressed in this verse, as to wait; but the thought is there, for with the eyes one looks, and one who is looking steadfastly upon another is waiting. But waiting in this sense, which is exceedingly common, does not mean standing in a state of idle expectancy; it means serving. A servant is most actively employed while waiting on his master. To wait on the Lord means to serve and obey Him (Jeremiah 14:22). Let us “wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord” (Psalm 27:14).

**Monday: Peace of a Weaned Child** – What lesson is drawn from a weaned child? It is to be humble and content, and not led by carnal heart that seeks greatness. A very striking instance of this carnal heart is recorded in Matthew 20:20-28 where we clearly see the sin of ambition and pride. Says Christ, “Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:4). Says David, “My heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother. My soul is even as a weaned child” (Psalm 131:1-3). Is this the language of my heart? Is this the language of your heart? Are we thus humble? May the good and merciful Saviour Jesus bear with us until we come wholly into the faith and patience of the saints.

**Tuesday: Bringing in the Sheaves** – What lesson do we learn from Psalm 126:6? It is to have joy in self-sacrifice – sharing the life of Christ. When the Son of God looked down from heaven and beheld the misery of our fallen race, the choice was before Him, either to remain in His glory, leaving the world to its fate, or take part with us, and bear our sins in His own body. Then for the glory of the Father and our recovery, He humbled Himself and entered into fellowship with our condition. He endured the cross, despising the shame, for the joy that was set before Him. He knew what infinite good would result to the universe from His humiliation, and with an inward peace, beyond all understanding, He prosecuted the work of self-sacrifice and suffering. The grief with which He was acquainted, was not a dull, sullen, despairing pain; for it was mingled with respect unto the recompense of the reward. Now how should the members be but as their head? They must enter into fellowship alike of

His sufferings and of His peace. Everything of joy in this sinful world is born of sorrow. The Christian must endure labour and self-denial, if he would follow his Master and come again with joy after his weeping, bringing his sheaves with him (Psalm 126:6). To bear burdens for Christ's sake is appointed to him, and God has connected with it the truest enjoyment of life. Notice yet another lesson we learn from Psalm 126:6 that is less appreciated: the individual obligation in the work of the gospel. It is interesting to observe that the fullest and sweetest promises and rewards for Christian faithfulness are given as if intended to encourage this individual activity! It is not said the church that "converteth a sinner from the error of his ways," but "he that converteth" him, shall hide a multitude of sins, and save a soul from death (James 5:20). Nor is it written, the company, but "he that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless return bringing his sheaves with him." Nor will it be said, in the last day, "Well done thou good and faithful" congregation, but "well done thou good and faithful servant, - enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25:23). Is there anywhere bestowed upon any company of persons, a commendation equal to that awarded to a single individual, and that individual, too, a woman: "she hath done what she could" (Mark 14:8)?

**Wednesday: Waiting in God's Sabbath Rest** – How does the psalmist help us to wait in God's Sabbath rest? Psalm 92:4 speaks more clearly to this point but let us first consider the common attitude to Sabbath keeping. We often hear about the cross involved in the keeping of the Sabbath. By this is meant the loss of employment if they begin to keep the Sabbath of the Lord. And so, Sabbath keeping is called a cross that is hard to bear. How little those who speak of it in that manner realise what the cross is. There is more truth in what they say about the Sabbath and the cross, than they think; but how different! The Apostle Paul said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Galatians 6:14). The cross of Christ, therefore, is something to glory in. Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt (Hebrews 11:26). It is by the cross that the Lord gives to us His life, by which we are saved; and therefore the glory of the cross is the joy of salvation. We are reconciled to God by the death of Christ, and saved by His life. The life which does this, is the life from which all created things came, and by which they exist. The power of redemption is the power of creation, and that is the power of the life of Christ. The Sabbath is a great memorial of the wonderful works of the Lord, which are the measure of His graciousness. He gave it that we might know that He is the Lord that sanctifies us. And therefore, as the cross of Christ brings joy and celebration, so the cross of the Sabbath is not a cross hard to be endured, but a cross that lifts up and saves. Instead of mourning over the difficulties involved in keeping the Sabbath, we say with the psalmist, "For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work; I will triumph in the works of Thy hands" (Psalm 92:4).

**Thursday: Joy Comes in the Morning** – How does the psalmist teach us to deal with weeping, in anticipation of the joy that comes in the morning? "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalm 30:5). Endure is too strong a word to apply to weeping, and the Hebrew text does not warrant it in this place. The International Standard Version gives a better rendering of the Hebrew: "Weeping may lodge for the night." Why does it lodge for the night? – Because in the dark, and especially when we are weary, we are likely to be cast down by that which, in the freshness of the morning light, is seen to be of no consequence. Weeping does not come to stay; and if we would only look at night and see things in the light of day, as becomes children of the day, we should not even give it a night's lodging. We need not, for we are told to "rejoice in the Lord alway" (Philippians 4:4). "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4). All mourning shall have an end. To every mourner it seems as though his grief would always continue. It is not the present sorrow or loss that causes us to mourn, but the loss which we expect to sustain in the future. If the loss, no matter how great, were only for a moment, no one would mourn. It is the dreary future, the utter absence of anticipation, that makes men mourn. Now we have the assurance that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." We are assured that the cause of all sorrow will soon cease, and sorrow itself; then we can at once be "joyful in hope" (Romans 12:12). Time is coming when, "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain" (Revelation 21:4).