

## WHEN GOD SEEMS LATE

Have you thought that the Lord's plan was happening rather slowly? Have you believed God for something, but it appeared to be taking a long time? When things are slow in happening, we may begin to think, it isn't going to happen.

*"But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day."* **2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:8** Doesn't that put things into perspective? The Lord is into the process more than He is into the results. As we go forward in the Lord in the process of life, then God develops our character. God is trying to develop us to be like Him. He is working out our salvation, working out that process of life to make us like He is.

With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. You might say, "In a thousand years I might not be around. Lord, you had better hurry it up because the number of my days are limited." The Lord gave us 120 years for the number of days. Then the Psalmist wrote that 70 to 80 years has been given to a person. This may cause you to think that you will not see the promise happen after a thousand years.

Look at this perspective: If the Lord is not in a hurry, and He has everything under control, why are we fussing, fuming, fretting, and stirred up? It all comes down to an issue of faith. Does the Lord have this under control or doesn't He? Is my life in His hands, or isn't it? We have to make a decision! We have to understand that the Lord makes all things beautiful in its time, and there is a time and a season for everything under Heaven. There is a plan, and it is the Lord's plan.

If I am living my life here for the Lord, then I am in His plan and He will work it all out. What is intended for evil, if it comes, the Lord has a provision. He has a plan. He knows our needs before we know our needs. Before we know we have a need, He knows things are going to happen. When we put our trust in Him, He will have the right provision waiting for us at the right time.

We can be at peace as we go through these trials. Why? The Lord has everything under control. If we believe He does, then He does. If we don't believe it, then we are out of control. We make "mountains out of a molehills." Everything looks big and awful; therefore there are giants in the land, and we cannot receive the promise of God.

The children of Israel said, "We can't do it. We can't have it. There are giants out there." Joshua and Caleb tried to tell them, "Hey, the Lord said it is ours. All we have to do is go get it." But they said, "Forget it; we can't do it." Who is bigger than the giants? God is, so what was the big problem?

The big problem is the six inches between our ears, which is where the unbelief settles in. We start thinking and operating by what we see, what we hear, taste, touch, and feel. *"Know ye not that the Lord your God, He is God and there is none like unto Him in the heavens or the earth?"*

One day a boy noticed lots of dust flying around in the air. He said to his dad, "Dad, we are kind of like the dust. We are so small, but God is so big, and He can take care of all our needs."

Before the five year old made this comment to his dad, what had his dad been doing? He had been worrying about finances, worrying about how he was going to accomplish things. God spoke through his son to put his life into perspective. We are like this little dust, and God is so big that we don't have to worry about anything. The Lord will take care of everything.

We need perspective. When the Lord comes on the scene, all the worries and fears start to disappear if we believe and trust in Him. The victory belongs to the Lord and His people.

*"The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise."* **2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9** When it seems He is slow in keeping His promise, there are other things He is working out. He is setting everything into place, so that it is in order. All the ingredients are in the pot.

Have you ever tried to make bread without yeast? Without the yeast, it will not rise. It may taste good, but it will be flat as a pancake, and it won't even look good.

The Lord does all things well. Nothing is left out. Time allows all of the ingredients and factors to get into place. Often we don't understand all that is really involved in the process until the Lord puts everything into place.

It is easy to look back and say, "Oh yeah, I understand now why this happened." It is easy to look back and see so clearly.

The problem is that when you are looking ahead you don't see it. You become afraid. You get impatient. You get fearful and worried because you gave the control to God. That makes a lot of people out of control because they think, *Is God taking care of this? Is the Lord doing His part? Lord, can you hurry the process?*

You might think that way about people for a good reason, but not about the Lord. He does everything in His magnificent way to perfection. He completes things. This is the process. Many people try to take it back so that they can get the control of what is going on, but then they mess it up.

It is easy to do because we don't necessarily know all the ingredients. We don't know all that is going on. There comes a point when you have to be still and know that God is God. ***Psalm 46***

*"The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness."* People want to see something happen right now so that they know that they have it.

By faith you know you have it as soon as you ask. You believe you will see it in God's perfect time. God's perfect time should be perfect for you. Otherwise, you may settle for second, third, or 28th best because you went out quickly and grabbed something.

When the Lord is working a plan, He is working a way and putting everything together. You may say you have to have it now. Have you ever bought something that went on sale the following week? The Lord might have had it for you, but you bought it at your price instead of His price.

*"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promises, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

God wants every one of us to come into the blessing. Wherever there is repentance, there will be a blessing from the Lord coming right behind it. God doesn't want anybody missing out on the blessing. We try to get the Lord to hurry up, but He is patient with us.

As long as we are impatient, trying to get Him to hurry up, it is not going to happen. Your impatience will hinder the blessing. At that point you are not moving in faith, the Lord is not going to honor your impatience. He will honor your faith and your confidence in Him.

Many people think that if they beg and cry long enough, God will do something. He is not going to do anything except be patient with us. He will wait for us to repent of our impatience and believe that He is in charge, and is working His plan out to His glory and our good.

There are multitudes of things that people believe God for, but they will never see them in their lifetime because many of the things are not what God has for them.

It says in Hebrews that some of the people died in faith, having not yet seen the promise (of the Messiah). However, after Jesus died, He went down and showed Himself to everyone of the people who died in faith. They received the promise, in the Lord's time!

Look at the big picture. God has the big picture. We only see a little. In *1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13* it says, "*We see through a glass dimly,*" meaning we don't see the whole plan.

We have to look at God when we are looking forward, and trust that He is with us, and He is leading and guiding us.

*"Trust in the Lord, lean not to your own understanding. Acknowledge the Lord in all your ways and he will direct your path." Proverbs 3:5&6* He will lead you to what He has for you. He will not lead you to what you want. He will lead you to what He has for you. It should be that is what you want. *Psalms 37*

For example, as long as you are looking for a wife or a husband, you may not find one. If you seek the Lord, the Lord will give you a spouse. If you

look for a wife or husband, you may find one, but it will not be the one God picked out. It will be the one you picked out.

*"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds."*  
**James 1:2**

One of the greatest trials people face is believing God for something, for there is a testing and a proving that goes on in the spirit realm. When something doesn't happen right away, it becomes a test or a trial. The term "trial" means testing, temptation, proving. It is a time of pressure to see whether you will believe God or not. It is a proving time for your character.

Time is our friend. Time shows many things for what they really are. It is like a sifter or refiner. Things that are proven over time are usually some of the best things. That is why you should not rush into a relationship. You should take your time and let time sift out what needs to be sifted out. Don't be too hasty in business. Don't be too hasty in whatever you do.

Some people burn themselves out so fast – running here and there, doing this and that. They don't allow themselves time to enjoy life the way God intended them to, nor do they rest in Him.

You need to enjoy what you are doing. Enjoy what you eat. Enjoy your work. Enjoy your time with the Lord. Enjoy your time with people, savoring every minute of the good life the Lord has given. All of the things that God is doing are works of art.

When you look in the mirror, savor it. You are God's creation, God's work. ***Ephesians 2:10*** Every moment that God gives us in life should be savored. Every moment is a precious gift from God. Moments fly by so fast. So let us enjoy the time we have. Let us appreciate it. Let us not reflect on our own lives, but allow the Lord to occupy our time with gladness of heart. ***Ecclesiastes 5:20***

Count it pure joy when you face trials of many kinds. Every day is a trial. Every day there are temptations and pressures, but the Lord says to enjoy your life.

The Lord makes all things beautiful in its time. ***Ecclesiastes 3:11*** Enjoy the process and the Lord's provision. Enjoy how the Lord puts things together.

The Lord does all things so well and so perfectly. We have a tendency to rush in. We learn over time that when we were young we were impetuous. When we get a little older, we may understand that all we do is hit our heads against the wall when we rush in. Then we learn there is another way.

We never want to lose our excitement, our anticipation, our expectation. However, we need to add patience to our expectation. The zeal of youth is an incredible thing, but when we get older we get a little more sense, a little more wisdom. God would have us appreciate what we didn't appreciate when we were younger.

The testing of your faith develops perseverance. **James 1:3** The Lord is patient with us. What does He want to develop in us? Patience. He wants us to see things as He sees them and not be in such a hurry. When God is moving we need to be moving, but when the Lord is putting something together, we need to be involved with sure, slow, steady steps in order to get God's will and purpose. Then we will see the whole thing come together the way the Lord would have it. God's plan is for our good and for the good of everyone around us.

- Sure - based on the Lord's principles
- Slow - allowing the Lord to work in His time
- Steady - don't give up - stay with it
- Steps - keep advancing in faith and obedience to the Lord's direction

Equals

Success - fulfilling the Lord's plan and purpose.

Events do not happen in an isolated environment. What happens to someone happens to those around him. When you were happy, did the people around you become happy? When you were depressed, did others become depressed? Wouldn't you rather be excited and have those around you get excited too?

No matter what you are going through, you should know that the Lord has everything under control, and you can rejoice in every circumstance at all times. The Lord is greater, He is with us, and He is helping us. Perseverance is being developed, and it is a testing of our faith. Everything in life is a testing of our faith in God.

Whatever it is that we are working out, whether we are raising children, working with a spouse, doing our jobs or businesses, working on our health, finances, or emotional condition, it is a test of faith. Do you believe God for the situation? Do you believe He is in control? Or are you pouting?

*"Perseverance must finish its work."* **James 1:4** Perseverance is being developed in us, a confidence in God is being developed in us, and it doesn't just come overnight. Character is tested, tried and proved through time, through years of experience. People say, "Pastor, I wish I had your great faith." You have to understand that my faith began to be developed when I came to the Lord over 47 years ago, and it continues to develop. I have not arrived, but I am growing.

A person can not expect to be in the same spot after one or two years in the Lord. Faith may rise up, but when things do not happen right away, what are you going to do? The confidence through time has not settled in. Don't get discouraged when your faith doesn't happen immediately. It is a process.

It is very important to understand that you are growing in the Lord, and you have to let perseverance and patience have its perfect work. You have to let it happen, which means you have to settle down. You have to be obedient to do what God gives you to do. Take sure, steady, slow steps and have confidence in God. You may feel that you need something right away, but if the Lord is in control, then He determines right away, not you. Learn this.

Have you watched little children grow impatient when they want something immediately? They throw little fits and scenes to get it. Have you given your children what they wanted right away?

You don't crack a fertilized egg in order to bring a little chicken out. Breaking itself out of the egg is part of its survival process. Otherwise, it won't be strong and healthy. It has to peck its way through the eggshell if it is going to live.

People want short cuts. They want the easy way out. The Lord doesn't do things that way. He knows exactly how things are supposed to be. Would you sow a seed and expect to see the crop on the same day? You have to put yourself in an environment for growth by hearing God's word, praying, and

telling people about what Jesus has done for you. You honor God in obedience to His word, and you will continue to grow in God.

He will grow you into the way He is, as His son or daughter. You don't have to be worried and frustrated about. "Lord, hurry up, I need to be here by now." You don't need to be there by now.

Many parents make the mistake of expecting four year olds to act like 18 year olds. Then when they are 18 they want them to act like they are 65. It is not the way it works. You can't expect more from four year old than what they are able to do. You can't expect more from 18 year olds than what they are able to do. You can't expect more from 65 year olds than what they are able to do. However, just because people are old doesn't mean they are mature.

Some people in the spirit realm are not mature, even though they have been in the Lord for 25 years. They don't believe God, they fuss and fret, and they are unstable in their decisions. We should not think more highly of ourselves than we ought. We may not be where we want to be, but we are growing.

*"Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."* **James 1:4** When we get to this point, we know that we have given it to the Lord and it is taken care of. Maturity is a good thing. We are growing into maturity, but we have not arrived yet. Still, we are pressing on and moving ahead.

*"If any of you lacks wisdom, He should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault."* **James 1:5** The Lord won't fault us for not having the wisdom. The problem is that we think we have the wisdom when we don't have it, or when we don't have it, we don't ask God for it. We look to other people or to our own understanding.

The Lord is not finding fault with us about this. He knows that eventually we will come to our senses, and He is patient with us. If you really think about all the shenanigans we have pulled, and the things that we do, the Lord is amazingly patient and merciful. He lets us jabber until we get tired of jabbering, and then He will come along like He did to Job and say, "Where were you when I created the heavens and the earth? Have you been my

counselor lately?" (He means, "Come on, son, daughter, wake up and let's get with the program.")

An even better example is shown when Elijah kept complaining about his situation. The Lord came to him and said, "Now I want you to do this, this, and this." He didn't even listen to Elijah's jabbering; He just told him what to do. Then He said, "By the way, Elijah, you're not the only one left in Israel. There are 7,000 others who have not bowed their knee. (In other words, get your information correct. We have to get going here. Let's move on!)"

If any of you lacks wisdom, God will give it. *"Ask God, who gives generously, without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt."* **James 1:5, 6**

When people ask God for something, they often don't really believe they have received, so they ask again and again and again. Some where along the line, we need to believe that we receive what we ask. Do not doubt.

It is not that the Lord is slow. He is waiting for us to believe. He wants to do it. He is not slow, as people understand slowness. Everything is in His time. God is waiting for somebody to believe Him, and when somebody believes Him and doesn't doubt, then they receive. Time and process are involved in the formation of the Lord's plans.

He who doubts is like what? *"... he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind."* One minute he believes God and the next minute he doesn't. And so he is negating his faith.

Have you ever prayed for someone to receive the Lord? It says, "When you pray, believe you have received." **Mark 11:24** Have you still looked at that person as being an unbeliever, and you treated him that way? If you believe that you receive what you ask, then you should be treating the person as the best believer you know and viewing him that way – if you really believe that you receive. God calls things that be not as though they are, and then they become. **Romans 4:17**

At times, people get impatient because they are not recognizing someone as having come into the Lord. They are not seeing that person saved and delivered.

I knew a woman whose miserable husband treated her badly. She asked me what she should do. I told her to go home and tell him that she thanked God for him, what a wonderful blessing he was in her life, and what a source of encouragement he was. She went home and did what I told her to do. Her husband stood there a moment and then walked out of the room, went into the bedroom and shut the door. He came back about 20 or 30 minutes later and asked if she really meant what she said. (This was a test of faith. She was given an opportunity as a test.) She looked at him and tears started rolling down her cheeks. She said, "Yes, I believe that is true." Right then and there, the man asked her for forgiveness, and he started to change.

This woman had been abused in a relationship for many years. When you pray, you have to believe you have received. Start calling things that be not as though they are (see **Romans 4:17-21**). She loosed the power of God into the situation that changed her husband because God was patient; we need to be patient with one another.

It is so easy to have mercy on yourself and not show mercy to others. Doing so is a mistake. If somebody else does the same thing, we think it is deliberate.

The Lord said, *"That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord. He is a double-minded man, unstable in all that he does."* **James 1:7, 8** People who pray and do not believe that they receive should not expect to receive anything from God. One minute they are on and the next minute they are off. If I do not believe what the Lord says, then I should not expect to receive from Him. Have you ever been in that place? You really didn't expect to receive anything from God because you did not ask in faith.

How do you know you are in faith? Listen to you words. Listen to what comes out of your mouth. *"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."* I can always tell what I am believing by what is coming out of my mouth.

One day you believe people are going to change, and the next day you say they will never change. "Look at them, look at what they are doing. They will always be rotten and miserable." What do you believe in your heart? - that they will never change. You might be saying, "Lord, change them. Do something good," but in the next breath you negate your prayer by unbelief.

The problem is not with other people, it is with us. It is our attitudes. Have you ever tried to get someone conformed to your image? How did you want them to be? The Lord says that we are supposed to be conformed to His image. He is the One who is working.

Have you tried to change your spouse? Did you find that it didn't work? If you see problems you can't handle before the marriage, then don't even get married. Before going into the marriage don't think that person is going to change because they will not do it just by your expectation. You might want to marry 10 years later. Maybe by then God has worked some changes.

You don't have to rush into anything that is worthwhile and is of God. It will be there when God has it for you. You can wait for it.

We are confident of better things in your case, things that accompany salvation. God is not unjust. *"He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them."* **Hebrews 6:10** In other words, your labor in the Lord is not in vain. Whatever you do in the Lord, based on His principles and His word, is never in vain. It doesn't go out and come back empty. What we do in obedience to the Lord is accomplishing His purpose.

You need to know that so you don't get discouraged, you don't get weary in doing good to people. It is going to have a good effect, and the Lord is going to do something special. You may not see it right away, but it is happening.

We want each of you to show the same diligence to the very end. You should want to believe God and not let your faith drop. Don't give up, persevere in the faith and stay in there. Faith says it is happening. Faith in God says it is happening because when I pray to God, I believe I receive what I ask according to God's Word and will.

*"Show the same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure."* **Hebrews 6:11** Hope is your goal. It is what you are believing for. If you don't have hope, or goals that you are looking forward to, then faith has nothing to attach to.

Faith is the substance of the things hoped for, evidence of things not yet seen. **Hebrews 11:1** So we have to know that what we are hoping for is happening. Hope is hope. Faith has to be put to the hope. It is not enough to have a desire. You have to believe that you receive when you ask God.

We don't want you to become lazy. This is what happens to people. They get lazy in their faith. They start to forget about it. Keep it right in front of your eyes.

**Proverbs 4** talks about keeping the word of God in front of your eyes. Keep what you are believing God for in front of your eyes. Write down the vision. Make it plain. Why? You will forget it if you don't. Keep it where you can see it. Keep it in front of you all the time. Talk about it day and night. Tell people what God is doing.

"I don't see it yet." God is doing it! Don't you know that everything has to come out of the spirit realm before it can come into the physical realm? **Hebrews 11:3** There is a battle going on in the spirit realm in order to get things into the physical realm.

In **Daniel 10** the angel was sent 21 days before he actually showed up. When Daniel purposed in his heart to receive an understanding of the vision from God, 21 days later the angel appeared.

What was happening? There was a battle going on in the heavenlies. As Daniel persevered and continued to believe God, and set his heart to receive from God, the angel kept coming. Many angels come halfway down, but when you start doubting, they go back up to the throne of God. They don't know where to deliver the goods because all of a sudden you stopped believing. You gave it up. You got discouraged. You got weary. You started cursing yourself, cursing your faith, doubting God, and cursing what you asked for.

"How long, Lord, do I have to keep believing?" is the same type of question Peter asked Jesus. "How many times should I forgive?" In other words, is there a time when I stop forgiving? Is there a limit to it? Jesus said no, there is no limit. Actually He told Peter the limit was 490 times. In actuality, if somebody does you wrong, how many wrongs are on the record? One. You forgive him and then there are zero wrongs. It is

impossible to ever get past one wrong if you forgive! Your part is not to count the wrongs. Your part is to forgive. That is faith.

*"We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised." **Hebrews 6:12***

"How long, Lord?" Patience doesn't ask that question. What asks that question? Impatience and unbelief. The weary heart and weary mind asks that question. Faith and patience never ask. Faith says, "We have it." Patience says, "We will see it." In God's perfect time He makes all things beautiful. In other words, I will receive it, I have it, and I will see it at just the right time.

When God's purpose is accomplished, that is when we will see it. *"And when God made His promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for Him to swear by, he swore by Himself." **Hebrews 6:13*** He made an oath to Himself. This is a good thing because He is the Lord. He is the finest of the finest so He made an oath with Himself. With every promise God made an oath with Himself to keep it in our behalf. He is looking for somebody to believe Him to receive that promise.

*"He swore by Himself by saying, 'I will surely bless you and give you many descendents.' And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised,"* namely, the son of promise **Hebrews 6:14-15**. People wonder "How long did he wait?" Nine months, eighteen months, two years, four years? Abraham waited approximately 30 years to see that promise fulfilled. In the meantime he and Sarah did a few other things to try to make the promise happen.

Abraham and Sarah leaned to their own understanding and complicated the matter. They caused some pretty complex situations to come out of it, and they ruined their family life. Sarah became jealous because Hagar had a son. Do you know that Sarah was upset at Abraham every day about that? Abraham was upset. He regretted his decision every moment because he had hell to go through in his home as the two women were going at it.

He spent many a sleepless night over the situation. It was God's desire that they have a child, but they tried to make it happen apart from God.

Rather than waiting patiently upon the Lord, many times we feel we have to rush in because time is short, or running out, and we feel that we have to make something happen. (Read **Romans 4:17-25**)

I remember when Diana and I tried to have our first child. Diana was driving me crazy. She was constantly checking her temperature and other things in order to know when she thought it was time to have intercourse. It just wore me out. I finally had enough of it. I said, "This is supposed to be fun: this is not supposed to be torment." I continued, "Kneel down with me in front of the bed to the Lord. We will pray and give this whole thing to him."

We gave it to the Lord, and we asked Him "Whatever you have for us, whenever you have it, we are releasing it all to you right now in Jesus name." Four months later I got a call from Diana, "Guess what? There is a baby in the hanger!"

Those were the nicest four months. It had been rugged trying to make something happen. You just wear yourself out, and stress out and fret, which tightens everything up and messes everything up. The body doesn't work right when it is stressed.

Thank you, Jesus, for peace. The peace comes when everything is given to God. After Diana and I released everything to God and let go of it, whether the Lord wanted us to have a child or not was up to Him in His time. While praying (before we were married), we felt we would have a girl and a boy four years apart. We have a girl and a boy - four years and five days apart. Praise Jesus!

Thirty years went by, and... *"after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said, and puts an end to all argument. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of His purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised [that is us], He confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things [namely Himself] in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest, forever..."* **Hebrews 6:16-20**

In other words, He is seeing to it that the promise is secure and that it is being worked out in our behalf. Not only did Jesus come to the earth for us now, He is sitting in the heavens and making certain that the will and purpose of God is accomplished in our lives. *"God is not a man, that He should lie... Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" Numbers 23:19*

I meditated on that verse for 60 days one time. Another time 90 days. I never looked at another thing all that time. When I was teaching, I taught whatever the Lord gave, but for my personal study, the meditation was just on that verse. What the Lord shown me was, "It is impossible that the impossible not happen when you act on my word."

You have faith when you act on the Word. You are obedient to what God says. You hold on to it and know that however long it takes to see it happen, you know it will happen. You are just going about the Lord's business in the meantime. He will take care of everything. He will put it into place.

God tells us that He loves us with an everlasting love that never fades away and never changes. *Jeremiah 31:3* I do not have any problem trusting myself to the Lord because He does not lie.

Today, if you have been believing God for something, and you don't see any difference yet, maybe you need to make an adjustment in your faith. Maybe there is some repentance that needs to be done. Ask God to forgive you for not believing.

There was an honest man in the Bible who brought his son to Jesus because his son was often thrown into the fire. A spirit of Satan had come upon his son and tried to destroy him, but this fellow came to Jesus.

He had heard what Jesus was doing and how God was working through Him. He brought his son and said, "If you can do something, make my child whole." And Jesus answered, "Not if I can do something, but if *you* can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Jesus didn't let him dump it all on Him but said it was the man's personal responsibility to believe God.

The man admitted, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief." To me that man is one of the most honest men in the Bible because he knew, *I am coming and I am seeking and I am believing, but, Lord, if there is any unbelief in me, help me to believe.* This was an honest response. "Lord, I believe, help me to get out of that unbelief. Help me to move ahead. Help me not to doubt Your promises. Help me not to doubt Your word." The Lord in His love and mercy will help us. He will not find fault with us. ***James 1:2-8***

Have you ever gone up in a prayer line for one thing, but the Lord gave you something else? That is what I call a God-bonus. He is taking care of what you came up for, and He wants to give you something extra!

Many times what He gives unlocks what you came for. There may be an attitude that needs to be altered. There may be a little faith adjustment that needs to happen. Maybe there is something in your character that needs some work. The Lord is good that way. He loves us. He is helping us to grow into all that He has for us.

When you try to measure up and try to see if you have grown any, just understand that it is not your concern. Your concern is to eat the word of God, exercise the word of God, and rest in the word of God. When you are doing those three things, you will grow. The things that God has promised are going to happen. Besides, the Lord has put somebody like myself into your life to help you be responsible, to help make sure you are doing it.

If you have something like that going on in your life, put to work what you have learned.

"Selah" in the Psalms means pause, meditate, reflect, and think upon this. Don't go on to the next part but stop right there.

People say "Thank you" after they receive something or to show how they appreciate someone. The word of God says to thank God after you pray because you know you have received what you ask according to His will.

Selah, pause, meditate and think on that. In other words, settle down. Let God's rest settle in on you. God has everything under control!

*"For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him." 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:12*

When I give something to God, I have to know it is a done deal. It is taken care of. I just go on to the next situation. Whatever He is going to work out, however He is going to work it out, is not my concern. It is His business. He will show me whatever I need to do, and I will do it. In the meantime, I know it is done. Whatever you are believing the Lord for, it is done. According to His word, it is done.

The entrance of God's word brings light. Then we can see clearly. Many situations in life are foggy and dark, and take a while because there is a character forming process going on. There is a faith process happening. God is more concerned about the growth process than He is about the outcome. What is the outcome going to be? It will be good if we do what God says. He is concerned about our growth. When we have let patience have its perfect work, then we will come into the bonus of maturity, and we will not lack for any good thing.

What does your future hold? Good things, through faith and patience.  
***Jeremiah 29:11-12*** (Read ***Joshua 1:6-9***)

The Lord is patient with us when we mess around, are distracted, or are not believing. The Lord is patient because He knows that we will come to our senses. Why? He has put faith in us. He has put patience in us. We need to put some faith and patience in Him and in one another.