



A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

WHILE WE WAIT...

The scriptures are replete with the use of the word, wait, await, and waiting, to name just a few variations from the root word “wait”. In fact, the Bible and Book of Mormon record the use of “wait” over 150 times (the exact number can be found via the Church app). Yet, waiting is not something we as humans often enjoy. All can reflect on the frequency with which we get upset at waiting over common life events such as sitting in a vehicle waiting for a traffic light to turn green, waiting in line for your drive-thru order, waiting for an answer from a doctor’s office, or a job application, or school admission, etc. Sometimes, we can even get frustrated spiritually when waiting for a meeting to end, or for a testimony or sermon to end or, more importantly, for a prayer to be answered.

However, the Lord has provided His creation with a wonderful blueprint on waiting that includes unforeseen blessings while we wait, how to act while we wait, and benefits that can occur both while we wait and afterward.

Unforeseen Blessings

The Lord has provided evidence in the Holy Scriptures and in each of our own lives of blessings that come from waiting while seeking His direction, sometimes when we don’t realize it. A wonderful example is when Nephi and his brothers were directed to get the plates of Laban and yet they were forced to wait until the third attempt for success. Faith was needed during their wait as is recorded in 1 Nephi 4:6-7, *“And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do. Nevertheless I went forth, and as I came near unto the house of Laban I beheld a man, and he had fallen to the earth before me, for he was drunken with wine”*. The benefits of waiting were many: they brought all the records they needed for their journey to the promised land, Laban was eliminated as a threat to come after the family for the records, and they also brought another individual on the trip (Laban’s servant Zoram). The last two benefits (unforeseen blessings) would not have been realized had they not been made to wait until the third time when God provided for them to get the plates.

In our church meetings, we often hear testimonies of the Lord forcing someone to wait and then they receive an unexpected or unforeseen blessing. The following are a few examples: The Lord spared them from an accident due to an extended traffic wait, the Lord provided the right job after a wait when other jobs looked good but would have been a mistake, the

Lord provided the right spouse after waiting when other choices would have not been for the best and many other examples.

How to Act:

The Lord does make promises that require us to wait, either individually or as His Church. He ALWAYS fulfills His promises, but it is in His timing. During this period of waiting, He often tests His people, and when we pass the test of faith on His promises, He acknowledges us with blessing. Two scripture stories illustrate the test, the reactions and blessings:

In the Old Testament, we read the story of Abraham being promised a child with his wife Sarah. In Genesis Chapter 17, the name of Abram was changed to Abraham when he was 99 and the name of Sarai was changed to Sarah when she was 90. In verse 16 it is written, *“And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her”*. This promise was a reminder of what was given many years before when in Genesis 15:5 the Lord stated, *“And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be”*. Abraham’s actions and reaction to the original promise are what pleased the Lord as the next verse recorded in Genesis 15:6 states, *“And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness”*. It is also recorded in Hebrews Chapter 11, specifically in verse 8, that *“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went”*.

In the Book of Mormon, we can reflect on a wonderful act of waiting with firm steadfastness found in III Nephi Chapter 1. In this account, the people of God were in danger for believing in the coming of Christ by the unbelievers who wanted to put them to death, as is recorded in III Nephi 1:9: *“Now it came to pass that there was a day set apart by the unbelievers, that all those who believed in those traditions should be put to death except the sign should come to pass, which had been given by Samuel the prophet”*. However, the people of God were already doing exactly what the Lord wanted as is recorded in the previous verse, *“But behold, they did watch steadfastly for that day and that night and that day which should be as one day as if there were no night, that they might know that their faith had not been vain”*.

The Lord came to the rescue of the people while they waited and spoke these beautiful words in III Nephi 1:13: *“Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to show unto the world that I will fulfill all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets”*. The people of God were spared and unbelievers fell to the earth because the promises of God were fulfilled as recorded in III Nephi 1:16: *“And there were many, who had not believed the words of the prophets, who fell to the earth and became as if they were dead, for they knew that the great plan of destruction which they had laid for those who believed in the words of the prophets had been frustrated;”*.

Likewise, today, we as a Church are awaiting the promise of the Latter Day glory in the Kingdom of Peace or Zion. How does our God want us to act and what should we be doing

while we are waiting for God's promises to be fulfilled more fully? We should be focusing on drawing closer to the Lord in righteousness and having more love for one another that we might be in one accord. Our families, friends, coworkers and neighbors all need the atoning blood of Jesus in their lives that comes through the waters of baptism. Consider how the people in Jerusalem after the ascension of Christ continued together as the family of God. When the great power of God via the bestowal of the Holy Ghost came into their midst on the day of Pentecost, as found in the 2nd chapter of the book of Acts, they were waiting together because the Lord gave them a commandment as found in Acts 1:4, *"And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me"*.

Because our early brothers and sisters obeyed the Lord's commandment and worked together, God blessed them with 3,000 souls added in one day and the Gospel then began to grow as recorded in Acts 6:7, *"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith"*. Likewise, today as we endeavor to obey the Lord's direction, He is blessing us with many revelations that help us to prepare and focus our efforts to spread the Gospel to the dying souls of men starting with the House of Joseph, and then to all of Israel, and to all the nations of the earth.

Benefits While We Wait and Afterward:

There are often great benefits the Lord gives while we wait, and certainly afterward that on the initial surface are not visible to the natural man and woman. We can share many examples but want to focus on two famous passages of scripture.

The first passage is about Joseph of Egypt who was made to wait many years for the fulfillment of what the Lord had promised him, as outlined in Chapter 37 of Genesis, verses 5 through 11. During his wait time, Joseph was sold into slavery and cast into prison, just to name two challenges. However, an amazing pattern arose during his entire time of waiting – God blessed Joseph in every place and promoted him in every circumstance whether in his master's house or in prison, where he became second in command over the entire country of Egypt. He was used to not only save the country of Egypt from starvation but was able to rescue his own family from the same fate. Joseph told his brothers their plan to hurt him was overmatched by God's providence. God had Joseph in the palm of His hand as shown in Genesis 45:7-8: *"And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt"*.

The second passage is the raising of Lazarus from the dead. When Lazarus was sick, Jesus heard about it and decided to stay (or wait two extra days) in the same place. It is recorded in John 11:6, *"When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was"*. When Jesus made His appearance to the family, Lazarus was already dead. When Lazarus' sister, Martha, saw the Lord, she stated her feelings as found in John 11:21: *"Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had*

not died". Great blessings then began to occur as the interaction led to the Lord providing one of the most beautiful scriptures as recorded in John 11:25, "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live". Following this was the pinnacle blessing of Lazarus being raised from the dead as found in John 11:43-44, "And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go". In this instance, the waiting brought greater blessings. The fame of this miracle brought many to believe in Jesus and the testimony of Lazarus just being seen must have been indescribable.

To conclude, there is always a benefit to waiting on the Lord. This is captured for all by the prophet Isaiah in Chapter 40, verses 29-31: "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But **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**".

In the love of God,

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles

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