

# Waiting on God

by Chuck Smith

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*Waiting on God requires great strength and faith, and leads to great things and rewards, as seen in the examples of Abraham, Jacob, and the church's wait for the Lord's return.*

**Duration:** 30:48

**Scripture:** Psalm 37:1

**Topics:** "Waiting On God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the commandment to wait on God, as mentioned in Isaiah 64:4 and 1 Corinthians 2:9. The speaker highlights the difficulty in obeying this commandment, particularly when pressured by others to take action. Examples from the Bible, such as Abraham waiting for a son, Jacob waiting for his bride, and Joseph waiting for his brothers to bow down to him, are given to emphasize the importance of patience and trust in God's timing. The speaker also mentions the moral downfall of the nation of Israel after the deaths of Moses and Joshua, and how God would raise up judges to lead the people back to Him.

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## Transcript

Let's turn to Psalm 37 for our scripture reading. I'll read the first and the unnumbered verses. We ask you to read the even-numbered verses.

We will read through verse 20. Psalm 37, 1 through 20. Shall we stand as we read? Fren't not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

Trust in the Lord and do good and so shall you dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed. Divide thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord.

Trust also in him and he will bring it to pass. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. Fren't not thyself because of him who prospers in his way.

Because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass. For evildoers shall be cut off, but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. But the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

The Lord shall laugh at him for he seeth that his day is coming. Their sword shall enter into their own heart and their bows shall be broken. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the Lord upholdeth the

righteous.

They shall not be ashamed in the evil time and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. Let's pray. Lord help us we pray to keep the injunctions that are given to us in this psalm.

Help us Lord not to fret ourselves over the issues of life, not to worry. Help us Lord to just put our trust in you and to commit our ways unto you that we might wait Lord upon you. Resting in your word and in your promises.

And so Lord teach us this day and help us this day to obey these injunctions that we might live a life of blessedness, a life of peace that you have promised to those that would do these things. Help us now Father in Jesus name. Amen.

This morning we'd like to draw your attention to the 64th chapter verse 4. Where the Lord said, for since the beginning of the world, men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither has the eye seen any God like you, what you have prepared for those who wait on you. When we read this passage, our minds immediately associate it with a passage in the New Testament where Paul wrote to the Corinthians in his first epistle. But as it is written, eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of men, the things that God has prepared for those that love him.

Obviously Paul is giving sort of a free translation of Isaiah 64 for. There are a couple of minor differences in the two passages. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he adds that the heart has not perceived or it hasn't entered into the heart of man.

Speaks about you haven't seen, you haven't heard. Paul adds, it hasn't even entered into your heart. We sing, I can only imagine Paul saying, no, you can't imagine.

It's far beyond whatever you've imagined. The glories of, of heaven, the things that God has prepared. Paul said for those that love him here in our texts, in Isaiah, Isaiah said, it's for those who wait on him.

You can't imagine from the beginning man hasn't seen man hasn't heard the things that God has prepared. There's no God like him and the things that he is prepared for those who wait on him. It's interesting how many times in the Bible we are exhorted to wait upon the Lord.

Psalms 27 14 tells us, wait on the Lord, be of good courage and he will strengthen your heart. Wait, I say on the Lord. As we read in Psalm 37 7, rest in the Lord, wait patiently for him, fret not thyself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass.

In Lamentations 3 26, it is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. Zephaniah 3 8, therefore, wait upon me, saith the Lord. So the Lord commands us to wait on him and he gives special promises to those that will wait on him.

Psalms 37 9, they that wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth. Psalm 37 34, wait on the Lord and keep his way and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land. Proverbs 20 22, don't say I will recompense evil, but wait on the Lord and he shall save thee.

Isaiah 30 18, blessed or happy are they that wait on the Lord. Isaiah 40 31, 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. They shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 49 23, for they shall not be ashamed who wait on me.

And then our text, Isaiah 64 4, for since the beginning of the world, men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither has the eye seen any God like you and what you have prepared for those who wait on you. Finally, Lamentations 3 25, the Lord is good unto them that wait for him. And so the promises, you'll inherit the land, you will be saved, you will be blessed, you will have renewed strength, you will never be ashamed.

You will experience the goodness of God. God has prepared unimaginable things for you that wait on him. But have you ever discovered how difficult it is to wait on God? You know, it seems like it should be a very simple thing.

It seems to be a simple commandment. Wait on me, saith the Lord. And yet we seem to have such difficulty obeying that command.

Why is it so difficult? Well, I think that one reason why it's difficult to wait upon God is that so often we are pressured by people to take action. Don't just sit there, do something. And it really doesn't matter what you do, do something, you know.

And it's hard for us many times to just wait on God when we are under pressure to act. I don't know, maybe it's because of my age. But I used to find it much more difficult to wait on God than I do now.

I don't know if I'm just learning or if it's just that I'm too old to take action anymore. And it's a lot easier to wait than to do something now. I used to be the kind of roll up your sleeves, jump in, get it done, you know.

And now I think, well, I would like to roll up my sleeves, but I don't really feel strong enough. And so I'll just wait on God and let God do it. But coming into this transition in life and into this age where I am physically not capable as I once was of activity as much as I used to be into it, I find it a lot easier to wait upon God.

But not only that, I am learning the lessons of how God can do things much better than I ever dreamed of doing them. I'm experiencing the blessings that God has promised to those that wait upon him. I'm experiencing all of these wonderful things that God said he would do for those that wait upon him.

Sometimes people say, look, you've been waiting now for a whole year. Time to do something. We're tired of you just waiting.

Well, I remember that Abraham waited for 85 years for God to fulfill his promise to give him a son through Sarah. I remember that Jacob waited to receive his bride Rachel for 14 years. That for 17 years, Joseph waited for the fulfillment of God's declaration to him that his brothers would all one day bow down to him.

And the church has been waiting for almost 2000 years for the Lord to return. So there are issues that I've been waiting on. I've been waiting for a couple of years and I'm under a lot of pressure to do something.

But two years that isn't much. To wait when you think of how long others have waited for God to work out the situation according to his will and his good plan. Why is it that God wants us to wait for him? Because sometimes God wants to do more than just what we are seeking and he is wanting us to understand his purpose and waiting for us to get in harmony with what he is desiring.

And once I get into harmony, then it opens the door and allows God to do the things that I've been wanting him to do. But in reality, it's a waiting game. God's waiting for me as I am waiting for him.

But he's waiting for the changes to take place in my heart. I think in the Old Testament, the life of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, Moses had died. A powerful, strong leader.

A man who was able pretty much to keep the people in line and following God. His predecessor, Joshua, has also died. Joshua was a good leader, not as strong as Moses, but yet a powerful leader who challenged the people to serve God.

After the death of Joshua, there was really no strong leader raised up and thus the nation of Israel began a moral downfall. And God would raise up men, they were called judges, and they would call the people to repentance and call the people back to God. But before long, when the judge would die, the people would revert to their practices of paganism, turning away from God, and they would go into oppression, and then they would cry unto God, and God would send another man along to lead them back to God.

But it was a downward progression. The nation was going lower and lower until it was so bad that there wasn't a man in the nation that God could raise up to lead the people back to God. The priesthood had become corrupted under Eli, the high priest.

His sons were profaning the priesthood. They were taking advantage of the people. They were using their position as priests to enrich themselves.

They were becoming very wealthy off of the people, and they were causing people to turn against God and not even want to worship God. God needed a man. There were none in this decadent age.

And so God got hold of a woman, and God closed up the womb of Hannah. She was unable to bear children, and that was a cultural curse. Her husband, Elkanah, he had another wife, and someone's phone.

His other wife was very prolific. She had a lot of children, and she was really taunting Hannah until Hannah's life was absolutely miserable because of not having a child. And so as Hannah was going with Elkanah to the tabernacle to worship the Lord, she was crying.

He said, what's wrong? Why are you crying? She said, give me a son. He said, am I God? I can't, you know, I don't know what's wrong. While she was there at the temple, she was so in agony over this issue that she was lying there praying, and her heart was so taken up, so grieved that she could not articulate, just could not even voice her prayer, but was just her mouth was moving as she was in agony before God.

And in her heart she was saying, God, if you will just give me a son, I'll give him back to you all of the days of his life. That's what God was wanting, a man that would lead the children of Israel in a spiritual revival. The high priest Eli came by, he saw her there on the ground, he saw her voice, her mouth moving, and the agony on her face, and he said, sober up woman, drink will kill you, you know.

And she said, no, I haven't been drinking, my heart is grieved. And he said, well, may God, you know, answer your prayer. And God did answer her prayer, and she kept her vow, and she brought her son Samuel, and allowed him to be raised there in the temple.

And God raised up Samuel to be the great prophet, and the great judge, and the leader of the people, who led the people in a spiritual renewal. But you see, the waiting was that God might give more than what she was just desiring, just another son, and just to live in the corrupted condition. God was wanting a man to lead the nation.

Sometimes God calls us to just wait on him, and watch him do his work. You don't have to get involved in this, just watch me, watch what I can do. The case of Jehoshaphat, who was the king over Judah, we read about it in 2nd Chronicles chapter 20.

Came to pass that the children of Moab, the children of Ammon, and others with them, came against Jehoshaphat to battle. Then word came to Jehoshaphat that a great multitude was coming against him from beyond the Dead Sea, and behold, they're in En Gedi. And Jehoshaphat feared, and he sought the Lord, and he proclaimed a fast throughout all of Judah.

And the people of Judah gathered themselves together to ask the Lord for help. And they came from all of the cities of Judah to seek the Lord. And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah there in Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court.

And he said, O Lord God of our fathers, are you not the God in heaven? And do you not rule over the kingdoms of the world? And in your hand is there not power and might, so that no one can stand against you? Are you not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and you gave it to the descendants of Abraham, who was your friend forever? And they dwell there, and they built a sanctuary for your name. And did you not say that if evil would come upon us as the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine, that if we would stand before this house, and in your presence, and cry unto you in our affliction, that you would hear and help? Now behold the children of Ammon, and Moab, and Mount Seir, whom you would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt. But they turned from them, and did not destroy them.

Behold, look how they seek to reward us by coming to cast us out of your possession, which you have given us to inherit. O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no might against this great company that comes against us, and neither do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon you. And all Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones, their wives, their children.

And then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jehaziel in the midst of the congregation, and he said, Listen to the Lord, all Judah, you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat. Thus saith the Lord unto you, be not afraid nor dismayed by the reason of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow, go down against them.

Behold, they are coming up by the cliff of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. And you will not need to fight in this battle. Just set yourselves, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you.

O Judah and Jerusalem, fear not, nor be dismayed. Tomorrow, just go out against them, for the Lord will be with you. And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshiping the Lord.

And the priest stood up to praise the Lord, the God of Israel, with a loud voice on high. And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood

and said, Hear me, O Judah, you inhabitants of Jerusalem, believe in the Lord your God, and so shall you be established.

Believe his prophets, and you will prosper. And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, that should praise the beauty of holiness. And as they went out before the army, they sang, Praise the Lord, for his mercy is forever.

And when they began to sing and praise the Lord, the Lord set an ambush against the children of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, which had come against Judah. And they were smitten, for the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, to utterly slay and destroy them. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Mount Seir, everyone started to destroy each other.

And when Judah came to the watchtower in the wilderness, they looked at the multitude, and behold, they were all dead, not one escaped. Now when Jehoshaphat and the people came to take the spoil from them, they found an abundance of riches on the dead bodies, precious jewels, and they stripped off for themselves more than they could carry away. There was so much spoil, it took them three days to gather it all.

As Isaiah said in our text, For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither have their eyes seen a God like you, and the things that you have prepared for those that wait upon you. They couldn't imagine what God was going to do to their enemies. They couldn't imagine the wealth that they were going to receive in the stripping of the bodies of these armies that had come against them.

But they waited upon the Lord, and they saw the salvation of God. Now, we need to know that waiting upon God is not laziness. It's not an abandoning of our efforts.

Waiting on God is activity under the command of God. It's a readiness to move when God commands us to move. It's the ability to wait until the command comes.

Don't do anything, basically, until God tells you to do it. But it is waiting on God to give you the command to tell you what to do and how to do it. Waiting on God takes great strength.

Waiting on God takes great faith. I'm convinced that a lot of times, God allows us to wait just to test our faith. Because we are impulsive.

It's not easy to just wait on God. It takes great strength to wait on God and great faith. Waiting on God is far more difficult than working.

It takes a complete surrender to the will of God and an absolute confidence in the promise of God. But oh, what great things God has in store for those that will wait on Him. You can't imagine what God will do for those who wait on Him.

We are waiting for the return of Jesus Christ. And James said, Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth and has long patience for it.

Until he receives the early and the latter rain, be ye also patient, establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is drawing near. Wait, I say, upon the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass. Father, we thank you for

the wonderful promises that are given to us who will wait upon you.

Surely there is no God like you. That rewards and blesses those that will wait upon you. The eyes haven't seen, the ears haven't heard, neither has it entered into the heart of men.

The things, Lord, that you will do if we will just simply wait on you. So give us, Lord, that faith whereby we can wait upon you. Give us that strength, Lord, to wait upon you.

And that confidence, Lord, in your sovereignty over our lives, that we can just quietly wait and watch what you will do as you accomplish, Lord, your purposes. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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