

Reading: Job 42:1-17

“I waited patiently for the Lord” (Psa 40:1a)

Patience is the secret! Doctors need patience to perform successful surgeries. Engineers need patience to build complex structures. Teachers need patience to produce distinguished scholars. Parents need patience to raise responsible children. Scientists need patience to explore shrouded mysteries. Spouses need patience to build harmonious families. Christians need patience to develop holy character.

God sends difficulties and disappointments, and allows defeats and diseases in our lives to serve as a rod of correction. His punishments are not just an expression of anger. He has the end in view, even our transformation (Heb 12:10). Our problem is that we want to have solutions and explanations right now (v 11). We reject God’s voice of silence and turn to wrong sources. The result is further complications. Impatience with the dealings of God wastes our time and energy. A minor sprain becomes a major dislocation (v 13b). But “perseverance produces character” (Rom 5:3,4).

In the beginning of Christian life we may only “hear” about the holiness of God. After walking through fires of testing we will actually “see” His holiness. Our repentance will be deepened. It’s no more prayers of repentance at the altar, but tears of repentance in ashes! This was Job’s experience (Job 42:5,6). The Bible calls us to follow the “patience of Job” (Js 5:11). We must study all our lifetime in the School of Suffering and College of Chastisement. God has used sicknesses to break the lifestyle of many an arrogant man and woman. Following a bitter experience with a killer disease, King Hezekiah decided, “I will walk humbly all my years because of this anguish of my soul” (Isa 38:15b).

God has no pleasure in our suffering. If we sinful people desire that our children should be happy and healthy, how much more will our heavenly Father desire so for His children! But if suffering is an incomparable means to correct us and teach us His ways, will the Heavenly Father spoil us by sparing that rod? Job said, “Teach me, and I will be silent; and show me how I have erred” (Job 6:24). If we recollect the outcome of the sufferings of the past, we will stay patient instead of turning bitter. In inescapable and inexplicable situations, let’s tell God what Job said, “I am nothing — how could I ever find the answers? I will put my hand over my mouth in silence” (Job 40:4).

*Heavy-laden, sore oppressed, love can soothe thy troubled breast;
In the Saviour find thy rest; at the Cross there’s room!*

(Fanny J. Crosby, 1823-1915)

OCTOBER 13

PRAYER

Subject: Patience

Reading: Job 42:1-17

Memorising: Psa 40:1a

Almighty God, we worship You as the God of patience, grace and mercy. We worship You as the God of love and compassion. But for Your patience, we would have perished long long ago. You remember that we are just dust. Our pride melts like wax when Your anger turns against us. Forgive us all our boasting. We worship Your greatness realising our nothingness. You are God. You are Lord. You are Almighty. You are All-holy.

Dear Lord, we are too weak to bear our sufferings; strengthen us through Your power. We are too timid to face challenges; embolden us with Your presence. We are too unsteady to withstand pressures; quicken us with Your promises. We are too ignorant to understand Your ways; enlighten us with Your precepts. We are thrown off-gear when winds of adversity blow on us. Questions and doubts overwhelm us when we don't know which way to turn. Father God, help us Your poor children!

Heavenly Father, we often forget that Your chastisement is only for our betterment. Teach us to wait for Your deliverance. Forgive us our words of impatience. Forgive us our words of anger and bitterness against others. Forgive us for whatever we spoke against Your character while walking through floods and fire. Thank You for the indwelling Holy Spirit who intercedes for us, understanding our agony and anguish. Thank You for the support from family and friends. Thank You for the fellowship of Your children who encourage us while our spirits are sinking.

Bless me, Lord, with the meekness of Moses when spoken against. Grant me the patience of Job while walking through the furnace. Give me the brokenness of David while afflicted. Fill me with the sweetness of Stephen when accused. Endow me with the humility of Paul when challenged. Thank You, dear Father, for Jesus who is the embodiment of all the virtues as the perfect Pattern for our lives. Thank You for the Holy Spirit who adorns us with His fruits of patience and joyful endurance.

Father God, we confess that we forget the lessons learnt in one trial too soon and remember them only when the next one knocks us down. Help us walk softly all our life remembering the days of bitterness.

In the Name of Jesus the Lamb and the Lion, Amen!

(Psa 25:4; 69:29; 70:5; 103:8,14; Joel 2:13; Isa 6:3; 30:21; 43:2; Rom 8:26,27; 11:33-36; Lam 5:5; 2 Cor 7:1,2; 12:1-6; Heb 3:12,13; 12:7-11; Num 12:1-3; Js 5:11; Acts 7:54-60; Gal 5:22,23)