

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2022: *In the Crucible With Christ*

Lesson 11 “Waiting in the Crucible”

Read for this week’s study

Romans 15:4, 5; Romans 5:3-5; 1 Samuel 26; Psalm 37:1-11.

Memory Text

“But the fruit of the Spirit is . . . longsuffering” (Galatians 5:22, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The God of Patience
- III. In God’s Time
- IV. David: An Object Lesson in Waiting
- V. Elijah: The Problem of Rushing
- VI. Learning to Take Delight in the Lord
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week, we’ll look at what could be behind some of the most trying of all crucibles: the crucible of waiting.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Sunday’s lesson encourages us to concentrate on the God of patience. We are normally impatient about things that we really want or don’t yet have. Because we rarely get what we want when we want it, we can often find ourselves feeling irritated and impatient. In the Old Testament the people are commanded forty-three times, “Wait on the Lord” (cf. Psalm 37:7). Why is it important to switch our attention from things to God?
3. What God does in us while we wait is at least as important as what it is we are waiting for. Paul says that while we are waiting for God to set everything right, we suffer. But suffering produces perseverance, and perseverance produces character, and character produces hope (Romans 5:3-5). God can produce these qualities in us while we wait. Biblically, waiting is not just something we have to do until we get what we want. Waiting is part of the process of becoming what God wants us to be.

4. Monday's lesson focuses on God's timing. People have been waiting millennia for Jesus' first and second coming. Abraham & Sarah waited 25 years for the promised son, Israel waited 430 and 490 years for the fulfilment of a promise (Exodus 12:40; Daniel 9:24-27).
5. Often we want God's resources, but we don't want his timing. We want his gifts, but we don't want his scheduling. We forget that his work in us while we wait, is as important as what it is we are waiting for. Waiting means we must trust that God knows what he is doing.
6. Tuesday's lesson spotlights David as an object lesson in waiting. It was about 15 years between the time that he was anointed king and actually became king. When the tribe of Judah asked David to reign over them, he was about thirty years old. But he had to wait seven and a half more years before the remaining tribes of Israel acknowledged him as their king. What lesson can we learn from this and from the events of 1 Samuel chapters 16 & 26?
7. Wednesday's lesson asks us to consider Elijah and the problem of rushing. What caused Elijah to run in 1 Kings 19:1-9?
8. Biblical waiting is not passively waiting for something or someone to arrive that allows us to escape from our troubles. People sometimes say "I'm just waiting on the Lord" as an excuse not to face up to reality, take appropriate action, or own up to their responsibility. That is certainly not what waiting on the Lord means!
9. What can we learn about waiting from Psalm 37:1-11? How do you understand the promise: "Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart" (Ps. 37:4, NRSV)? What does it mean to "take delight in the LORD" and how can we learn to do it?
10. Biblical waiting is not a passive attempt to evade unpleasant reality. Waiting is the hardest work of hope. Waiting means I am willing to trust that God knows what he is doing because he views things from the angle of eternity.
11. Waiting on the Lord requires confident humility. Isaiah wrote: "the fruit of righteousness will be peace." (32:17) The result of righteousness can be two qualities of character: confidence – the conviction that God is able to orientate us towards the future – and, oddly, quietness. This is the opposite of arrogance and boasting. It is the humble recognition of our limits. To wait for something means to recognize we are not in control or in charge. But we are not simply waiting; we are waiting on God and on what God is doing in us.
12. When what we always hoped for is not happening and we don't know why, it hurts. We are tempted to try to force things to happen, to manipulate, or to use people. We may be tempted to give up trying to realize the potential God has given us and just drift along. How can we develop the patience of neither trying to force things nor to quit, but to wait confidently on God?
13. In what way can we continue to learn about our giftedness, humbly and openly receive feedback and coaching from others? If we learn to recognize that God is at

work even in our difficult circumstances, we will grow one step at a time and learn to trust God's plan for us and recognize his voice and hand in our lives.

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Is it apparent, though, that Elijah had much to learn as the years went by? And it's interesting to note the things that he learned that were most significant. Take, for example, that story on Mt. Carmel. Now obviously he was on God's side. He risked his life. A minority of one under those circumstances! And here were all the priests of Baal gashing themselves, and so on. And Elijah stands up before that whole crowd and does what's recorded. Absolutely magnificent, isn't it? And then fire comes down from heaven and consumes the sacrifice, and even the altar itself, and laps up the water around it. Elijah enjoyed great confirmation from heaven right then. And when the fire went out, he became depressed and scared, and he ran for his life; even ran from a woman; from Queen Jezebel. Doesn't sound like the man who stood on Mt. Carmel, does it? And he hid in a cave. Now this is near the end of his life, and God comes to him there to teach him something, I believe, of very great consequence. He learned this before he was translated to heaven without seeing death.

What do you think of that record in 1 Kings 19:9? You know, the events surrounding this flight of his, and how the Lord fed him on the way. Why is that in the record that God would do this and feed His fleeing prophet? Well you remember when Jairus' daughter was resurrected, they all rushed out of the room so happy to tell the news. The scriptures say that Jesus called after them and said, "Wait a minute; this little girl is hungry. Somebody get her something to eat." Now, doesn't that say something about God? The little details here. He fed Elijah. But now in 19:9:

He came to a cave, and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he [that is, God] said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" And he said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the people of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

You remember, God had to tell him that he wasn't the only one; there were others. But how do you think God feels about a person who's jealous for God? Isn't God jealous for our reputations? And His friends are jealous for His. Didn't Abraham show jealousy for God's reputation? And Moses? And the whole book of Job. Job's defending God, not himself, all through that book.

As witness, look at God's comment at the end, "Job has said of Me what is right." He was jealous for God's reputation. This is where Elijah really was a friend. But now he's depressed,

because all the fire's gone out. So long as there was fire coming down from heaven, he was in good courage. Clearly the Lord was with him.

But God said, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD" [so you see, he knew God was coming]. And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD [and Elijah was saying, "Ah, now the Lord is really approaching; now you're talking, God."], but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake [and Elijah would think, "Ah, the footprints of the Lord; He's approaching"], but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire [and a fiery preacher like Elijah, he knew the Lord was in the fire], but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

What do you have in your version for that? Some of them are very colorful. "A still, small voice"; what do you have for that? "The breath of a light whisper?" Oh, that couldn't be much quieter, could it? "The breath of a light whisper." What version is that? That's *Moffatt*. Oh, you don't often see *Moffatt* anymore. It was one of my dad's favorites. A man as competent as *Moffatt*; he did the whole Bible, not just the New or the Old; he did it all. And I think it is such a waste not to use *Moffatt*. He's very dramatic. Any other translation of what it was Elijah heard? "A soft whisper"? Any others? "A murmuring sound." One thing for sure, it was quiet. Something very gentle and soft.

And when Elijah heard it [one version has, "The sound of a small silence", when he heard that], he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" And he said [again], "I have been very jealous for the LORD" [and the Lord spoke to him].

Why would this story be in here? Does it say anything of great consequence to us about God? Personally, I think this is a real key to so much of scripture. At Mt. Sinai, did God come as wind, earthquake, fire, or a still, small voice? Well, there was wind and earthquake and fire, but no still, small voice. Because there was only one person at the foot of the mountain who could hear the still, small voice. God's friend there who said, "There is no need to be afraid." And you remember, God said, "To a prophet I'll speak in visions and dreams, but not so to My friend Moses, for to him I will speak face to face, as a man speaks to his friend."

Have you ever stood talking with a friend face to face and have him shout at you? Is there any need? That's somebody who might be angry with you. That's not a friend. In fact, the wonderful thing about a close friend is you could both sit there and not say much, and communication occurs. And this is what God wants the most. But if we're hard of hearing, He can't talk that softly. And I think Elijah had learned through the years, that talking softly wasn't very effective,

and he had become a man of wind and earthquake and fire himself. And he needed to learn this before he was taken up to heaven and come face to face with God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – 1&2 Kings, recorded November 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/17MMPOGIA66> (1 Kings - Part 1)
<http://pkp.cc/18MMPOGIA66> (1 Kings - Part 2)

<http://pkp.cc/19MMPOGIA66> (2 Kings - Part 1)
<http://pkp.cc/20MMPOGIA66> (2 Kings - Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

Could our spiritual vision be quickened, we should see souls bowed under oppression and burdened with grief, pressed as a cart beneath sheaves, and ready to die in discouragement. We should see angels flying quickly to the aid of these tempted ones, forcing back the hosts of evil that encompass them, and placing their feet on the sure foundation. The battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend. {PK 175.3}

Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you. {SC 71.2}

Remember that underneath you are the everlasting arms. “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him” (Psalm 37:7). He is guiding you into a harbor of gracious experience. {HP 269.5}

In the divine arrangement God does nothing without the cooperation of man. He compels no man’s will. That must be given to the Lord completely, else the Lord is not able to accomplish His divine work that He would do through the human agency. Jesus declared that in a certain place He could not do many mighty works among the people because of their unbelief. He wanted to do for them in that place just what He knew that they needed to have done, but He could not because unbelief barred the way. The potter cannot mold and fashion unto honor that which has never been placed in his hands. The Christian life is one of daily surrender, submission, and continual overcoming, gaining fresh victories every day. This is the growing up into Christ, fashioning the life into the divine Model. . . . {TMK 55.4}

All heaven has been looking on with interest, and ready to do whatever God might appoint, to help fallen men and women to become what God would have them. God will work for His

children, but not without their cooperation. They must have indomitable energy, and a constant desire to become all that it is possible for them to be. {RC 296.3}

In every human being He discerned infinite possibilities. He saw men as they might be, transfigured by His grace—in “the beauty of the Lord our God.” Psalm 90:17. Looking upon them with hope, He inspired hope. Meeting them with confidence, He inspired trust. Revealing in Himself man’s true ideal, He awakened, for its attainment, both desire and faith. In His presence souls despised and fallen realized that they still were men, and they longed to prove themselves worthy of His regard. In many a heart that seemed dead to all things holy, were awakened new impulses. To many a despairing one there opened the possibility of a new life. {Ed 80.1}

The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God. {Ed 126.4}

When temptations assail you, when care, perplexity, and darkness seem to surround your soul, look to the place where you last saw the light. Rest in Christ’s love and under His protecting care. When sin struggles for the mastery in the heart, when guilt oppresses the soul and burdens the conscience, when unbelief clouds the mind, remember that Christ’s grace is sufficient to subdue sin and banish the darkness. Entering into communion with the Saviour, we enter the region of peace. {MH 250.1}

Never feel that Christ is far away. He is always near. His loving presence surrounds you. Seek Him as One who desires to be found of you. He desires you not only to touch His garments, but to walk with Him in constant communion. {MH 85.2}

Man’s need for a divine teacher was known in heaven. The pity and sympathy of God were aroused in behalf of human beings, fallen and bound to Satan’s chariot car; and when the fullness of time was come, He sent forth His Son. The One appointed in the councils of heaven came to this earth as man’s instructor. The rich benevolence of God gave Him to our world, and to meet the necessities of human nature He took humanity upon Himself. To the astonishment of the heavenly host the eternal Word came to this world as a helpless babe. Fully prepared, He left the royal courts and mysteriously allied Himself with fallen human beings. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” John 1:14. {CT 259.2}

At the time of Christ’s first advent darkness had covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Truth looked down from heaven, and nowhere could discern the reflection of her image. Spiritual darkness had settled down over the religious world, and this darkness was almost universal and complete. . . . {RC 16.2}

All things proclaimed the urgent necessity on the earth of a Teacher sent from God—a Teacher in whom divinity and humanity would be united. It was essential that Christ should appear in human form, and stand at the head of the human race, to uplift fallen human beings. Thus only could God be revealed to the world. {RC 16.3}

Christ volunteered to lay aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and come to this earth to show to human beings what they may be in cooperation with God. He came to shine amidst the darkness, to dispel the darkness by the brightness of His presence. . . . {RC 16.4}

And “when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son.” . . . The heavenly Teacher had come. Who was He? No less a being than the Son of God Himself. He appeared as God, and at the same time as the Elder Brother of the human race.—*Signs of the Times*, May 17, 1905. {RC 16.7}

Satan was exulting that he had succeeded in debasing the image of God in humanity. Then Jesus came to restore in man the image of his Maker. None but Christ can fashion anew the character that has been ruined by sin. He came to expel the demons that had controlled the will. He came to lift us up from the dust, to reshape the marred character after the pattern of His divine character, and to make it beautiful with His own glory. {DA 37.3}

When Adam fell, provision was made for his restoration. In due time Jesus, the Prince of life, came to our world to enter into controversy with the powers of darkness. In this world Satan had an opportunity to exhibit the result of the working out of his principles of freedom from all law, and Christ, by His unswerving obedience to His Father’s commandments, made manifest the result of practicing the principles of righteousness. {1SM 347.4}

Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which, through the grace of Christ, the soul becomes a conquering power. {MH 62.2}

Where there is not only a belief in God’s Word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God. {AG 137.5}

True faith and true prayer—how strong they are! They are as two arms by which the human suppliant lays hold upon the power of Infinite Love. Faith is trusting in God,—believing that He loves us, and knows what is for our best good. Thus, instead of our own way, it leads us to choose His way. In place of our ignorance, it accepts His wisdom; in place of our weakness, His strength; in place of our sinfulness, His righteousness. Our lives, ourselves, are already His; faith acknowledges His ownership, and accepts its blessings. Truth, uprightness, purity, are pointed out as secrets of life’s success. It is faith that puts us in possession of these. Every good impulse

or aspiration is the gift of God; faith receives from God the life that alone can produce true growth and efficiency. {GW 259.2}

God's dealings with rebellion will result in fully unmasking the work that has so long been carried on under cover. The results of Satan's rule, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, will be laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The law of God will stand fully vindicated. It will be seen that all the dealings of God have been conducted with reference to the eternal good of His people, and the good of all the worlds that He has created. Satan himself, in the presence of the witnessing universe, will confess the justice of God's government and the righteousness of His law. {PP 338.4}

So long as the people of God preserve their fidelity to Him, so long as they cling by living faith to Jesus, they are under the protection of heavenly angels, and Satan will not be permitted to exercise his hellish arts upon them to their destruction. {OHC 92.5}

It is the greatest joy of the angels of heaven to spread the shield of their tender love over souls who turn to God. {OHC 92.6}

It is Satan's work to fill men's hearts with doubt. He leads them to look upon God as a stern judge. He tempts them to sin, and then to regard themselves as too vile to approach their heavenly Father or to excite His pity. The Lord understands all this. Jesus assures His disciples of God's sympathy for them in their needs and weaknesses. Not a sigh is breathed, not a pain felt, not a grief pierces the soul, but the throb vibrates to the Father's heart. {DA 356.2}

You are not working alone. When you are tempted to become discouraged, remember this: Angels of God are right around you. They will minister to the very earth, causing it to give forth its treasures. {UL 130.7}

Those who surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service will never be placed in a position for which He has not made provision. Whatever our situation, if we are doers of His word, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexity, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. {MH 248.2}

The enemy can never take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding. What privileges we have in Christ Jesus! {SD 351.4}

Recommended Reading: *Desire of Ages* Chapter 3 – “The Fullness of the time”

<https://egwwritings.org>