

# PATIENCE vs. RESTLESSNESS

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***PATIENCE IS WELCOMING TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS AS FRIENDS AND ALLOWING THEM TO PERFECT OUR CHARACTER.***

## **DEFINITION OF PATIENCE**

The word *patience* presupposes an adverse situation that must be endured. Thus, patience is accepting a difficult situation from God without giving Him a deadline to remove it.

The Hebrew word *chiyl* is used in the verse “rest in the LORD and wait patiently for him” (Psalm 37:7). This word means “to writhe in pain as in bringing forth a child, to bear, to bring forth, to be sorrowful, and to travail.”

In Psalm 40:1, David used a different Hebrew word with the same underlying connotation. “I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.” The word he used here is *apavah*. It means “to bind together, to tarry, to expect.”

Two primary Greek words are translated *patience*. *Hupomone* is a word that comes from *hupo*, which means “under,” and *meno*, which means “to stay or remain.” It means “to endure with cheerfulness, and to be constant.” Its root meaning is “to undergo and to bear trials, to have fortitude, to preserve.”

The second word is *makrothumeo*. It means, “to be forbearing, long-spirited, and longsuffering.” It is by faith and *makrothumeo* that we inherit the promises of God (See Hebrews 6:12).

## **HOW IS PATIENCE DEVELOPED?**

Patience is a reward for properly responding to trials and tribulations. Therefore, Paul wrote: “We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh **patience**, and **patience**, experience, and experience, hope” (Romans 5:3-4).

In order to “glory” in tribulations, we must thank God for them and rejoice in the benefits that He designed them to produce. The end result of glorying in tribulations is that we experience the power of God’s love through the power (*dunamis*) of His Holy Spirit. “Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans 5:5).

Paul reaffirms this in his letter to the Corinthian believers: “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong” (II Corinthians 12:9-10).

The development of patience through tribulations is also confirmed by James: “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh **patience**. But let **patience** have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing” (James 1:2-4).

The Greek word for *perfect* is *teleios*. It means “complete (in various applications of labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc.).”

## **TRIBULATION IS NECESSARY FOR PATIENCE**

Scripture identifies Job as an ultimate example of patience. “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the **patience** of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy” (James 5:11).

The trials Job endured were classic examples of disasters. “There came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

“While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

“While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped to tell thee.

“While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee” (Job 1:14-19).

In this response, we see the following perfection of character.

1. Tribulation produced humility. - Job “arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down...”
2. Tribulation increased reverence. - Job “fell down upon the ground and worshipped.”
3. Tribulation prompted meekness. - “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb.”
4. Tribulation clarified priorities. - “Naked shall I return thither.”
5. Tribulation caused gratefulness. - “The Lord gave.”
6. Tribulation strengthened discernment. - “The Lord hath taken away”(not Satan, although he carried it out).
7. Tribulation resulted in honor. - “Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

## **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ANGUISH IN PATIENCE**

The quality of patience presupposes suffering and anguish. It is in the definition of the words.

The trials and tribulations requiring patience have a purifying effect on those who endure them. Peter emphasizes this. “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you” (I Peter 5:10).

The suffering we are to endure with patience also powerfully benefits the lives of those who watch our faith grow through trials.

Paul explains that the more we experience suffering and death, the more power we will have to impart life to others. “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

“For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you” (II Corinthians 4:7-12).

Paul uses this same Hebrew word for patience to describe bringing others to salvation and to maturity in the Christian life. “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you” (Galatians 4:19).

## **WHY PATIENCE IS NECESSARY**

1. To see the end of the wicked - “Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass” (Psalm 37:7).
2. To produce a good harvest - “But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15).
3. To possess our souls - “In your patience possess ye your souls” (Luke 21:19).

4. To seek after glory and honor - “To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life” (Romans 2:7).
5. To be approved for ministry - “But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses” (II Corinthians 6:4).
6. To prepare for Christ - “And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ” (II Thess. 3:5). Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming for the Lord draweth nigh” (James 5:7).
7. To be a qualified leader - “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient” (II Tim. 2:24).
8. To run a good race - “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1).

## **THE REWARDS OF PATIENCE**

1. Seeing God answer our cries - “I waited patiently for the LORD: and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry” (Psalm 40:1).
2. Having hope in the Lord - “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4).
3. Being renewed with strength - “Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” (Colossians 1:11). “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” (Isaiah 40:31).
4. Inheriting God’s promise - “That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises . . . And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise” (Hebrews 6:12-15). “For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise” (Hebrews 10:36).
5. Becoming a mature believer - “But let patience have her perfect work, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing” (James 1:4).
6. Gaining God’s approval - “For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God” (I Peter 2:20).

In the instruction that James gives to be patient, he emphasizes both the importance of it and the rewards from it. “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

“Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh . . . Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy” (James 5:7-11).

After Job successfully passed the test of persecution, God rewarded him with double of everything that he lost.

## **HOW PATIENT ARE YOU?**

- Do you realize that the final results of life's situations are in God's hands?
- Do you use waiting on others as an opportunity to learn to wait on God?
- Do you take time to listen to God's voice when you pray?
- Do you wait for God to answer your prayers in His timing?
- Do you fulfill your responsibilities while waiting on the Lord or others?
- Do you look to the face of God while waiting for provisions from His hand?
- Do you joyfully endure pain and suffering?
- Do you patiently instruct those for whom you are responsible?
- Do you rejoice in trials instead of becoming bitter?