

THE WAIT

FACILITATOR GUIDE

What is your favorite weather season of the year—spring, summer, fall, winter? Why?

Each of us have our personal preference when it comes to weather. But no matter how much we dread a particular time, the calendar does march on and we find the seasons changing nonetheless. Like the changing winds, we must endure the changing seasons.

The Bible makes it clear that we even go through spiritual seasons of change as well. One of those seasons is the time of waiting. Those times when God seems so far away. Look at these words as penned by David, a man who God said was “after His own heart.”

Psalm 22:1-2—My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.

Describe David’s thoughts in one word. [Abandoned, separated, deserted, desperate, depressed, etc.]

Have you ever experienced the silence of God? If so, how did you feel at the time?

Verse 1 is a prophetic verse. It is a direct quote also spoken by another person. Who else said those same words? [Jesus while he was on the cross= Mark 15:34—And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”]

How does it make you feel to know that Jesus understands how you feel when God is silent?

What is your least favorite weather season of the year? Why?

When it is your least favorite season, do you think that nature stops working just because you don't see the evidence? Actually, what takes place in one season, helps to usher in the next season. Likewise, when you are a spiritual "season of wait," know that Jesus has not stopped interceding on your behalf. He is just using the time to set things up for your blessing!

While you are **WAITING**, God is **WORKING**!

THE 400 YEARS OF SILENCE

From the end of the last book of the Old Testament to the beginning of the New Testament, God sent no prophets, had no "authorized" Scripture written, and proclaimed no Word for His people. In the last chapter of Malachi (the last book of the OT), the prophet writes:

Malachi 4— For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. 2 But for you who fear My name, the Sun of Righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. 3 And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts. 4 Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. 5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. 6 And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.

What will happen to the evildoers on that day? [Verse 1—They will be burned.]

What does the phrase "you shall go out leaping like calves from the stall" mean? [Happy, carefree, playful, etc.]

Who will be the ones that feel that way? [Those who believe and fear the name of the Lord.]

What are the laws of Moses that verse 4 tells us to remember? [The Ten Commandments God doesn't mean for us to forget His commands just because we are carefree and happy. Real happiness can be found in keeping the Laws of God.]

God promises in the last few verses of the Old Testament that He would send an "Elijah" to be a forerunner before Christ. Who was Elijah? What kind of person was he? Jonathan Cahn, in his book **The Paradigm**, states:

“Elijah was a man uncompromised, undivided, single-minded, and focused. Others had compromised with the evil of their day and had disqualified themselves as being used of God. But Elijah went in the opposite direction. The more evil the culture became, the more strongly he stood. And it was this radical and uncompromised stand that allowed him to change the course of his nation.”

This describes a man who is passionate about standing strong in the middle of those who would oppose God!

It was widely believed among the Jews of New Testament times that the prophet Elijah would come back to earth prior to the coming of the Messiah or Christ. However, some of those who heard Jesus believed that He was ‘the promised Elijah’ who would come before the Messiah (see Matthew 16:13-14). Jesus made it quite clear that John the Baptist had performed the role of Elijah by preparing the way for Jesus Himself.

Here we are in 2020, looking and waiting for the second coming of Jesus. How might we, believers in Christ, fulfill that role of Elijah today? [We should be unmovable in our beliefs. We must be willing to oppose those who would make laws that go against the commands of God.]

According to Jonathan Cahn, how did others disqualify themselves from being used by God? [They compromised their Godly beliefs with the beliefs of the evildoers of their day.]

Even when God is silent and we are in a state of waiting, we need to remember God’s laws and refuse to compromise our faith. The remnant of believers that had remained faithful during the 400 years of silence, passed their faith to the generations that followed. Those who were still heeding the law and looking for Messiah were able to recognize Jesus when He finally made is arrival on earth.

FIVE THINGS

Waiting on God doesn’t mean sitting back and doing nothing. Here are five things to do while waiting on God:

1. TRUST while patiently waiting on God

Cling to a special Scripture that brings you hope during your wait. In case you don’t have one, here’s a good one to remember:

Micah 7:7—I trust the Lord God to save me, and I will wait for him to answer my prayer.

2. Pursue your **FAITH** while patiently waiting on God

It is easy to become angry and bitter when you are waiting on God. You may even run from Him because you think He has left you. In reality, you need God then more than ever.

Don't run **AWAY FROM**, but run **TO** God and surround yourself with His people.

3. **SERVE OTHERS** while patiently waiting on God

Don't consider it beneath you to do the smallest of things for others. God is watching how you are responding to others and Him during your time of waiting. God may not allow you to move forward with the next assignment until you do this one with a good attitude. Remember, God has a way of giving you the same test over and over until you pass it.

4. Be **WATCHFUL** and **EXPECTANT** while patiently waiting on God

God answers prayers in amazing ways but rarely does He answer them exactly the way you imagine. Trust His ways are better because He sees the whole picture.

5. Be **GRATEFUL** while patiently waiting on God

Many times we become hyper-focused on one issue that we forget to look around and see what God has already done in our lives.

List some of the blessings that God has given you in the past.

After you have considered your blessings here, write them down on small pieces of paper or post-its and leave around your house or car to remind you of what God has done for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 —Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Lamentations 3:21-25—But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: 22 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. 24 “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in Him.” 25 The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him.

DELAYED

What have you been waiting for God to do in your life?

What has been your response to the wait?

How have you seen God work in your life when you have had to trust His timing and not your own?

What can you do to slow things down in your life so that you learn patience and trust?

Apply this to your time of waiting:

Remember that a DELAY is not a DENIAL.

When you think God is saying no, he may just be saying, “Not yet. Will you keep trusting me through this?” That is the kind of faith that God blesses.

PRAYER TIME

As you pray, consider these prayer points:

- Thank God for your faith journey. Acknowledge that you know He is in control and knows what is best for you.
- Make your requests known to God and then tell Him that you place it in His hands and wait for His perfect timing.
- Ask God to help you remain faithful during your times of waiting. Ask Him to show you how you should respond during the wait.