

I Was So Tired of Praying I Almost Gave Up

I've been praying for a specific financial need related to my overseas ministry for several years. Missionary work is a challenge because 1) I'm certainly not a professional fundraiser, and 2) most people don't spend a lot of time thinking about needs in developing countries.

Eventually I hit a spiritual wall. I was discouraged. I had prayed and prayed and prayed again. Yet it seemed like the promised provision was just trickling in. I needed a miracle, but I felt too exhausted to keep fighting.

Thankfully a friend of mine who is an intercessor kept encouraging me with words of hope. I decided to fast and pray for a few days, and then my wife and a few other intercessors joined in for a time of fasting and focused prayer. I also texted several other friends who agreed to pray with me for a breakthrough. Much as Aaron and Hur held up Moses' arms, my friends stood with me.

I parked in Matthew 7:7 (NASB) and meditated on those words often. This verse says: "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." Jesus gave us this iron-clad promise. But notice He didn't spell out a time frame about when prayers are answered. He didn't say, "Ask, and it will be given to you in two weeks," or "Seek, and you will find in 24 hours." We must leave the timing of the answer in God's hands.

Thankfully, after my friends prayed with my wife and me about the financial need during the month of May, a dam broke. Money began to flow. Over a period of weeks enough funds came in to complete several of our overseas projects. Half the budget was met in a matter of days. And my faith grew stronger in the

process.

Waiting is so painful. We want the answer now! But we forget that patience is part of the process of receiving answers from God. Never forget that many people in the Bible waited a long time for God's promises to be fulfilled:

– Sarah waited 25 years from the time God told Abraham that he and his wife would have a son until the day Isaac was born.

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– Moses waited 40 years in the wilderness before God called him to deliver Israel from the Egyptians.

– Caleb waited 45 years from the time God promised him that Israel would take Canaan until the moment he received Hebron as his inheritance.

– Hannah endured unspecified years of barrenness waiting for her baby, Samuel.

– David waited at least 15 years from the time he was anointed to be a leader until he became king.

It was David who wrote these words during his long delay: "I waited patiently *and* expectantly for the Lord; and He inclined to me and heard my cry" (Ps. 40:1, AMP). God gives us a promise—that's the easy part. But faith is also warfare. The devil hurls doubts and obstacles in our direction. And there are always, always delays. It is in those painful times of waiting when we are most tempted to quit.

Are you waiting for a prayer to be answered? Have you considered throwing in the towel?

Zerubbabel and Joshua, the two men commissioned to rebuild Solomon's temple, struggled with intense discouragement as they looked at Jerusalem's ruins. The task was overwhelming,

the cost was prohibitive, the workers were dismayed and their enemies were fierce.

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They started the work in earnest, but they heard a familiar voice that whispered, "You'll never finish this. God is going to abandon you in the middle of this project."

Fortunately, the prophet Haggai showed up with a refreshing announcement. He told them: "'But now take courage ... and work; for I am with you,' declares the Lord" (Hag. 2:4, NASB).

The Lord promised He would see the building project to completion. He said: "The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former ... and in this place I will give peace" (v. 9).

Those prophetic promises propelled Zerubbabel and Joshua forward. Their passion was refueled. Their hands grew strong again, and they returned to the work. God's glorious house arose from an ash heap.

Many of us today are weary. Budgets are tight, resistance is strong and people seem distracted and disunified in these polarizing times. The devil is busy trying to abort God's promises. You may have been tempted even this week to resign from your assignment.

But I want to encourage you with the words of Haggai: "Take courage! The Lord is with you!"

Regardless of what you lack, the Lord's mighty presence is all you need to finish the task. Keep asking, keep seeking and keep knocking. It is through faith and patience that we receive God's promises.

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Spirit is doing around the world!

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