

Waiting on the Lord -The Test of Life

by Philip H. Page, Jr.

As I write this article about waiting, it's important for me to describe my current situation. It's December of 2002 and my Christmas joy is restrained by the fact that I am unemployed. This is the second time in two years and it's really getting old. I have submitted about 100 applications for jobs in the past two months, but to no avail. To make matters worse, my wife and I have just looked at our monthly budget and, unless God intervenes in a supernatural way, we're going to be short by about \$177. And that figure is after we've cut out all discretionary spending (including Christmas gifts) and slashed our grocery budget.

At this point, the last thing I want to hear from God is a message about waiting so I turn to 1 Samuel to read about an early victory for Saul and the Israelites. (There's nothing like the wayward Israelites to make a modern day Christian feel justified in any situation.) After reading a few chapters, an obscure passage about Saul's preparation for battle caught my eye.

Some Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul remained at Gilgal, and all the troops with him were quaking with fear. He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter. So he said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings." And Saul offered up the burnt offering. Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul

From the Author of ***Getting Up Again – Surviving Unemployment and Pursuing Destiny***

went out to greet him. "What have you done?" asked Samuel. Saul replied, "When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the LORD's favor.' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering." "You acted foolishly," Samuel said. "You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command."

1 Samuel 13:7 – 13.

As with all scripture, there are many points that can be brought out. But the thing that most captivated me was the severe punishment Saul received for just being in a hurry. After all, this was a battle against those pesky Philistines and Samuel was late. After meditating on this scripture, however, it became clear to me that Saul's sin exposed more than just a lack of patience. Saul's affront to God was that his faith was not in God but rather in the 'act' of sacrificing. To put it another way, Saul wanted God to be like Aladdin's genie in the lamp rather than the all-knowing, all-loving Creator of mankind.

The more I think about it, the more I realize that this 'test of waiting' is very common today. God often puts us in a situation where we have to wait in order to reveal our faith level. I see this very clearly in my own life as I apply for multiple jobs on a daily basis. As unemployment progressed, I spent more time on job applications and less on my

Copyright 2009 Philip H. Page, Jr.

This document is solely for the personal use and motivation of the reader. No reproduction, copying or storage in a retrieval system shall be allowed without the express written permission of the Author.

From the Author of *Getting Up Again – Surviving Unemployment and Pursuing Destiny*

morning devotions. The frustration of a rejection letter (or, even worse, no letter at all) caused me to lose hope. Out of desperation, I rushed the process by sending more letters, which caused more rejection and ultimately more desperation.

An Empowerment Tool for *Getting the Most Out of Life*

My sin, like Saul's, is that my faith was in the process of applying for jobs rather than in the Creator of all things. It's as if I believed that the text of my resume and the eloquence of my cover letter would get me a job. All the while, God was reminding me of Hebrews 11:3, "*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear*". In other words, my next job or promotion will be a direct result of my faith in God. Period. So the only way to rush the process is to increase my level of faith through the reading of His word.

Finally, it's important to remember Samuel's rebuke of Saul in order to realize the gravity of the offense. Verse 13 says "*But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command.*" Of course, this does not predict doom for any of us who have fallen in this sin. Thanks to the forgiveness found in the New Testament, we simply need to acknowledge our sin (repent) and turn away. God is faithful and just to forgive us. And the next time you get tired of the test of waiting, remember that weeping will endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. The only way to know when morning comes is to keep your eye on the Son.

Copyright 2009 Philip H. Page, Jr.

This document is solely for the personal use and motivation of the reader. No reproduction, copying or storage in a retrieval system shall be allowed without the express written permission of the Author.