

PATIENCE FUELED BY FAITH

SIMPLY TEACHING THE WORD SIMPLY—PASTOR CHUCK SMITH

This article was edited by permission and taken from the book *Faith* by the late Pastor Chuck Smith of CC Costa Mesa, CA.



Years ago when my Sunday school teacher would ask us to name the most patient man who ever lived, we children always knew that it was Job.

Since ancient times, Job has been known for his patience because he endured such terrible afflictions. But the secret of patience is faith, for patience is merely an outgrowth of faith. Though he did not understand the calamities that had befallen him, Job's beliefs about God enabled him to endure his intense sufferings with patience. And what did Job believe that caused him to have such great patience?

Job believed that God was in control of all the circumstances of his life. When he received word of the loss of his cattle, his possessions, and all 10 of his children, he fell on his face and worshiped God.

Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. JOB 1:21

Job remained confident that God was in control of every circumstance of his life. God is in control of your circumstances, whether they seem to be of benefit or of pain. Nothing happens to you except what God has allowed.

When Job's wife saw his miserable condition, she told him to curse God and die. But Job replied, ***"Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?"*** (Job 2:10b).

Job knew there was One who stood for him in heaven. ***"Surely even now my witness is in heaven,"*** he declared (Job 16:19a). In Hebrew, the word translated "witness" is more literally, "the one who vouches for me."

Somehow, despite his awful circumstances, Job knew that God was for him. This conviction allowed Job to triumph over his trial. His utterances of faith were flashes of light in the darkness of his grim circumstances.

The Redeemer

In faith, Job also declared, ***"For I know that my Redeemer lives"*** (Job 19:25a). The word "redeemer" in Hebrew is an interesting term. It's the word *goel*. It describes the person who would stand by your side in the day of calamity or trouble, the one who would support and defend you, no matter what.

In those days, if you could not pay a debt and your creditor took you to court, you would be sold as a slave to repay the debt. But if you had a *goel*, he would pay your debt so that you could be freed from slavery. If you bought a house and couldn't make the payments and your house landed in foreclo-

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sure, your *goel* would come and pay off the mortgage. The *goel* settled the obligations you could not meet. He was your redeemer.

By this point in his story, Job stood alone. His wife, brothers, family, friends, acquaintances, and servants had all turned against him. Every earthly support was taken from him, leaving him totally abandoned—but not quite. He declared, ***"I know that my Redeemer"***—the One who stands with me and who stands for me—I know He lives. ***"And that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth"*** (from Job 19:25). Job believed that his *Goel* lived, and that even though his body would return to the dust, yet in his flesh he would see God.

Job had a glorious hope of one day seeing his Lord establish the righteous kingdom of God upon the earth. In the midst of his agony, he focused on his Redeemer, his *Goel*,

and so Job began to experience the triumph of faith.

When everything shakes and the earth around us crumbles, we must stand upon certain foundational truths:

- *God loves us* (Jeremiah 31:3).
- *God keeps us, and He will neither slumber nor sleep* (Psalm 121:4).
- *God will preserve us* (Deuteronomy 6:24).
- *God will cause us to come forth triumphant* (2 Corinthians 2:14).
- *We need to know our God* (John 17:3).

As Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 1:12b, ***"I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day."***

Paul was able to endure the stonings, beatings, and shipwrecks because he knew in whom he believed. He had placed his trust in the Living God, and therefore he could wait with confidence for God to bring him through triumphantly.

One of the hardest Scriptures for me to obey is, ***"Wait on the LORD"*** (Psalm 27:14; 37:34). I don't want to wait on the Lord—I want to see it done now. What I need is more patience. And what creates patience? Faith. Faith in God enables us to wait for the purposes of God to be fulfilled.

Rather than praying for patience, pray for faith. "Lord, increase my faith that I might truly understand that I have One who stands for me in heaven—my Redeemer. You're in control of the circumstances of my life, even though I cannot and do not understand why I'm experiencing this awful pain and suffering. I have faith that You're going to work things out for Your eternal plan and purposes." That's patience fueled by the triumph of faith. 🙌