**SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS (MARCH 23 - MARCH 29, 2024)**

**Lesson 13- Wait on the Lord**

**Memory Text:**

**“Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!” (Psalms 27:14).**

**SABBATH AND SUNDAY 5 IMPORTANT POINTS:**

**Sunday Lesson Title: The Call of Waiting**

1. **Waiting on the Lord as an Act of Faith**: Waiting on the Lord isn't passive but an active expression of faith and trust in God's promises. It involves perseverance and a deep longing for God, even amidst life's challenges and uncertainties (Psalms 27:14; Psalms 37:7; Romans 8:18-25).
2. **Transformation Through Waiting**: Waiting on the Lord transforms our perspective, turning gloomy evenings into expectant mornings. It strengthens our hearts, renews hope, and motivates us to work diligently in God's mission fields, assured of His faithfulness (Psalms 30:5; Psalms 126:6; Matthew 9:36-38).
3. **Confidence in God's Faithfulness**: Waiting on the Lord is rooted in the confidence that God is faithful to His promises. Though we may not see immediate results, we trust that God will work things out for our best. Our waiting is marked by a refusal to succumb to fear or doubt (Psalms 37:9; Psalms 37:34; Psalms 71:1; Psalms 119:137-138).
4. **Anticipation of Ultimate Salvation**: As Christians, we wait not only for temporal blessings but for the ultimate fulfillment of salvation and reunion with God. This anticipation is marked by the assurance of Christ's first coming as the surety of His second coming. We eagerly await the renewal of the world and the blessed meeting with God (Romans 8:19; Mark 16:1-8).
5. **Active Witness While Waiting**: While awaiting the culmination of our hope in the new creation, we are called to actively bear witness to the plan of salvation. This witness is empowered by the Holy Spirit and is integral to the fulfillment of God's ultimate purpose for humanity (Acts 1:4-8; 2 Peter 1:19).

**Discussion Questions:**

1. **How does waiting on the Lord differ from simply enduring difficulties or challenges in life? What mindset or attitude distinguishes waiting on God?**

Answer: Waiting on the Lord involves an active trust and faith in God's promises rather than merely enduring circumstances. The distinction lies in the mindset of expectancy and hope despite challenges. Waiting on God entails a surrendered attitude, acknowledging His sovereignty and timing, whereas enduring difficulties may lack the anticipation of God's intervention or provision.

1. **In what ways can the concept of waiting on the Lord be practically applied in our daily lives? Can you share a personal experience where waiting on God brought about transformation or renewal?**

Answer: Waiting on the Lord can be practically applied by seeking His guidance through prayer, patiently trusting His timing, and actively aligning our actions with His will. Personal experiences of waiting on God may include seasons of uncertainty where reliance on His promises led to unexpected blessings or personal growth, demonstrating the transformative power of trusting in His providence.

1. **The lesson highlights the idea of persevering in faith while waiting for God's promises to unfold. How can we cultivate perseverance in our spiritual journey, especially during seasons of prolonged waiting or uncertainty?**

Answer: Cultivating perseverance in our spiritual journey involves nurturing a deep relationship with God through consistent prayer, studying His Word, and seeking fellowship with other believers. During seasons of waiting or uncertainty, focusing on God's faithfulness in past experiences and maintaining hope in His promises can sustain perseverance. Additionally, relying on the support and encouragement of fellow believers can strengthen our resolve to wait faithfully on the Lord.

1. **The memory text encourages us to "wait on the Lord" with courage. How does courage intersect with waiting on God, and what role does it play in sustaining our faith during times of waiting?**

Answer: Courage intersects with waiting on God by enabling us to face uncertainties and challenges with confidence in His faithfulness. It involves trusting in God's sovereignty and provision, even when circumstances seem daunting. Courage sustains our faith during times of waiting by bolstering our resolve to persevere and reminding us that God is with us every step of the way, strengthening our hearts as we wait on Him.

**MONDAY 3 IMPORTANT POINTS:**

**Lesson Title:** **Peace of a Weaned Child**

1. **Humility in Relationship with God**: Psalm 131 teaches us about the importance of humility in our relationship with God. The psalmist acknowledges his dependence on God, contrasting this humility with the deceitfulness of pride. Humility allows us to lift our eyes to God's greatness, freeing us from self-centeredness and vain ambition (Psalms 131:1-2).
2. **Trusting in God's Nourishment**: The metaphor of a weaned child with its mother illustrates a deep sense of calmness and trust in God's embrace. By weaning us from insubstantial ambitions and pride, God introduces us to the nourishment of solid spiritual food. This involves doing the will of God and maturing in faith through life's trials (Psalms 131:2; John 4:34; Hebrews 5:12-14).
3. **Strengthening God's Church Through Witness**: The psalmist's focus on the well-being of God's people emphasizes the role of personal experience with God in strengthening the church. By sharing our experiences of God's faithfulness and goodness, we can help others who are still struggling in their faith. This witness extends even within the church community, fostering deeper relationships with Christ (Psalms 131:3).

**Discussion Questions:**

1. **What is the significance of humility in our relationship with God, as depicted in Psalm 131? How does pride hinder our ability to fully trust in God's provision and guidance?**

Answer: Humility allows us to acknowledge our dependence on God and recognize His greatness. Pride, on the other hand, blinds us to the reality of God and prevents us from seeking His will. It hinders our ability to trust in God's provision and guidance by focusing our attention inward rather than lifting our eyes to God's sovereignty.

1. **How does the metaphor of a weaned child with its mother convey trust and calmness in God's embrace? What spiritual significance does this metaphor hold for believers in cultivating a deeper relationship with God?**

Answer: The metaphor portrays a sense of calmness and trust in God's care and provision, similar to a child finding comfort in its mother's embrace. It signifies the maturity of faith that comes from being weaned from worldly ambitions and fully trusting in God's nourishment. Believers can deepen their relationship with God by embracing this trust and allowing Him to sustain them spiritually.

1. **In what ways can personal experiences of God's faithfulness and goodness strengthen the church, as mentioned in Psalm 131:3? How can believers effectively share their experiences to encourage others in their faith journey?**

Answer: Personal experiences of God's faithfulness serve as powerful testimonies within the church community, inspiring others and fostering unity. By sharing these experiences, believers can encourage and uplift those who may be struggling in their faith. Effective sharing involves authenticity, vulnerability, and a willingness to listen and empathize with others' experiences, ultimately strengthening the bonds of fellowship within the church.

**TUESDAY 3 IMPORTANT POINTS:**

**Title: Bringing in the Sheaves**

1. **Drawing Strength and Hope from Past Deliverances**: Psalm 126 highlights the importance of remembering and cherishing God's past deliverances as a source of strength and hope for the future. Despite present challenges or captivity, reflecting on God's miraculous interventions in the past rejuvenates faith and inspires hope for present circumstances (Psalms 126:1-3).
2. **Renewed Hope in Divine Intervention**: The metaphor of "streams in the south" symbolizes God's sudden and powerful intervention on behalf of His people. Just as arid desert regions experience sudden floods after heavy rainfall, God's intervention can bring unexpected blessings and renewal in seemingly barren situations (Psalms 126:4; Deuteronomy 11:14; Deuteronomy 28:12).
3. **Harvest Motif and Spiritual Lessons**: The imagery of sowing in tears and reaping in joy underscores the spiritual journey from present trials to future salvation. Similar to the agricultural process of sowing and harvesting, God's people undergo trials with the assurance of a joyful harvest at the end of time, symbolizing the restoration of God's kingdom (Psalms 126:5-6; Matthew 9:37).

**Discussion Questions:**

1. **How can reflecting on past experiences of God's deliverance and intervention strengthen our faith and hope in present challenges? What practices or habits can help us actively remember and draw inspiration from these experiences?**

Answer: Reflecting on past experiences of God's faithfulness reminds us of His enduring presence and power in our lives. Practices such as journaling, sharing testimonies within the faith community, and incorporating gratitude into daily prayers can help us actively remember and draw inspiration from these experiences. Additionally, regular engagement with Scripture and meditation on God's past works can deepen our faith and hope in present challenges.

1. **What does the metaphor of "streams in the south" teach us about God's ability to intervene suddenly and powerfully in seemingly barren situations? How can we maintain hope and trust in God's timing when faced with prolonged difficulties or waiting periods?**

Answer: The metaphor illustrates God's capacity to bring unexpected blessings and renewal in times of hardship, akin to sudden floods transforming arid desert regions. To maintain hope and trust in God's timing during prolonged difficulties, we can cultivate patience through prayer, seeking guidance from Scripture, and fostering a supportive community of believers. Recognizing that God's timing is sovereign and aligning our desires with His will can help us persevere with hope and trust.

1. **How does the harvest motif in Psalm 126 parallel the spiritual journey of God's people and the promise of future salvation? What significance does waiting play in this journey, and how can we cultivate patience while awaiting the fulfillment of God's promises?**

Answer: The harvest motif symbolizes the spiritual journey from trials and tears to eventual joy and salvation. Just as the labor of sowing precedes the joy of harvest, God's people endure present trials with the assurance of future redemption and restoration. Waiting plays a crucial role in this journey, reminding us to trust in God's faithfulness and sovereignty. Cultivating patience involves surrendering our timelines to God, maintaining a posture of prayerful expectancy, and finding strength in the assurance of His promises.

**WEDNESDAY 3 IMPORTANT POINTS:**

**Title:** **Waiting in God’s Sabbath Rest**

1. **Commemoration of Creation and Redemption**: Psalm 92 highlights two central aspects of the Sabbath: commemoration of Creation and redemption from evil. The psalm praises God for His great works of Creation and sustenance, emphasizing His victory over enemies and role as the God of justice, which reinforces the themes of Creation and redemption inherent in the Sabbath (Psalms 92:1-15; Deuteronomy 5:12-15).
2. **Renewed Devotion and Consecration**: The imagery of "fresh oil" symbolizes the psalmist's renewed devotion to serve God and be consecrated as His servant. By using the term "balal," typically associated with the mixing of oil in sacrifices, the psalmist conveys a deeper commitment to consecrate his whole self to God, presenting himself as a living sacrifice (Psalms 92:10; Romans 12:1).
3. **Sabbath Rest as Covenant Sign and Source of Hope**: The Sabbath serves as a sign of God's eternal covenant with His people, signifying His sanctification of them. The imagery of palm trees and cedars of Lebanon portrays God's people growing in faith and appreciation of His purposes and love, while Sabbath rest empowers them to trustingly wait upon the Lord to fulfill His covenantal promises (Psalms 92:12-15; Exodus 31:13; Hebrews 4:1-10).

**Discussion Questions:**

1. **How does Psalm 92 portray God's role as both Creator and Redeemer, and why is this significant in understanding the Sabbath day? How does reflecting on God's past acts of Creation and redemption impact our worship and Sabbath observance today?**

Answer: Psalm 92 emphasizes God's great works of Creation and redemption, underscoring His sovereignty over all aspects of life. Understanding God as both Creator and Redeemer deepens our appreciation for the Sabbath, as it commemorates these foundational aspects of our faith. Reflecting on God's past acts of Creation and redemption inspires gratitude and reverence in our worship, reminding us of His power and faithfulness throughout history and encouraging faithful Sabbath observance.

1. **What does the imagery of "fresh oil" and the psalmist's consecration signify in the context of Sabbath rest? How can we apply the concept of consecration in our own lives as we observe the Sabbath?**

Answer: The imagery of "fresh oil" symbolizes the psalmist's renewed devotion and consecration to serve God. It signifies a deep commitment to present oneself as a living sacrifice to the Lord. As we observe the Sabbath, we can apply the concept of consecration by dedicating ourselves afresh to God, surrendering our desires and ambitions to His will, and seeking His guidance in every aspect of our lives. This involves yielding to His leading and allowing His Spirit to work in and through us during Sabbath rest.

1. **How does the Sabbath serve as a source of hope and empowerment for God's people, according to Psalm 92? How can we find comfort and strength in the promises of Sabbath rest, even amidst challenges or uncertainties in our lives?**

Answer: Psalm 92 portrays the Sabbath as a sign of God's eternal covenant with His people, empowering them to trustfully wait upon the Lord to fulfill His promises. The imagery of palm trees and cedars of Lebanon symbolizes growth in faith and appreciation of God's purposes. Even amidst challenges or uncertainties, we can find comfort and strength in the promises of Sabbath rest by recognizing God's sovereignty, trusting in His faithfulness, and drawing near to Him in worship and rest.

**THURSDAY 3 IMPORTANT POINTS:**

**Title: Joy Comes in the Morning**

1. **Morning Symbolizes Divine Redemption**: In the Psalms and biblical narratives, morning symbolizes the time of divine redemption and favor. It represents the end of darkness, despair, and trouble, ushering in the light of God's salvation and new beginnings (Psalms 130:5-6; Psalms 143:8). The morning signifies the transformation of weeping into joy and the reversal of death into life (Psalms 30:5; Mark 16:1-8).
2. **Resurrection Morning: Jesus' Victory Over Death**: The resurrection morning of Jesus Christ holds paramount importance as it signifies victory over death and the fulfillment of God's promise of salvation. Jesus' resurrection demonstrates the fulfillment of Psalms 30:5, where weeping gives way to joy. It is through God's favor and unconditional love that sorrow is turned into rejoicing (Psalms 30:7). Jesus' resurrection heralds the dawn of eternal life for believers, symbolized by the morning star (2 Peter 1:19).
3. **Hope in the Promise of Eternal Life**: The resurrection of Jesus promises believers the temporal nature of death. Through His victory over death, Jesus offers the assurance of eternal life to all who believe in Him. As Christians, we eagerly await the establishment of Christ's kingdom, where there will be no more darkness, evil, or death (Revelation 22:16). The promise of resurrection reminds us of the transient nature of death and the eternal hope we have in Christ.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. **How does the symbolism of morning in the Psalms and biblical narratives resonate with our experiences of redemption and new beginnings? Can you share a personal experience where you felt God's redemption and renewal during a metaphorical "morning" in your life?**

Answer: The symbolism of morning represents the transition from darkness to light, despair to hope, and sorrow to joy through divine redemption. Personal experiences of redemption may include moments of spiritual awakening, forgiveness, or deliverance from challenging circumstances, where God's presence brings a sense of new beginnings and restoration. Sharing these experiences can encourage others in their faith journey and testify to God's faithfulness.

1. **Why is the resurrection morning of Jesus Christ considered the pinnacle of hope for believers? How does Jesus' victory over death reassure us of the temporal nature of death and the promise of eternal life?**

Answer: The resurrection morning of Jesus Christ is pivotal as it signifies victory over death and the fulfillment of God's promise of salvation. Jesus' triumph over death assures believers of the transient nature of death and the promise of resurrection to eternal life. This event serves as the foundation of Christian hope, offering reassurance that death is not the end but a transition to everlasting life in Christ.

1. **In what ways does the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ impact our perspective on mortality and suffering? How can we maintain a steadfast hope in the face of trials, knowing that death is temporary and eternal life awaits us?**

Answer: The promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ provides comfort and reassurance in the midst of trials and suffering. By focusing on the hope of resurrection and the eternal kingdom, believers can endure present challenges with courage and perseverance. Cultivating a deep trust in God's promises, engaging in prayer and Scripture, and nurturing a supportive community of faith can help maintain steadfast hope in the face of adversity, knowing that death is temporary, and eternal life awaits beyond the veil.

**FRIDAY 5 IMPORTANT POINTS:**

**Title: Further Study**

1. **Fervent Appeals to Wait on the Lord**: The Psalms emphasize the importance of waiting patiently for the Lord's guidance and intervention (Psalms 37:7). Despite the challenges and uncertainties of waiting, biblical examples like the disciples on the day of Jesus' ascension demonstrate the necessity of trusting in God's timing and promises (Acts 1:4-11).
2. **Dependence on the Holy Spirit**: Waiting on the Lord requires a transformation of the heart by the Holy Spirit. Human effort alone is insufficient to withstand the strain of waiting; only through abiding in Jesus Christ can believers find the strength and perseverance needed (Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 4:15).
3. **Spiritual Growth Through Waiting**: Waiting is not passive but an active process that fosters spiritual growth. Biblical heroes of faith endured seasons of waiting, which purified and strengthened their faith. Examples include Abraham's waiting for the promise of a son and the disciples' waiting for the Holy Spirit (Romans 4:19-22; Acts 1:12-14).
4. **The Promise at the End of Waiting**: The end of waiting is marked by the fulfillment of God's promises. In Psalms 37:34-40, believers are assured of God's justice and deliverance. This offers hope for the resolution of injustices and hardships, providing comfort to those who patiently wait on the Lord.
5. **Hope Beyond Death**: Despite the reality of physical death (Ecclesiastes 9:5), believers find hope in the promise of Christ's return. The waiting of the dead for Jesus is almost over, as they anticipate resurrection and eternal life. This hope reassures believers that death is not the end, but a transition to everlasting life in Christ.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. **Why is waiting significant in our spiritual life? Discuss the experiences of waiting of some biblical heroes of faith. How did waiting purify and strengthen their faith?** (Romans 4:19-22; Hebrews 11:1-40).

Answer: Waiting is significant in our spiritual life because it cultivates patience, trust, and reliance on God's timing and sovereignty. Biblical heroes of faith endured seasons of waiting, which purified and strengthened their faith. For example, Abraham and Sarah waited many years for the fulfillment of God's promise of a son, Isaac. Despite their doubts and struggles, their faith was ultimately strengthened as they witnessed God's faithfulness. Similarly, Hebrews 11 recounts the stories of various individuals who waited faithfully for God's promises to be fulfilled, even in the face of adversity. Their experiences demonstrate that waiting is often a crucial part of God's plan for shaping and refining our faith.

1. **What is the end of our waiting? What are we promised when all things are finally resolved? What hope do we find in these texts, for instance, about the justice that has so long been missing in this life?** (Psalms 37:34-40).

Answer: The end of our waiting is marked by the fulfillment of God's promises. In Psalms 37:34-40, believers are assured that those who wait on the Lord will inherit the land and experience His salvation. This passage offers hope that the injustices and hardships of this life will be resolved through God's righteous judgment. Ultimately, the faithful will dwell in the presence of the Lord forever, enjoying His everlasting peace and prosperity. The promise of justice and deliverance provides comfort and assurance to those who patiently wait on the Lord, knowing that He will make all things right in His perfect timing.

1. **Why, as far as the dead are concerned, and as far as their own experience goes (Ecclesiastes 9:5), is their waiting for Jesus almost done? What hope can we take from the answer?**

Answer: Ecclesiastes 9:5 acknowledges the reality of physical death, stating that the dead are unaware of the events taking place on earth. However, for believers, their waiting for Jesus is almost done because of the promise of resurrection and eternal life. Despite the temporary nature of physical death, believers anticipate the return of Jesus, who will conquer death and bring about the resurrection of the dead. This hope assures believers that death is not the end but a transition to everlasting life in Christ.

1. **How does waiting on the Lord cultivate trust and reliance on His timing and sovereignty? Reflect on personal experiences or examples from Scripture where waiting led to a deeper trust in God's faithfulness.** (Isaiah 40:31; Genesis 21:1-7)

Answer: Waiting on the Lord cultivates trust and reliance on His timing and sovereignty by teaching us to surrender our own desires and plans to His will. Personal experiences and examples from Scripture illustrate how waiting can lead to a deeper trust in God's faithfulness. For instance, in Genesis 21:1-7, Abraham and Sarah waited patiently for the fulfillment of God's promise of a son, Isaac, despite their doubts and struggles with infertility. Similarly, Isaiah 40:31 encourages believers to wait on the Lord, promising renewed strength and endurance to those who trust in Him.

1. **In what ways can the practice of waiting on the Lord strengthen our relationship with Him and deepen our understanding of His character? How does waiting foster spiritual maturity and resilience in the face of challenges?** (Isaiah 64:4; James 5:7-8)

Answer: The practice of waiting on the Lord strengthens our relationship with Him by fostering patience, humility, and intimacy with God. Waiting deepens our understanding of His character as we experience His faithfulness and sovereignty in our lives. Through waiting, we learn to rely on His wisdom and timing, which ultimately leads to spiritual maturity and resilience. Isaiah 64:4 reminds us that God acts on behalf of those who wait for Him, demonstrating His love and provision. James 5:7-8 encourages believers to be patient in waiting for the Lord's return, emphasizing the importance of steadfastness and perseverance in the face of trials.