

WHEN GOD SEEMS TO BE VERY SLOW ANSWERING YOUR PRAYERS, REMEMBER HEBREWS 10
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YOUR PRAYERS, REMEMBER HEBREWS 10:36-37

"For ye have need of patience ... For yet a little while,
and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

I was very desperate, but in my own defense let me add I was also inexperienced and had much to learn. I expected God to turn the world upside down, but it seemed I was more concerned than He. My services had continued nightly for three weeks. The large Gospel Hall was crowded to capacity, but no one had responded to my invitation to trust the Savior. At that time I was twenty years old, and my enthusiasm exceeded my knowledge! The local Christians appeared to be disappointed, and I thought they were beginning to blame me for the lack of visible results in the meetings. My hostess was a dynamic lady whose love for the Lord overflowed. Night after night she stared at me and said, "There is a difference between praying, and praying through." Each time she repeated the statement, I felt that somewhere I had failed. Actually, I began to resent her words and wanted to say, "Then why don't you pray through and get things moving?" I was afraid to challenge her, however, and remained silent!

I prayed by the hour but the meetings became progressively worse. I was so certain God would answer my appeal for help that one night I said to the congregation, "After we have prayed, I shall go to the counseling room to wait for you. I have asked the Lord to bring six souls to Himself." But when everybody went away, I felt horribly alone and became resentful. I knelt by a chair and said, "Lord, it's not fair. I'm doing all the work down here, and You are doing nothing!" That was a very stupid thing to say, but, as I have already explained, I was desperate. Then suddenly I heard a voice saying, "If I could save souls as easily as you think I can, I would have saved the whole world long ago."

That dynamic utterance destroyed my ego and left me in a state of confusion. I had never known an experience when God's voice was so authoritative and real. Nevertheless, my disturbed and disappointed soul was still rebellious. I placed my Bible on the chair before me, closed my eyes, stabbed with my finger at the unseen page, and said, "Alright, Lord, if You cannot save all these people, at least say something to me." When I opened my eyes to see the verse at which my finger pointed, I read, "For ye have need of

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patience that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." I was astounded. I had neither heard nor read that text and was unaware it was in the Bible.

Later that night I climbed into my bed, pulled the blankets over my head, and prayed until I fell asleep. The next afternoon when I entered the sanctuary, I took one step down the aisle and suddenly stopped. I knew something had happened. The entire building seemed to be filled with the presence of God. Perhaps the change had taken place within me, but everything appeared to be different. The service which followed had been especially convened for Christians; I neither preached the Gospel nor issued an invitation, and yet amazing things happened.

A soldier about to leave said, "Sir, I am the boxing champion of my regiment." I looked at his flattened nose, smiled, and said, "Fellow, there was at least one punch you didn't dodge." He grinned and replied, "Yes, sir, I knocked out a lot of fighters, but today the love of God has knocked me out." He came to the front of the sanctuary with three other soldiers, and they were the first of about seventy

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adults who came to know Christ as their Savior. They were the firstfruits of a wonderful harvest. Since that day I have never complained of a difficult assignment or the lack of converts in my evangelistic crusades. I really did have need of patience, for He who intended to come did come to that Gospel Hall at Lerwick in the Shetland Islands.

The person who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews was aware of the tremendous trials besetting the church of his day. The Roman Empire was attempting to annihilate Christians. The faith of new believers was being challenged. The temple at Jerusalem was either destroyed or was about to be destroyed. Many believers were being fed to ravenous beasts or burned to death in the emperor's garden. To many of these suffering people it must have seemed a waste of time to pray. Whatever they requested, it appeared God was either indifferent to the needs of His people or not sufficiently interested to listen to their desperate requests. Yet the writer of this remarkable letter stood firm in the midst of the storm, and his words echoed amazing confidence. He was sure the Lord would come, and he was not mistaken.

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