

WHAT GOD
LONGS FOR

ISAIAH 30:18



What God Longs For

- Last week we looked into the parable of the loving father in **Luke 15**
 - What was the longing in the Father's heart?
 - Longing in Scripture carries the idea of a deep, expectant desire plus waiting, a yearning for completion
 - The Father was ready to supply an ample amount of mercy and grace lavishly but had to wait until the son returned

What God Longs For

- There is a difference between a desire and a longing
 - Desire = a craving, as for something that brings satisfaction or enjoyment plus moving in the direction to attain it
 - Longing = a strong, persistent desire or craving, especially for something unattainable or distant, usually outside of your ability to attain on your own
 - This was the word Job used when longing to die because of all his sorrow and physical pain

What God Longs For

- God's desire is found in **2nd Peter 3:9 NIV**, "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."
- Jesus' longing is found in **John 4:34 NIV**, "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

What God Longs For

- Is your relationship with God one of desire or longing?
 - It would be nice if God was more real/active in my life or
 - I so long for a deeper relationship of trust with God
 - Trust that will support me no matter the circumstance of life
 - Trust that can give me the power to see through to the blessing
 - Trust that would allow me to live in peace and walk in joy no matter the circumstance of life
 - Trust like Jesus to say, “Not my will but yours”
- Good News – Your loving Heavenly Father longs for this too

Scripture

- **Isaiah 30:18 AMP**, Therefore the Lord waits [expectantly] and longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; Blessed (happy, fortunate) are all those who long for Him [since He will never fail them].

What God Longs For

- The Old Testament is really a great love story shown through the covenant relationship between a holy, righteous, infinite God and finite, sinful, rebellious people of Israel
 - It shows that God is not just a forgiving machine
 - It shows rebellion against God is terribly serious and results in terrible consequences
 - But anyone who thinks God of the Old Testament is just wrathful, vindictive, and stern has never read the text for today

What God Longs For

- Jehovah has a heart that patiently waits, longs to show you His favor
 - He can hardly wait to pour out His grace and compassion on you, to draw you close to Him
 - He cries over your mistakes and rejoices at your obedience
 - He applauds your trust and mourns your self-sufficiency
 - He longs to be our constant companion and champion

What God Longs For

- Where God's people find themselves
 - **Isaiah 30:15-16 NIV**, "15 This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. 16 You said, 'No, we will flee on horses.' Therefore you will flee! You said, 'We will ride off on swift horses.' Therefore your pursuers will be swift!"
- So what is God going to do – remember back to the loving father in Jesus' parable?

He will patiently wait expectantly with a longing in His heart for Israel's wholehearted return to Him

- **Psalms 7:9 MEV**, You are a righteous God who examines (*probes*) the minds and hearts.
 - In other words, you can't play games with God
 - You can fool others, but not God
 - He knows your heart, motives, intentions
 - He sees down the road where your decisions will take you
 - Remember Adam and Eve in the garden

He will patiently wait expectantly with a longing in His heart for Israel's wholehearted return to Him

- So when God looked at the heart of His people Israel what did He see?
 - **Isaiah 29:13 NIV**, 13 The Lord says: “These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.
 - **MSG**, “These people make a big show of saying the right thing, but their hearts aren't in it. Because they act like they're worshiping me but don't mean it.”
 - Israel wanted all the benefits of their relationship with God with none of the requirements

He will patiently wait expectantly with a longing in His heart for Israel's wholehearted return to Him

- The one overarching requirement is found in **Exodus 20:2-3 NIV**, 2 “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. 3 You shall have no other gods before (*besides*) me.”
- **Deuteronomy 30:19 NIV**, 19 This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.
 - God had given Israel His truth on how to live blessed and protected in this life like He did Adam and Eve
 - They chose to go their own way believing God would just accept them because they were Abraham's children

He will patiently wait expectantly with a longing in His heart for Israel's wholehearted return to Him

- The way you live your life has consequences, scars but also blessings beyond measure
 - God knew the direction Israel was going
 - What they were bringing into their lives as a consequence of their decisions
 - He has grace and compassion overflowing for them but not when they choose to live in the far country as the younger son did

He will patiently wait expectantly with a longing in His heart for Israel's wholehearted return to Him

- And He waits, He longs until He can let them flow
 - **Isaiah 30:18 AMP**, Therefore the Lord waits [expectantly] and longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you.
 - Like the loving Father looking down the road for his lost son to come home, God waits
 - This does not mean He no longer loves them, forsaken them, gives up on them
 - It's easy in this world to feel abandoned, overwhelmed, alone
 - When you feel this way, come to this scripture

He will patiently wait expectantly with a longing in His heart for Israel's wholehearted return to Him

- And He waits, He longs until He can let them flow
 - **Isaiah 30:18 AMP**, Therefore the Lord waits [expectantly] and longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you.
 - God feels deeply about who you are, where you are, and what you are facing
 - He wants, more than anything, to be gracious to you
 - He wants to be a constant companion to you personally
 - He stands on the porch looking down the road for you and when He sees you coming, He will rejoice and run to you
 - You can delight God by showing up

He will patiently wait expectantly with a longing in His heart for Israel's wholehearted return to Him

- God's longing today is not just salvation but a relationship through discipleship
 - There is a loving Heavenly Father waiting to lavish you with grace, mercy, and compassion
 - Longing to fill you with strength and power of the Holy Spirit
 - Longing to give you hope and a future
 - Longing to give you peace and joy
 - But you will never accept it from Him as long as you live in the far country
 - As long as your heart is far from Him, in rebellion
 - What do you long for most in your life?

He will patiently wait expectantly with a longing in His heart for Israel's wholehearted return to Him

- God waits, He longs until He can let His compassion flow to you
 - **Isaiah 30:18 AMP**, Therefore the Lord waits [expectantly] and longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you.
 - So what's the problem?
 - If God intensely longs to fill our lives with peace, why doesn't He?
 - He is the sovereign Master of the universe, who is going to stop Him?

He will stay true to who He is

- **Malachi 3:6 NIV**, “I the Lord do not change. “
 - What does this say to you?
 - You are not an exception
 - **Isaiah 30:18 AMP**, For the Lord is a God of justice
 - The Biblical word “justice” mean “to make right”
 - Justice is, first and foremost, a relational term — people living in right relationship with God and one another

He will stay true to who He is

- **Malachi 3:6 NIV**, “I the Lord do not change. “
 - When God says, “The wages of sin is death...the wages of sin is death”
 - Physical death for all but eternal death for unforgiven sin
 - When Jesus said, “No one has access to the Father except through Me...”
 - When Jesus says, “I stand at the door of your heart knocking....”
 - When God says, **Malachi 3:7 NIV**, “Return to me, and I will return to you,”
 - **Isaiah 30:15 NIV**, “In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.”
 - Your decisions and the consequences from them rest in your hand

He will stay true to who He is

- Israel never accepted that God would allow His land to be taken from them, He would disperse His people, Allow His holy temple to be destroyed
 - “We have God’s temple here. We have His revealed Word. He will never allow this to happen.”
 - “We are still offering sacrifices to Him; we still celebrate His festivals”
 - “We are His people”
 - God was giving them a choice. God wanted his people to enjoy the bounty of the Promised Land. But he didn't make them accept it.
 - **Hebrews 13:8 NIV**, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

The answer to receiving God's blessing is anchored in our longing for Him

- **Deuteronomy 30:20 NIV**, “For the Lord is your life.”
 - He is the source of life, He gives us life and breath, Each breath is a gift from him
 - He is the source of joy in life, He is the one that makes life worth living
 - He is my salvation
 - **Acts 17:28 NIV**, “For in him we live and move and have our being.”
 - Can you truthfully say this morning, “The Lord is my life.”
 - Can I honestly say, “The Lord is my life.”

The answer to receiving God's blessing is anchored in our longing for Him

- **Isaiah 30:18 AMP**, Blessed (happy, fortunate) are all those who long for Him [since He will never fail them].
 - The blessings of God come to us in direct proportion to our longing for Him
 - As I long for Him, I will seek His face
 - As I long for Him I will seek His truth to live and pattern my life by
 - As I long for Him I can see myself through His eyes and not my own
 - But only if we are longing for more of Him and less of me
 - **John 3:30 NIV**, “He must become greater; I must become less.”

The answer to receiving God's blessing is anchored in our longing for Him

- **Jeremiah 17:7-8 NIV**, 7 “But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. 8 They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”
 - Truly blessed is the one who is rooted deep into the Lord allowing confidence in Him to overcome your fears, powerlessness, sense of failure, helplessness, loneliness...
 - Their peace is in their confidence in an Almighty God that loves them eternally and not in their immediate circumstances
 - Where have you anchored your heart and soul?

What God Longs For

- So after all of this, what does God long for?
 - You, all of you, an undivided heart
 - Your trust
 - Your faith
 - Your dedication to Him which will allow His blessings to flow into your life
- **Psalms 86:11 NIV**, “Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear (*be awe inspired by*) your name.”

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