



## PATIENT ENDURANCE

April 2014

*Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.*

Hebrews 10:36 NLT

The tulip bulb spends a long time in the ground, preparing for the two months it blooms. The rest of the time it is patiently developing so that it can become what God intends it to be.

This reminds me of the long periods of dark depression some go through at times. But Scripture tells us that this is only for a while. As we go through it, God is preparing us for something. Malachi 3:3 tells us *"He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver..."*

Would you be able to endure the suffering better if you knew God was using that time to prepare you for something? Trials tend to refine us, to develop us, to make us into people we could never be if life was easy. But we need to be patient, not anxiously looking for deliverance of the pain.

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I like the story of Joseph. There were thirteen years between when he was sold into slavery by his brothers and when he became second in command in Egypt. Thirteen years of patient endurance while he went through many kinds of trials. After all these years he finally became the person God could use. Under his leadership, Egypt was able to store away enough grain to save many from hunger.

His brothers came asking for the grain they so badly needed, not realizing that the man they were asking this from was their brother Joseph. When they found out, they were petrified.

*But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. Genesis 50:19-20)*

The things that happened to Joseph had a purpose though he himself, nor anyone else, could see it at the time. But Joseph patiently endured those many years, having faith and loving God. He trusted God's plans, though he could not see what they were.

The difficulties God brings our way also have their purposes, though we may not see it now. We don't have to know why we suffer. Joseph didn't either. Endure patiently, trust God and have faith. If you love God, everything will work together for good, even the difficulties and the suffering. (Romans 8:28)

How would things be for you today if your life had been easier? How have your trials refined you?

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