

Ninan Andrews - In Its Time

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Brethren, the topic of consideration today is in its time. Now, I'd like to preface this service by mentioning that oftentimes we take this subject along a prophetic or timeline time feature route, but not necessarily going down that route today. So I hope that you will be able to follow along with the heading and direction that I have for this for this service, and I pray for God's blessing upon it so that we may all be edified by it.

What trials, brethren, are you enduring currently? Have you been feeling stressed lately? How about anxiety or feelings of uncertainty? What has been troubling you as of late and how are you coping with the chaos in your life?

The US Population has experienced an intense range of stressors over the past few years as the COVID 19 pandemic, racial injustice and political divisiveness have dominated news cycles in social media. A new survey conducted by the Harris Paul on behalf of American Psychological Association APA tells a story of uncertainty and dissolution. Stress in America 2022 concerned for the Future Beset by inflation shows a battered American psyche, the article writes. Facing a barrage of external stressors that are mostly out of personal control, the survey found a majority of adults are disheartened by government and political divisiveness, daunted by historical inflation levels, and dismayed by widespread violence. Stress and the consequence for health are very well understood, especially in our current times, and so consistent with psychological science.

Results from this poll reveal that when adults are feeling stressed, around 3/4 reported there are aspects of their lives that were negatively impacted. Specifically, their mental health, eating habits, physical health, and interest in hobbies and activities were among the top aspects negatively impacted by stress. High stress has been linked to a range of health conditions, including high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, and diabetes. According to the Mayo Clinic brethren, we live in a world in turmoil. Like the apostles of Jesus on the Sea of Galilee.

We see in that scene that they were beset by storms, tossed to and fro, and on the brink of seeming danger.

We read in 1 Corinthians 10:13 no temptation, and certain translations use trial for temptation. It says, no temptation has overtaken you, except what is common to mankind. So chaos within and around us.

It is too easy to lose faith and grounding as we travail through these experiences in our spiritual walk. But the great apostle Paul also assures us in the same verse, 1 Corinthians 10:13, that God will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, and that he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. So brethren the question that I have for you to consider today is, what sustains us through these difficult experiences? What sustains us through these difficult experiences? And we will talk about three main things as far as the spiritual recipe for spiritual blessings that will sustain us through these times of chaos.

So the theme text for this service is from Ecclesiastes 3:11, and this is a very familiar verse to all of us. He has made everything beautiful in its time. As we focus on the three key areas of our spiritual life that we will consider today, it will lead us down a path of realization of this promise that we read about in Ecclesiastes. This promise is to be a guiding principle in our lives, to guide us through every circumstance, to lead us to the spiritual blessings God has in store for us in his time.

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So what then is that recipe? What is the recipe for spiritual blessings? Well, we'll consider three things today. One, guidance, two, strength, and three, peace, and this by no means is an exhaustive list of what can be included in your recipe for spiritual blessings.

But these are the three main areas that I want to focus on here today. So we'll start with the first of the recipe ingredients, which is guidance. Having consecrated our all to the Lord, we are to seek for his guidance, for his presence is with us in all the affairs of our life. The closer we live to the Lord, brethren, the more we shall realize the Divine direction in our lives. We read in Exodus, chapter 33, verse 14, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

When the Israelites started on their wilderness journey towards the promised land, the Lord assured Moses that he would go with him, that he should have his presence throughout the entire journey, for he had found grace in his sight. He said, my presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. So God promised Moses that his presence, his power and sustaining grace, should go with him all the way he wished for. He wished for Moses to understand that he was not to perform this great work alone without all sufficient guidance, because God said, I will be with you, and that was the promise.

The experiences of natural Israel have very important lessons for Israel, according to the Spirit, a people originally a part of the world. We have been invited to come out from the world and to journey to a new country, to come into a heavenly inheritance. We are marching towards the glorious kingdom promised us if we are faithful. There are trials and difficulties, though, along the way. But our God has promised us, as he promised Moses, his servant, that his presence shall go with us all the way.

Sometimes he seems to withdraw from us and to leave us to ourselves. But he does not really do so. He tests our loyalty and our faith in him by withholding the sense of his presence at times. So shall we then, like Israel of old, conclude that God is no more with us, and turn again to the gods we formerly worshiped? Gods of wealth or pleasure, or gods of gods worshiped by the nations around us?

No. Shall we forget all the way by which our God has led us till now, all the great deliverances which the past of our lives have recorded? Child, anything, either tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword, or life or death, or things present or things to come, or any other thing in creation, be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Absolutely not. The closer we live to the Lord, brethren, the greater our faith, the more we shall realize the Divine direction, and the more we shall make use of the means he has provided for our strengthening and upholding.

We may call upon him in time of trouble, we may go to him in prayer, and he never fails those who put their trust in him, and earnestly seek to walk in his appointed way. Now, this being true, we may go forth upon our journey in perfect trust and confidence. Having consecrated our all to the Lord, we are to seek for his guidance for for his presence is with us in all the affairs of our life.

In seeking guidance from God, we are to practice two main things. 1. Trust in God's plan We read from Proverbs 3, 5, 6. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding in all of your ways. Submit to him, and he will make your path straight.

Be where God is leading us, and we'll consider the example of Peter and Cornelius here. Every mature child of God must learn well and and appreciate the sentiment of this verse. Experience has

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taught him the perf the sorry experience has taught him the imperfection of his own judgment in many things, and the fallibility of all human counsel, and he has learned, and is still learning to trust the Lord implicitly in order thus to trust the Lord.

And knowledge of his word and the plan of salvation which it reveals are very important. They inspire trust and confidence, not only in the ability and wisdom of God, but also in his justice and his love, and this is where we also would like to read from Jeremiah 29:11, because here we read that For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you plans to give you hope and A future. So these verses emphasize that trusting in God's plan and timing, even when it's not clear to us, is the first step that we must take in seeking guidance from him, and here, as I mentioned earlier, the example of Peter and Cornelius is a wonderful example for us to consider.

We know that in the case of Peter, when God revealed to him his plan of having the first Gentile convert come into the gospel calling, it was not up to Peter to decide whether that was something he was comfortable with. But he had to learn really quickly to trust in God's plan, to be where God is leading him, and that is the first lesson for us here. Now, secondly, we must have patience and perseverance. Psalms 27:14 Wait for the Lord.

Be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord. Psalm 27:14. Here we'll consider the example of Joseph, and we refer to Genesis 37:50 for this example. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and later imprisoned in Egypt. But he remained faithful to God throughout the trials that he endured.

We're all familiar with this story. We know that he waited many years for God's plan to unfold, ultimately becoming a powerful leader in Egypt and saving his family during a famine. We read In Genesis chapter 50, verse 20, Genesis chapter 50, verse 20, you intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. Brethren. Joseph was able to come to this conclusion because he sought out guidance from God, trusted in God's plan, and exemplified patience and perseverance as he waited on God's timing to unravel.

And this is the perfect example for us to consider along these lines, because Joseph's story is a very powerful example of how God's timing can work through difficulty and seemingly unjust circumstances. The God of Israel is indeed ever present with his true people.

He never forgets us, but is constantly looking out for our interest, guarding us in every time of danger, providing for our every need, both temporal and spiritual, whatever is best for the interest of the new creature. He reads every thought of our hearts. He marks every impulse of devotion and love to him. He shapes all the influences surrounding our life for our disciplining and refining, and hearkens to our every cry for aid and comfort and sympathy and fellowship with him. He is never for even a moment forgetful or off guard.

For we Read in Psalm 121, he that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

So, brethren, if we call him in the busy hours of the day, or in the silent watches of the night. He is near to uphold and sustain and protect, whether we can realize his presence at all times or not.

How blessed the assurance of such constant abiding care and faithfulness. No real child of God is devoid of these evidences of his precious relationship to the Father. The God of Israel and the saints who have been called with the heavenly calling and are faithfully responding, are his true

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Israel in the highest sense, heirs of all his choices, promises how good a heritage is ours.

Few have such mighty burdens to carry as Moses had. But all of God's children have burdens to bear, and important responsibilities are resting upon each of us who have taken upon us the wiles of our God. Each member of the body of Christ, the true Israel of God, is privileged to have the continual guidance of the Lord in every experience of our wilderness journey. The heavenly manna is furnished for our daily sustenance. The water of life flows out to us for our daily refreshing from the smitten rock of ages.

Our Father's chastening rod restrains us when we are in danger or when we wander into any forbidden path. How lovingly he brings us back into the right way and heals our wounds and graciously forgives our stumblings and weaknesses. Surely we may have implicit confidence in our heavenly guide. Thus we may rest in him and be kept in perfect peace, for our hearts can truly proclaim with the poet he has guided my steps where I could not see, by ways that I had not known. The crooked was straight, and the rough made plain as I followed the Lord alone I praise his name for the pleasant psalms, and the water springs by the way, for the glowing pillar of fire by night, and the sheltering cloud by day.

There is light for me on the trackless wild, as the wonders of old I trace. When the God of the whole earth went before to search me a resting place. Hath he changed for me? Nay, he changed not. He will bring me by some new way, through fire and flood, and each crafty foe as safely as yesterday.

Brethren, he who so faithfully cared for Israel after the flesh, who were a perverse and fickle people, will surely care more abundantly for his true spiritual Israel, who love him supremely, and are daily seeking more fully to know his will that they may do it.

Next we'll look at the second aspect of the recipe strength.

The greater our faith, the more we shall make use of the means he has provided for our strengthening and upholding. Psalm 28:7 reads, the Lord is my strength and my shield my heart trusts in him and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy and with my song I praise him. King David was 37 years old when finally the 11 tribes sent a delegation to talk with him, indicating that they would appreciate having him as the king over all Israel. This was seven years and a half after the death of King Saul, and probably about 17 years after David had been anointed first by Samuel.

Faith and patience mark every step of those years and show us King David's character as we could not otherwise have known it. Its greatness was chiefly shown in that it manifested a devotion to God and a submission to the Divine will. Brethren, we are to learn from David the lessons of drawing strength from Jehovah in times of distress. This is what allowed him to endure these experiences for 17 years after the privilege of kingship was rightfully his.

In strength we find renewal. Isaiah chapter 40, verse 31 we read, but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength they will soar on wings like eagles they will run and not grow weary they will walk and not be faint. If a child of God becomes discouraged and loses his hope and strength, it is because he has lost his hold upon the Lord's promises to help to lose courage is to lose faith. Loss of faith and courage makes a child of God powerless before his foes. We must trust our heavenly Father, even when the meaning of his providences is veiled from our eyes, and when our efforts to serve him seem to be hedged up.

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For we know, brethren, that the precious promises are our strength. When we drink from the brook, as God instructed Elijah, we will be refreshed and renewed, and strengthened to continue to fight the good fight of faith rather than rely on our own strength, and lean upon their own strength. Mainly it will be to their advantage that the Lord shall allow them to come to the point of discouragement, that they may become more timid, may lose all self assurance, may realize their utter helplessness and weakness, and their need of leaning wholly upon the Lord, of looking constantly to him for guidance and support as the Lord's children thus learn to wait upon him. To them is fulfilled the promise. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They shall mount up with wings as eagles they shall run and not be weary they shall walk and not faint.

Hebrews chapter 11 the great cloud of Witnesses in this chapter we read about three the three Hebrew men who, no matter the outcome, believed and found their strength in the promises of God and they were able to soar high above their troubles on the strength received by their Faith and the strength received by their hope in the Lord, and this is a worthy example for us to emulate in our times of trouble, in our times of needing strength.

Next, we'll look at the last ingredient in our recipe, which is peace.

The more unswerving the confidence we have in our Father's love and abiding faithfulness, the more we shall enjoy this perfect peace in the Lord. This is what we Read in Psalm 116, verse 7. Brethren, if we have this proper foundation, the foundation of unswerving trust in our Father's love and abiding faithfulness, if this is our foundation for our faith, if we learn to know our Father through His Word, the only way we can know him, we come to have confidence in Him.

And when we are on this journey of building and growing in the peace that we have in in God, there are four main things for us to consider. First, faith and hope. Psalm 130, verse 5. Psalm 130, verse 5 I wait for the Lord, My whole being waits, and in His Word I put my hope. So we know that hard when we talked about the foundation of our faith, it is built upon this proper and thorough and sure understanding that the what we learn about God, what we learn about our Heavenly Father through His Word, is sure.

It's unmoving, it's unchanging, and that if we trust in him, if we put our hope and faith in him, then we will have complete faith, sorry, complete peace in Him. No matter the times of trouble that we travel through next, God's timing is perfect. Ecclesiastes 3:1. There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens.

Brethren, oftentimes, as we mentioned earlier, sometimes we feel the presence of our Lord withdraw from us, and oftentimes we feel the answers to our prayers being delayed. But what we must remember at these, in these moments is that God's timing is perfect. That as long as you first place your faith and hope in him, then the next thing for us to remember is that God's timing is perfect, and that gives us the assurance that even if there is a delay, even if there is a seeming withdrawal of his presence, that even in that moment that he is trustworthy and that we can continue in the peace that we have in Him.

Next is active waiting. Now, this is slightly different than just saying waiting, because active waiting requires action on our part. Psalm 37, verse 7. Psalm 37:7. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him.

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Do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. Brethren, do not make the mistake of expecting him to give you the desires of your heart instantly. We must not be disappointed and allow our faith to falter when the when the test of patience and endurance is applied in our life. Waiting on God is not passive. It definitely is not passive.

It involves actively seeking him and being hopeful that our prayers will be answered in the perfect timing of God. So we must always remember that we play a role in the waiting and the peace that it brings to us in the times of waiting, and lastly, assurance of God's promises. Hebrews chapter six, verse 15. Hebrews chapter six, verse fifteen.

And so, after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. So this is the end result that we see time and time again. As the Scriptures teach us. We shall taste and see that the God is good. This is our inevitable experience that his promises are sure and that as long as we place our faith and hope in him and that we remember that God's timing is perfect and we wait actively for the fulfillment of his timing.

And it leads us to the experience that God's promises are sure and combined. This experience gives us the perfect peace that we may have in our times of trouble.

So peace in the Lord. The Lord The Lord does not bless his people with peace. In an outward sense. The Master Special associates. The apostles were buffeted and so all his followers have been.

The adversary does everything in his power to make their lives anything but peaceful and happy. This is true of all who walk in Jesus footsteps. We have fightings without and fightings within rather than peace without and peace within. We are not to be at peace with the flesh, but always at warfare with it. Yet there is a peace in the Lord that is born of faith in him and in his promises.

He has promised us grace sufficient. He has promised that we shall not be overcome by having trials and difficulties that are too great for us. We are assured that we shall have the victory if we trust in him and if we trust in his strength. This gives us a rest and peace in all of our experiences. Through all the tumult and the strife, we can hear the music ringing because it finds an echo in our soul.

And in that experience how can we keep from singing? We are resting in the Lord's promises. We are resting in his strength and in his ability to make good his promises. For we know that he who has called us is able to fulfill all his good word. This peace or rest is the special blessing of the Holy Spirit only in proportion as we receive the Holy Spirit, the Holy mind of God, the holy disposition.

Can we have this peace fulfilled in us? Brethren, it's a matter of simple ratio. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord, in the knowledge of the truth, we shall have this to comfort and strengthen us, and we shall thus have more of the peace of God every day and be able to abide in his love. It has been written for our instruction and comfort.

This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. So in conclusion, this faith is built upon the testimony of God, God's word, which is a sure foundation. It is only through strong and unwavering faith that the peace of God will abide with his children. God has made us his sons and heirs, joined heirs with our Lord. No good thing will he withhold from these all things shall work together for for their good he shall bear them up in his hands, lest they dash their foot against a stone.

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The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry. Then let us be strong and be at peace.

The Bible teaches that waiting on God's timing involves trusting in his plan, being patient and persevering through challenges, finding strength and renewal in him, maintaining faith and hope, recognizing that his timing is perfect, actively seeking him while waiting and holding on to the assurances of his promises. Brethren, these principles encourage believers to rely on God and His wisdom, knowing that his plans and timing are ultimately for their good and his glory. May God add His blessings.