

Endurance, Part 2

by Van Knolton

Hebrews 6:11-12 (NKJV) states ***“And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”*** How can one show diligence until the end without endurance? We’re looking at endurance from a very narrow scope to see a few things we can individually accomplish to increase our endurance and in the process help others along the Christian walk. In the last article we examined the first characteristic of *don’t look back* using two examples. The first example of how Lot’s wife “looked back” and suggested that Lot’s wife looked back toward Sodom regarding it with pleasure, not in seeing it destroyed, but thinking back with pleasure to what she just gave up and was turned to salt.

We also examined the second example of the Israelites and their exodus from Egypt. In how they “looked back” after having seen God’s power and longed to be back in Egypt as they murmured against Moses and Aaron “And the children of Israel said unto them, *“Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”* Exodus 16: 2-3 (NKJV)

Now let us consider another characteristic to build endurance in us and in others, one of *seeing the vision of God’s words*. Consider the example of Joshua, after Moses death. God told Joshua to lead the congregation over the Jordan to assume the promise given from God to Moses. Joshua 1:3-4 (NKJV) states *“Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.”* Starting at the word of God, Joshua believed the word of God and began communicating the vision to the Israelites saying *“By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites”* Joshua 3:10 (NKJV). It was necessary that Joshua build the vision of the Promised Land into the mind of the Israelites so they would endure the hardships to come by keeping their minds on the final outcome. As Christians we are to *“Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth”* Colossians 3:2 (NKJV). The first step in seeing the vision for Christians is to understand where their vision should be, that is to say *“on things above.”*

We think of heaven, but having never been there we trust in the words of God as He describes heaven for us. Heaven is a place of beauty described in terms of rich color and precious stones. In Revelations 4:3 *“And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.”* Heaven is a place of light where there is no pain and suffering. *“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away”* Revelation 21:4 (NKJV). Later in the same chapter, John describes heaven as a bride adorned for her husband and the construction is of precious stones and pure gold. As humans, we have never seen heaven so those describing it use inadequate yet beautiful terms for us to envision.

We are told of a very beautiful place of no pain, full of God’s family, a place where we will feel at home no longer to be a pilgrim in a strange land, and a mansion prepared for us. As we develop these characteristics of not looking back and seeing the vision, we increase our **endurance** and are better able to finish the race and help bring others along with us. When we reach the destination may we all hear the words of God *“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’* Matthew 25:34 (NKJV).

EDITOR’S NOTE: See again Van’s first article, April 27, Issue 17, p. 2.

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