

# ANTICIPATION

“And the Lord God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. “ 2 Chronicles 36:15

Time and time again the Lord sent his prophets to warn the people and to turn their hearts back to himself. Yet time and time again the people rejected the warnings, even mocking the messengers. God wasted no time to send the messengers with the messages. He did so not in anger but in love “because He had compassion”. With hopeful anticipation He reached out to His people by sending His messengers, wanting them to receive the word of the Lord and repent.

The one who rises early anticipates the day ahead. He is hopeful to get much accomplished. So God rose up early. This doesn't mean that God was asleep for Scripture tells us that God never sleeps nor slumbers. What it does mean is that God had hopes in turning the people around so He wasted no time in getting his message out.

In this passage we can identify leadership characteristics that are indispensable: love, patience, hope, promptness - all positive attributes. However, where there is love there is truth. The truth must be spoken in love with hope and all patience. Truth which confronts is not easy to communicate, but love must compel us to do so. Ministry is full of long days and hard people and we must remember that our responsibility is ultimately toward the Lord. Our message must be His message. His love and compassion must be ours or we will easily become bitter, angry, and defeated. As leaders we must not give up on people too quickly. When those we lead go astray making wrong choices we should not write them off (reject them) immediately. Work hard, rising early with anticipation, giving them the word of God in good time and in hopeful anticipation that they will change.

Love must be our chief motivation, not anger, not revenge, not disgust, or any other negative characteristic. You can give the Word of the Lord without love (without patience or hope) but that is not like our Father in heaven. The Word should be packaged in love and patience, though the word itself may contain some stern warnings. As a loving Father, God is willing and able to discipline us that He might save us. Let His motivation be ours as well.

Which leadership characteristic do you lack the most? Begin to pray for grace in that area of your life and expect God to refine you.