



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- February 18, 2023

The Lord be with you.

Do you ever feel like you're running on empty? I don't mean your car, but in your life. Are there times when you feel like you're running on empty, when you don't know where you're gonna get the power to handle the problems that you're facing? Where you're gonna get the power to make the most of opportunity? Where do we get the power not just to keep going, but to thrive? That is a question that I've often had to deal with in my life in my ministry. Today, I've turned to a scripture that it really helps me when I'm looking for power to keep going and to thrive. You might know the text as it is a favorite of so many people. That's the prophet Isaiah Chapter 40:31 where he talks about waiting for the Lord and finding strength. And mounting up with wings like eagles. This favorite text of so many is a message to God's people who are worn down after years in the Babylonian captivity, and they're feeling powerless, guilty, feeble, helpless as they just can't bring themselves to believe that God could possibly have a new future for them. They are people running on empty.

Let's first look at the context of our verse, as Isaiah appoint it to the one who never gets tired... Never gets weary. In Isaiah 40:28, it asks, "have you not known, have you not heard the Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth? He does not faint or grow weary, his understanding is unsearchable, he gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless, even the youths will fade and be weary and the young will follow exhausted". Here's our first, here's the verse, as it says, that those who wait for the Lord They shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles. They will run and not be weary, they will walk and not faint. Now, those who wait for the Lord, that is coded language for the Hebrew people. It's an important phrase in the Hebrew Bible. It's for believers. Those who wait for the Lord as believers are oftentimes called those who wait for the Lord. It defines our faith as looking for the Lord to help. We're looking to him for deliverance. As salvation comes from the Lord, we're putting all of our trust in Him, we're waiting for him. That's all bound up in this phrase, those who wait for the Lord. The Hebrew word translated wait is the word Kavah, that's Kavah, and we've seen this word before because it's a big word in the vocabulary of faith, as Kivah means to wait for or to look for with eager expectation. It's that kind of waiting.

It's what I did as a kid on Christmas morning, waiting, expectantly, eagerly for mom and dad to get out of bed so I could open my presents. So Kavah is not just putting in time, but it means looking for, waiting for with eager expectation for God to show up and act in our behalf. Kivah makes me think of a bird's nest I saw last spring, as there were these tiny little baby birds and they were perched in the nest with their big wide open and they were yelling, eagerly waiting for mom to return to them with a warm. And our text promises that those who wait, those who wait expectancy, eagerly for the Lord. It says that They shall renew their strength. The Hebrew word translated



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renew, it's an interesting word. It's a Hebrew word chalaph, that's C-H-A-L-A-P-H, and it means really it means to exchange. So as a result, to renew, the basic meaning is to change or to exchange one thing for another thing.

Let me illustrate in second Samuel chapter 12:20 issues of David who after mourning the death of his infant son, it says that David bathe himself anointed himself, and then David exchanged, he changed clothes. That is, David gave up something old to receive something new, and God is promising you and me that those who wait equally for him, that they change or they exchange their weakness for God's strength.

And that is what many Christian writers have called The Exchange life. As the Christian life is from start to finish, it is The Exchange Life. It begins as God exchanges our sins for the righteousness of Jesus Christ. God exchanges our death for the life of Jesus, and the Christian life continues as you and I, as we get to exchange our weakness for God's strength. And that's why you and I can constantly affirm with the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things to him who strengthens me." That is, with God, you and I, we are up to whatever life is going to throw at us. So Isaiah says that God gives power to the faint, He strengthens the powerless, and in fact, God's power is oftentimes the greatest in you and me, when we're feeling at our weakest. That is exactly what the Apostle Paul is talking about in 2 Corinthians chapter 12, where Paul is struggling with this thing that he calls a thorn in the flesh, and then God reveals to Paul, God reveals in 2 Corinthians 12:9, he says, My grace is sufficient for you for power is made perfect in weakness.

And then Paul agrees, he says, For whenever I am weak, then I am strong. In my weakness, I look to God, and God promises that those who wait eagerly expectantly for him, that they should exchange their weakness for God's power. They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall soar. It will run and not be weary, they shall walk and not roll faint. You and I, we're never gonna be disappointed as we wait eagerly for God to work in our lives, as we exchange our weakness for God's power, so that I would join with the apostle Paul and praising God in Ephesians 3:20, "Now to Him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish, accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, to all generations forever and ever. Amen."

I am Tim Smith, the fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.