

Isaiah 40:31

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 September 2013

Preacher: Geoff Thomas

[0 : 00] I want to draw your attention to this passage that was read in Isaiah chapter 40 and the familiar words with which chapter 40 ends of Isaiah.

New strength and perpetual vigor. There is a longing for it in all the nature, nations and cultures of the world.

The very existence of wonderful beasts like a rhinoceros and a tiger are now threatened by primitive longings for youthful energy to be renewed by eating parts of those wonderful beasts.

And there are others then who want to freeze their bodies so that there will come a time when they can be renewed. When science will have got to the stage where those bodies can be renewed again.

Our society is characterized by a longing for a departed youth and an envy of the energy of the young.

[1 : 24] How can you find your strength renewed? And that's where these wonderful statements of Isaiah, so well known to every Christian, is relevant for us today.

And he is telling us where renewed strength can be found. So the first thing he tells us is that strength is given to those who wait upon the Lord.

That's the description that's given to us here. I think it's the best translation of it. And waiting on the Lord.

ESV, waiting for the Lord. NIV, hoping for the Lord. But as I've looked at the commentaries, they all turn again to this great phrase of waiting on the Lord.

A Christian is someone who waits on the Lord. What do you think of our Queen? Our Queen has got a group of trusted women that she's worked with and known. And sometimes their families and their mothers and fathers.

[2 : 34] Their mothers were ladies-in-waiting before them. And they've been primed for this task. She gets maybe a hundred letters every day.

And they have to be acknowledged. And she delegates then the work for the week to these ladies-in-waiting. And then her grandson and his wife become the parents of a child.

And hundreds of gifts are sent. And so she asks the ladies-in-waiting, Well, will you go to Anglesey now and work with them and help them with this mountain of mail that they've had.

And of people sending knitted toys and teddy bears for the baby and so on. And each day there's correspondence. And then she does her journeys everywhere.

And there are people to meet. And they stand behind her. And flowers are given to her and other gifts. And she hands them to the ladies-in-waiting. And they then love her and serve her.

[3 : 36] They give her their wisdom and intelligence. And they act on her behalf. And they work for her. So the lady-in-waiting is not some honorary title.

It doesn't describe someone who does nothing but simply wallows in affection. We don't know. We don't know the names, I suppose, of any of those ladies-in-waiting.

That they feel they're not important. She is important. And how they can help her. So waiting on the Queen is then a calling which demands much hard work and great satisfaction and contentment to be a figure in the background.

The Christian is someone who waits on the Sovereign of the Universe. We wait on Him. The Lord Almighty.

Each day we begin. And we want this day to be spent serving the God who loved us and created us. And blesses us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

[4 : 44] His mercies are new every morning. And we face a day never alone and never by our own strength. But by the kindness and love and patience that He's shown.

We can't get by through the day without Him. Without Him we can do nothing. And so we wait upon the Lord. And we seek then to know what ways can we please Him.

And speaking here of Christians who are men and women who have seen their sinfulness. The sinfulness of their unbelief. And have repented and turned from it.

And put their trust in the God who has made Himself known to us through the prophets. But especially through His Son Jesus Christ. And has inspired His apostles to write Gospels and letters that describe the person and work of Jesus Christ.

In the glory of all He is and in the great achievements of what He has done. Now you know the structure of the New Testament letters. How many of them begin by telling us, explaining to us about the Lord Jesus.

[5 : 52] And about His considerable achievements. And then after that then there's a therefore. In the light of all of this what sort of people ought you to be?

If you have been redeemed from the guilt and shame of your sin. If you are heading for the eternal glories of heaven. What sort of people ought you to be?

And how should you live? How should you wait on the Lord day by day? For how you are to live?

And so then the latter part of the letters so frequently.

Then expounds and explains how we are to live. And if I miss Romans there with the failings of the weak. Don't please yourselves.

1 Corinthians. Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourself fully to the word of the Lord. Because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

[6 : 53] The second letter. Aim for perfection. Listen to my appeal. Be of one mind. Live in peace. Galatians. Therefore as we have opportunity.

Let us do good to all people. Especially to those who are of the house of the faith. Ephesians. Among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality.

Or any kind of impurity. Or of greed. Because these are improper for God's holy people. Or Philippians. Do everything without complaining.

Or arguing. Or arguing. Or arguing. So that you may be blameless and pure. Children of God. Without fault. In a crooked and perverse generation. Colossians.

Colossians. Colossians. Be wise. In the way you act toward outsiders. Make the most of every opportunity. 1 Thessalonians.

[7 : 54] Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil. 2 Thessalonians. Keep away from every brother who is idle. And doesn't live according to the teaching you receive from us.

1 Timothy. Pursue righteousness. Godliness. Faith. Love. Endurance.

And gentleness. Six massive virtues. That's waiting on the Lord. 2 Timothy. Those who oppose him. Must.

Gently instruct them. In the hope that God will grant them repentance. Leading them to a knowledge of the truth. Titus. In everything.

Set them an example. By doing what is good. In your teaching. Show integrity. Seriousness. And soundness of speech. That can't be condemned.

[8 : 55] Philemon. Be active in sharing your faith. So that you will have. A full understanding of. Every good thing we have in Christ. Hebrews.

Keep on loving each other. As brothers. Don't forget to entertain strangers. For by suing. So doing some people. Have entertained angels. Without knowing it.

Remember those in prison. As if you were their fellow prisoners. And those who are ill. Treated as if you yourselves. Were suffering. Well there we are.

I've gone through the letters of Paul. And the letters of the Hebrews. And I've just selected. Just certain. Pertinent commandments. That caught my eye. That describe for us.

What it means. To wait. Upon the Lord. So. Waiting on the Lord. Is not quietism.

[9 : 50] Waiting on the Lord. I mean. Is not simply. Praying earnestly. Because you know. How so many people. Will say to you. But I prayed about it. And the challenge.

Is not praying about it. The challenge is. Looking at the clear instructions. Of God. And waiting on God. And saying. Give me grace. To do these things. Help me to do these things.

Day by day. That is waiting. On the Lord. Now. We are told. That those who wait. On the Lord. Then. They renew.

Their strength. They alone. Find their strength. Renewed. Each day. Now.

You didn't expect. That response. Did you? From. All those. High. Ethical. Commandments. All these. Holy. Demands. That God makes.

[10:45] On us. How we are to live. Every day. And you think. Well if I'm to live like that. I'll be exhausted. Bearing the weak. Standing firm. Aiming for perfection.

Doing good. To all people. No hint. Of sexual. Impropriety. Being wise. In how you deal. With non-Christians. Keeping away.

From every brother. Who refuses. To work. Pursuing righteousness. And godliness. Gently instructing. Those who oppose you. Showing integrity.

Seriousness. Soundness of speech. Being active. In sharing your faith. Entertaining strangers. Keeping your life. Free. From the love.

Of money. Living day. After day. After day. 24-7. That is. The relentless. Demands. That the ladies.

[11:39] And gentlemen. In waiting. Upon the king. Of the universe. Are expected. To let by. But Isaiah says. Those who do. Wait on the Lord.

Renew their strength. They don't die. Of exhaustion. These people. Who wait on the Lord. In these ways. And many others. Get stronger.

Literally. It means. To change. Their strength. The strength. Of the old. And regenerate person. The old man. Just pleased himself. And lived.

Vainly. And proudly. To satisfy. His vain desires. Things he wanted. To turn from that. That weary. Selfish.

To live. To live. A lifestyle. In which. You honoured God. And pleased God. In everything. That you did. In every relationship.

[12:36] With those that are. So depend upon you. For everything. And those you work with. And your neighbours. And the people in the providence. Of God. That you. Suddenly meet.

You are in trouble. And in need. And we live under such obligations. You see the contrast that's made.

In this passage before us. Between. The merely healthy people. The self integrated.

Psychologically sound. And sensible people.

That we see. People who don't seem to have any need. Of Jesus Christ. And we feel ourselves rather. Abashed. In presenting them. With the gospel. But we're told that.

Those people. Actually. Will get weak. You see it here. In the 30th verse. Even youths. Grow tired. And weary.

[13:36] And young men stumble. And fall. You dreamed of what you could do. If only you had. The strength you had. When you were a teenager. Or when you were in. Your 20s.

And you grumbled. And you said. Our youth is wasted. On the young. But you look. Here is this footballer. With a. A personal training. Program. And all the regimen. Of being there.

With a squad. And working. And yet. Look at him falling. Look at him staggering. Look at his dependence. On. On drugs. Look at the pathetic. Mess he makes.

Of his. Relationships. In life. Look at his athlete. It. And how this athlete. Is falling. That's the strength. Of the natural man. That's the strength.

Of human resources. And it quickly. Exhausts itself. This is the strength. That the providence. Of God gives. To all men and women.

[14:30] Because they are made. In God's image. And they are made. In God's likeness. And you admire. All the great achievements. We looked at the Olympics.

Last year. And we were just. Thrilled. To see the vitality. And energy. And the striving. And the success. Of young men and women. In the world.

And the young men. And the young men. Will grow weak. And the young men. Will fail. And they will reach. An end of their.

Resources. And yet. Here we are told. Those that wait. On the Lord. Are not like that. Those that wait. On the Lord. Renew their strength.

They. Get through. Enormous tasks. And then. The next week. More. Enormous tasks. From the hard. To the difficult.

[15:26] And the difficult. To the impossible. And they are doing it. And that is the logic. Of the Christian life. Because. The Lord. They wait upon. Every day. Who opens doors.

Of them. And closes doors. He renews. Their strength. And that is how God. Prepares us. It is.

The means. That he uses. To make us. Mature. And wise. And strong. Men and women. Here is. An athlete.

And he has got. A personal coach. And the coach. Checks him up. One day. And he says. Ah. Well. Your muscles are growing a bit. I think. We will put them. In cotton wool.

And. We will put your arm. In a sling. And. We will give you a stick. To help you to walk along. And you must slow down a bit. Does he say things like that.

[16:20] Take him. Well. Of course he doesn't. He gives him. He gives him. A pattern of. Integrated. Disciplined activity.

A regimen. Of exercise. Of breathing. Of striving. Of striving. Of balance. That's what he says. He develops a whole array.

Of these things. For every muscle. And improves. His coordination. And. He renews his strength. As he. Exercises himself. Relentlessly.

In his body. And so. My friends. Is just like this. As we're going to grow. As Christians. There's only one way. And that's. We wait upon the Lord.

Every day. We do all things. In a God fearing. And a God honoring way. So that. We think about. What we heard. On the Lord's day. And then we read the Bible. During the days.

[17:20] And we see instructions. There. That are. Given to us. And we think about it. And then we. Implement it. In our lives. It's like. The life of the. The men.

We most admire. In the history. Of the Christian church. A man like. John Wesley. He had a triangle. A Newcastle. To London. To Bristol. Back to Newcastle. And he would stop on the way. And he would preach. And he'd have his little horse. And he'd study as he went. And then he would come to the next village. And the crowd would be there. And the stoning. And the sticks. And the mud would be thrown at him.

And the shouting. And he would preach. Men back on his horse. And on to the next place. And preach. All the way from Newcastle. To London. Across.

To the west country. To Bristol. To his base there. And up again to Newcastle. Going everywhere. He lived until he was in his 80s. He waited on the Lord.

[18:15] He did God. God's will. And so. He grew stronger and stronger. In doing the will. Of God. He felt the sweat he broke into.

Was healthy for him. He lived there. At the temple. Looking to God. Seeking God's will. And so the language here.

Then becomes effusive. They will soar. With wings. Like eagles. He chooses. For him. The finest. The most. Magnificent. Of all the birds. The most beautiful. And there. They are rising on thermals. And they. Have a young lamb.

In their talons. And they are going. To the high crags. Where they nest. And their fledglings are. They are carrying. A big buck rabbit. With them. And. They rise.

[19:12] With wings. As eagles. We wait on the Lord. We present our bodies. As daily sacrifices. To him. We sit on the edge.

Of our beds. The first thing in the morning. We say. Lord. Here's my heart. I give it to you again. Here's my mind. Oh. I present. My mind.

And find it renewed. By you. Here are my arms. And my legs. And. I give them to you. Use me today. I wait upon you. To serve you. Today.

We remind ourselves. Of the great privileges. That we are in Christ. That we are seated. In the heavens. In him. That we are blessed.

With every spiritual blessing. We wait upon the Lord. Then he says. They will run. And not grow weary. You remember.

[20:07] How it was with Elijah. How he tells the king. You better get. Into your chariot. And head for home now. Because. The storm is breaking. The three years. Drought has come to an end.

And it's time for you. To go. And so. The king. Gets in. His chariot. And the chariot. He whips the horses. And Elijah. Runs ahead of him. And.

No matter how much. He lashes. His horses. They can't overtake. Elijah. Elijah's fleet footed. And he runs. And he isn't weary.

All the way back. He gets. To the palace. Before the chariot. And the king. Arising. When he's under. The juniper tree.

In a dead funk. Of. Depression. Then you'll remember. What happens. The angel comes. And feeds him food. And makes him rest. And gives him food again. And then tells him.

[21 : 02] Up now. Up now. Get up. Go for the journey. Is too much for you. So he got up. And ate. And drank. And strengthened. By that food. He traveled.

Forty days. And forty nights. Until he reached. The mountain of God. And you can do that. However long your journey. Forty years. Our God.

Is the end of the journey. And he was strengthened. For whatever tasks. They will walk.

And not faint. I just read. Those great missionary journeys. Of the. Apostle Paul. And his companions. Three of them. Around the Mediterranean basin. Even up to Albania.

Even up to Yugoslavia. He goes. And there he walks. From one place to another. When he arrives. There is opposition. Dogs are set on them. Stones are thrown at them.

[21 : 58] They are beaten. And lashed. And yet. He walks. And does he faint. And he turns the world upside down. And he brings the gospel. Because.

Every day. He is waiting on the Lord. He says. Close doors to me Lord. If I not go there. Open doors. Be with me. Guide me. Help me. You read.

A day. In the life of Spurgeon. The letters answered. Hundreds of them. The books read. The preparation. For his meetings. The travel. The preaching. What a colossus.

You get tired. Just reading. What Spurgeon did. In a week. I know the man. And he edits a magazine. And he heads a publishing house.

And he writes books. There are a lot of research behind them. He teaches in a theological seminary. And he travels around the world. And he speaks in conferences. Preaches in his church every Sunday. He is a family man.

[22 : 53] He does not neglect his wife. He does not neglect his children. He does all the duties. That God tells us to do. Husbands love your wives. As Christ loved the church.

And in seeking to do them. God renews his strength. And he walks through life. And he does not faint. I can't believe that the God.

Who knows the world. So much better than you. And I know the world. And knows us so much better. Than we know ourselves. Gives us a hopelessly idealistic. Set of commands.

To perform. That are quite impossible. To maintain. And only to be in mind. If your enemy strikes you.

On one cheek. Turn to him the other also. I was visiting. A dear friend of mine.

[23 : 54] Who keeps a furniture shop. In a little town in Mississippi. He's a Baptist deacon. And I was standing there. And talking to him. About his day. And my day. I was. I know his.

His son-in-law. And his daughter so well. He said. Oh Jeff. I was. On Wednesday. I met a. A black brother. And we talked together.

And we had such good fellowship. And along came this. This man. This white man. And he stood. And listened to us. For a while.

And he said something. Horrible. To my black friend. I said. You apologize to him. For saying that. He said.

You won't find me. Apologizing to a black. Epithet. And off he strutted. Back under the stone. Out of which he crawled.

[24 : 49] I said. Oh I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry. I want you to apologize. For the whole white race. And for ugly racism. Oh I was so sorry. I'm so sorry. I said.

He said that to you. It's alright. He said. It's alright. Don't worry. He said. You know. I'd like to get my revenge. On that man.

And this would be. My revenge. I'd be. Driving back. To Middleton. One night. At eleven o'clock. And I'd see his car. On the side of the road.

He had a flat tire. And he didn't have his jack. In the car. And I'd stop my car. And I'd get my jack out. And I'd jack up.

His wheel. And I'd change his wheel. For him. That would be the revenge. I'd like to get. On him. You understand. Don't overcome evil.

[25 : 47] With evil. But overcome evil. With good. You understand. You can do it. You can. You can forgive.

Seventy times seven. You can do that. You can go the second mile. You can. You can. Give a gentle answer. That turns wrath away.

You can. You can pray without ceasing. As Spurgeon says. Little and often. You can live. A Christ-like. Christian life. As you wait upon the Lord. Every day. And find your. Your orders for him. In every circumstance. In which you're in. Tomorrow. In the duties in the home. In the duties in school. And in your work. Letters to write. People to see. Household chores. Never ending. They that wait upon the Lord.

[26 : 43] Shall renew their strength. And shall mount up with wings. As he goes. Paul says. He makes us more than conquerors.

Because that's what happened. In Paul's experience. God didn't simply. Conquer. The apostle Paul. So that the.

Hateful enemy. Of the gospel. Was turned. To become a Christian. He made. He more than conquered him.

He made him his son. His herald. He made him his apostle. To the Gentiles. He made him. The letter writer. That's. Blessed. Christians.

For two thousand years. More than conquered him. And if you. Give your heart. And if you. Give your heart. And life. To Jesus Christ. And if you. Follow him. You will find.

[27 : 37] These remarkable words. Will be. The reality. Of your daily spirits. 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. You see. What we are being told. In this verse.

Is that. The Christian. Is a man. Who is practically. Omnipotent. Sometimes you look at the pressures. The mountains. That God asks us to climb.

And the burdens. That God asks us to carry. And we say to ourselves. I won't be able to cope. With these things. We say to ourselves.

That we can't possibly manage. And then we come to this verse. And we look at this verse. And we look at it. And all the promise. And all the comfort.

[28 : 31] That these words. Of Isaiah the prophet. Given by the spirit of God. Born along by the spirit of God. As he wrote these words. That they. Chalice of renewed.

Strength. Of what Paul wrote. To the Philippians. When he. Was conscious most. Of the greatness. Of God's power.

And he said. That to all who believe. They can do. All things. Through Christ. Who strengthens them. They can do all things. You can. You can do these things.

You know that. In many ways. I can say to you this evening. That I believe. In almost everything. The charismatic movement. Believes him. But I believe. That their foundational truths.

About spirit baptism. And spirit filling. And spirit leading. And spiritual gifts. Are not simply for. Some. Of God's people.

[29 : 33] For the hyper Christian. Or the super Christian. Some gifted. Some gifted. Minority. Of disciples. I believe.

That all. Who wait upon the Lord. Bring you their strength. And all of them. Mount up with wings. As eagles. That we all run. And don't get weary.

That we all walk. And don't faint. I believe. That Christ lives. In every one. Of his people. I believe. That God's omnipotent.

Spirit. Inhabits. The body. Of every Christian. That we have. Endless access. To an indwelling. Savior. I believe. That the Father.

Has made us. His temples. I believe. That the triune God. Lives. In every Christian. I believe. That every Christian. Bears the fruit. Of the spirit.

[30 : 28] Of God. I believe. That every Christian. Has gifts. With which he serves. The body. Of Christ. I don't believe. That some of the gifts.

Like the gift. Of apostles. Were meant to be permanent. That after the last apostle. Ceased. Then God stopped. Giving that gift. To men. I don't believe.

That there's anyone. Today. Who. Even knows. What tongue speaking. Was. I believe. That the whole error. Of that movement. Is that it is reminding us.

Of what. God's children. Can be. It is the invidious. Suggestion. That you can wait. On the Lord. And. Not have strength.

And not. Run. And be weary. And not walk. And. And be faint. That it is normal. And average.

[31 : 24] For Christians. Then. To limp. And stagger. Being in this way. And it can't live. In the light. Of the last verse. Of Isaiah chapter 40. I'm a charismatic.

And my deacons. Are charismatics. The elders. The spirit filled men. The youngest members. The most immature members. Everyone. Who trusts in Jesus Christ.

They're charismatics. But none of them. Speak in tongues. And none of them. And none of them. Prophesize. I believe. It's impossible. To be. A non charismatic church.

Because there is no. Christian. In whom. Jesus Christ. The son of God. And the spirit of God. Does not live. And actively.

Changes him. And influences him. And strengthens him. And so that he is moving. From one degree of glory. To another. I believe. The reverse. The opposite opinion.

[32 : 20] That we can plod on. Through life. Without the spirit strengthening. And without the spirit empowering. That that theory. Is one. That is so dangerous.

That it excuses failures. Oh I can't work in the church. I can't take this office. That the church gives me. I can't accept. Becoming a deacon. In the church. Because I'm not spirit filled.

I can't. Climb that mountain. Because I don't have spirit baptism. I can't ford that river.

Because I don't have spirit anointing. I can't resist the devil. In this temptation. Because I don't have spirit filling. I don't believe. There is any. Single Christian.

In all the world. Who has the right. To argue like that. Because this verse says. They have weight upon the Lord. And that's. The Christian. Renews his strength. He can do all things.

[33 : 18] Through Christ. Who strengthens him. Every Christian. Who wins on the Lord. He runs. He doesn't grow weary. He walks. And he doesn't faint. I believe that.

Those who are. Working in obedience to the Lord. Waiting on the Lord. Seeking to do their will. I believe. They do have renewed strength. They do that.

I believe you can climb any mountain. I do believe you can face any problem. I do believe you can bear any load.

I believe grace. Grace can heal the most broken of hearts. That you can endure any pain. That you can overcome any temptation.

That you can bear any pressure. Because I live. Yet not I. But Christ liveth. In me. Whatever God.

[34 : 17] Puts in the cup. And fills it to the brim. And gives you to drink. You can drink. You can drink from that cup. Whatever cross. God puts on your shoulders.

We are able to bear it. Whatever our calling. Whatever our duty. However lonely we are. However misunderstood we are. Where we work.

And. In our homes. We can do it. You can do it. You can do it. You can. Because Christ.

Lives. In you. So I am urging you. Tonight then. To begin. A new life. Of trust. In God. A new.

Obedience. Of faith. A new. Regimen. Of waiting. On the Lord. Day by day. When he says. Do you come. You come to him. When he says. Do this.

[35 : 14] You do it. When he says. Go. You go. You can be a Christian. Not a great Christian. I am not interested in great Christians.

Just ordinary Christians. Ordinary Christians. Wait. On. The Lord. Ordinary Christians. Want to please God.

In everything. They do. For them. The good. And acceptable. And perfect. Will of God. Is. Pleasing him. In everything.

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. Lord bless you.