

# God & the Greats

## Believing; Waiting

Isaiah 40:24-31

January 13, 2013

Waiting – it is one of the most difficult activities in the world.

- Especially if you are waiting on someone else.
- Think about it: waiting in traffic, waiting in line, waiting for food to arrive, mail to arrive, so and so to get home... there is a great deal of difficulty in waiting for someone else to follow through on something (how many spouses are waiting for their husband to fix the \_\_\_\_\_? Or wives to get a new \_\_\_\_\_?)

Some things are really DIFFICULT to wait for:

- Good health (healing), justice, forgiveness, vindication, an apology... the salvation of those that we love.

Yet, as we get to today's text many of us will recognize a familiar scripture, it's a popular one to have on a plaque or art work by the door:

<sup>31</sup> but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength

Two BIG QUESTIONS for today:

### 1. What do you need (or think you need) from God right now?

- If you are here as a West Londoner or as a brother/sister in Christ visiting with us you may think about the circumstances going on in your life currently – big decisions, difficulties, uncertainty over your future or perhaps something about what God has called you to do, or this church to do.
- If you are here this morning and would not consider yourself a Christian, perhaps you wouldn't even believe in God – I would invite you to ponder this question as well... if you believed in God, if you knew Him, what is it that you would need from him? If that's you this morning, we are going to be looking into our Bible's to see what God is like and how he responds to such requests... my prayer for you this morning would be that you come to trust in the God we know to be not only true, but very present and active in our daily lives.

### 2. What does it mean to "wait" for the Lord? (specifically in regards to what you need from him)

- I mean, how does this whole, asking and you shall receive thing work anyway? We're told to ask and to wait... well what does that look like?

Let's go to today's text and see if it can help us with our questions:

To whom then will you compare me,  
that I should be like him? says the Holy One.

<sup>26</sup> Lift up your eyes on high and see:  
who created these?

He who brings out their host by number,  
calling them all by name,

by the greatness of his might,  
and because he is strong in power  
not one is missing.

<sup>27</sup> Why do you say, O Jacob,  
and speak, O Israel,

"My way is hidden from the LORD,  
and my right is disregarded by my God"?

<sup>28</sup> 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.

<sup>29</sup> He gives power to the faint,  
and to him who has no might he increases strength.

<sup>30</sup> Even youths shall faint and be weary,  
and young men shall fall exhausted;

<sup>31</sup> but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their  
strength;

they shall mount up with wings like eagles;  
they shall run and not be weary;  
they shall walk and not faint.

This series is all about seeing the Greatness of God, so let's first focus on a few of the things we can BEHOLD about God based on these verses:

Incomparable – verse 25, 28  
Omnipotent – verse 26, 29

Creator – verse 26, 28

Omniscient – verse 26, 28

Concerned about his creatures/creation – verse 26, 29

Now let's focus on three things specific to our 2013 challenge:

What to BEHOLD about God's Power: He gives it to strengthen His people.

What to BEHOLD about God's wisdom: It is worth trusting.

How God shepherds: He asks us to "wait" for Him.

The Christian life calls us to hold in tension things that often seem opposed:

- Jesus fully became a man, and yet he was fully God.
- Our God is three and our God is one.
- We are called to live in the world but not of the world.
- God is Sovereign, and yet my choices are real and I am responsible for them.

*We can add to that list, we are called to action and we are called to wait.*

**Definition of waiting: "savor God's promises by faith until the time of fulfillment." (Ray Ortlund)**

So, WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM GOD TODAY? What are you waiting on Him for?

**Then what are God's promises?**

- He will never leave us or forsake us, He not only cares for, but delights in us, He will carry our burdens, He loves his people with a relentless love, He forgives us for our treachery and sin, He will bring justice, He will be near the broken-hearted, He will give eternal life to those who trust him... to name a few.

3 Promises given to those who "wait on the Lord":

1. God will act on their behalf.

**Isaiah 64:4**

From of old no one has heard  
or perceived by the ear,  
no eye has seen a God besides you,  
who acts for those who wait for him.

- Waiting for the Lord means, first of all then, looking to the Lord, consulting or seeking his will before any human aid is pursued. In short, we wait for the Lord when we pause to pray before we act. (OR REACT) The first act of waiting is to seek God's counsel in prayer before any attempt is made to solve the problem ourselves.
- Most of our actions, thoughts and words are habitual, which is why it is important to START the day waiting on the Lord... so when something upsets, frustrates, surprises you – you don't pause, but you respond having already waited on God... or anticipating waiting on God in that situation.

2. They will be strengthened.

**Isaiah 40:31**

but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;  
they shall run and not be weary;  
they shall walk and not faint.

- This is why anxiety is considered a sin... why we are commanded not to worry about tomorrow, or why we're told not to fear...
- New Mercies every morning...

3. They will be blessed.

**Isaiah 30:18**

Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you,  
and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you.  
For the LORD is a God of justice;  
blessed are all those who wait for him.

Our ability to adhere to biblical commands or to trust in the promises of God is directly related to what we truly believe about God.

- Therefore the “action” we are called to is to gain a proper view of God and to **WORK HARD** to be a person who trusts God with our difficulties.

So you battle the unbelief, impatience, irritability, sorrow, anxiety and fear by using the promises of God to persuade your heart that God's timing and God's guidance and God's sovereignty are going to take this frustrated, boxed in, unproductive situation and make something eternally valuable out of it. There will come a blessing, a strength, a vindication, a mounting up with wings like eagles.

**NEXT WEEK:** (Mike Wilkins)

**God & Ahaz**

**Isaiah 7, 8, 9:1-7**