

THE SECRET OF RENEWED STRENGTH

Key verse: Isaiah 40:31

Introduction: In order to see the significance of our verse we need to read the context in which the words occur, Isa. 40:25-31. These verses touch the very core of Christian experience. If we are honest before God and with ourselves, we must admit that we fail very much in our Christian living and service.

(1) The Word of God convinces us of our failure. We often "faint" and "have no might", verse 29; we are "weary" and we "fall", verse 30. This is God's description of the weakness that so often characterizes the lives of His children.

(2) Observation convinces us of failure. Our eyes tell us that there is much weakness in the church today and amongst God's people. Indeed, the prevailing condition would seem to be one of failure.

(3) Experience tells us that there is much failure. Our own heart tells us. We are so faint and weary, and so slow to learn the way of victory and power! Prov. 14:10.

What is the cause of our failure? There is a primary and a secondary cause.

1. The PRIMARY cause: Ignorance of the resources at our disposal.

Yes, ignorance! Look up Hos. 4:6, compare Matt. 22:29, and then see what Isa. 40:28 says: "Hast thou not known...?" What are the resources at our disposal? Read verses 28 and 29, "the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator . . ." is offering to give us power and strength. Against the sad background of our failure is the promise of the everlasting God, the Creator of the universe, to turn our failure into glorious triumph. He places all His unlimited resources of strength and power at our disposal, but we must tap these resources.

2. The SECONDARY cause: Failure to tap these resources.

Verse 29 says, "He giveth...", and in response to His giving we must receive. How does this giving and receiving take place? How does God transfer His power to me? Verse 31 gives the answer, "They that wait upon the Lord". But what does it mean to "wait upon the Lord?" Does it mean to pray, worship, attend services and read the Bible? Yes, but not primarily. It means to "keep silence before God", look up Isa. 41:1, and compare Psa. 62:1, where the word "waiteth" literally means "be silent". Look up Pro. 8:34.

Waiting upon God means to be cast upon Him in utter dependence, ready to hear His voice and to do His bidding, having our whole expectation from Him. It implies complete confidence and trust in the Lord, and absolutely no confidence in self or in human help

What is the result of such waiting upon the Lord? There is a fourfold result, as

emphasized by the four "shalls" in verse 31:

(1) We shall have God's strength in place of our weakness.

The word "renew" may be literally translated "change" or "exchange". Our greatest weakness is our own strength, and if we will go to the Lord in our utter weakness, He will exchange it for His strength, see 2 Cor. 12:9. What kind of strength?

- **Physical strength?** Yes, He can and does renew our physical strength when we wait upon Him, look up Rom. 8:11.
- **Mental strength?** Yes, He is the fountain of all wisdom and quickens our minds as we wait before Him, look up Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23; 2 Tim. 1:7.
- **Moral strength?** Yes, and how we need it! Look up Eph. 6:10; 2 Tim 2:1.
- **Spiritual strength?** Yes, look up Luke 24:29; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 1:25; Isa. 30:15.

(2) We shall enjoy life above the average.

We shall "mount up with wings as eagles", far above earth's sordid level, to where "the things of earth grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace." The eagle is the only bird which flies so high that it is lost to sight, and that is where you and I belong. We belong to Heaven now, Phil. 3:20 margin; "we are raised up together in Christ", Eph. 2:6, so look up Col. 3:1-2. Many Christians are earth bound, hopping on the ground like a bird with a broken wing, instead of flying high like an eagle! You and I have been made to fly, not hop!

(3) We shall do supernatural things.

We shall "run, and not be weary . . .". It is not natural to run and not feel weary, but God promises supernatural power for the accomplishing of supernatural tasks; we are a supernatural people because we are linked to a supernatural God! Look up John 7:38; 14:12. Are the "rivers" flowing through us and the "greater works" being accomplished through us?

(4) We shall live victoriously in the hardest place of all, in the daily routine of life.

We shall "walk, and not faint", not "run, and not faint". Sometimes it is easier to run than to walk. The most testing place for each one of us is that place where we engage in "the trivial round, the common task". Look up Gen. 5:22; Psa. 37:23.