

**Articles and Sermons :: Those Who Wait On The Lord Will Exchange Their Strength -poonen****Those Who Wait On The Lord Will Exchange Their Strength -poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/6/17 11:46****Those Who Wait On The Lord Will Exchange Their Strength***by Zac Poonen*

Chapter 40 of Isaiah begins with a prophecy of the ministry of John the Baptist: "A voice of one crying in the wilderness saying: Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness. Make smooth the desert." (Isa.40:3-5). This message has an application for us. The Lord is coming back a second time. And just as John the Baptist prepared the people for His first coming, the church must prepare people for His second coming. So our message must essentially be the same as John the Baptist's: First of all, "the valleys must be lifted up" (Isa 40:4). There is no place for discouragement and depression under the new covenant. We are never to say, "I am good for nothing, I am useless." God is a God of encouragement. He has lifted us up in Christ and given us dignity. We don't have to live in the dumps - in the valleys - any more. We are children of the King and He lifts our heads up. Secondly, "the mountains must be brought low" (Isa 40:4). All pride in us must be brought down. Thirdly, the rough places must become smooth. There is a lot of coarseness, rudeness and roughness in our lives. These have to be smoothed out and we have to become gracious and gentle. Fourthly, the crooked paths must become straight (This is how this verse is quoted in Luke 3:5). There are many areas in our lives. There could be unrighteousness in money matters. All of that has to be made straight. This is what true repentance involves - the valleys being lifted up, the mountains being brought down, the rough places made smooth, and the crooked paths made straight. Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed in our flesh. In our flesh, others will see the glory of Jesus Christ. That is how we are to prepare people for the coming of the Lord. "The mouth of the Lord has spoken it and all flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord".

Chapter 40:6, 7 are quoted in 1 Pet.1:24,25: "All flesh is like grass." All the honour that you can get from people in the world is only like some small flower that grows on the grass. The grass withers and the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows upon it. But Peter goes on to say there, "But the word of the Lord endures forever." So those who have lived by the principles of God's word will remain when all the glory of man is destroyed one day. We must never forget that. Everything we see around us is going to perish one day. If we live by the word of God, we will have something eternal. Chapter 40:10, 11 speak of the coming of the Lord. "The Lord will come. His reward is with Him. And like a shepherd He will take care of His flock. He will carry the lambs in His bosom." Chapter 40:12 to 17 speak about the control God exercises over the whole universe. He created everything from nothing. Verse 13 is quoted in 1 Cor.2:16: "Who has taught the Holy Spirit, or as His counsellor informed Him?"

All the nations of the earth are as nothing before Him (Isa 40:17). All the inhabitants of the world are all less than nothing and meaningless. We must see this sovereign rule of God, if we are to serve Him effectively and fearlessly - especially when we go to difficult places where people appear to be so powerful because they have the authority of the State behind them and oppose us as we seek to serve the Lord. We must remember these verses then and trust in the tremendous power of God to protect us and to preserve us. Chapter 40:21,22: "Don't you know and have you not heard? It is He who sits above the circle of the earth." This was written 2700 years ago and Isaiah clearly mentions here that the earth was not flat, but spherical. That was hundreds of years before anyone else on earth believed this. Solomon also mentions the spherical nature of the earth in Proverbs 8:27(NASB). Jesus also implied that the earth was spherical by referring to it being day in some places and night in other places when He returns from heaven (Lk.17:31,34). Chapter 40:26: "Look at the One who controls the stars. He has given them all names." Isaiah was given a vision not only of God's awesome holiness (ch.6), but also of His almighty power. These are the two visions of God that we must always have before us when we serve Him.

Chapter 40:29-31: This verse teaches that this almighty God Whom we worship and serve will give us strength when we are weak. When we lack might, He will give us power. He will give us health and strength to serve Him. Even young people may grow weary and tired and vigorous young men may get exhausted in trying to serve the Lord. But those who wait on the Lord, no matter what their age, will gain new strength. What a wonderful promise! And when young people are collapsing, these older men "who wait on the Lord will mount up with wings like eagles. They will run and won't get tired. They will walk and they will never become weary". I want to encourage you young people: From early youth, learn to wait upon the Lord in simple trust for all your needs. You will gain new strength, as this verse says. Or as another translation puts it: "Those who wait on the Lord will exchange their strength". That means that we give our human strength to the Lo

rd and He gives us His Divine strength in exchange! Hallelujah!! It is wonderful to exchange everything we have with the Lord. Jesus told the Father, "All that I have is Yours, Father. And all that You have is mine" (John.17:10,11). In the Lord's service you need the Lord's strength to see you through. We who serve the Lord really need to trust the Lord to give us supernatural strength from above, His resurrection power - not only in our spirit but in our bodies too. Then we will bear fruit for Him even in old age (Psa.92:14)