

The Answer is in Waiting

By

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Text: Isa. 40:25-31

“To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

“Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth.

“Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God?

“Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

“He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.

“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

“But 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; and they shall walk, and not faint.”

God can, but will He?

“Have faith;” “God is in control;” “continue to pray hard;” “your problem is not beyond God;” “God will do it” are some of the spiritual buzzwords believers tend to throw at a fellow believer in distress.

Most often, the distressed believer agrees with the sayings and sentiments expressed. That God is able to give him victory over the problem he is faced with is usually not something he finds difficult to accept. His concern is really whether God will do it. He can, yes, but will He?

This is the perplexing issue the prophet address in the selected passage. Here he primarily addresses a people in bondage, the people of Judah in Babylonian captivity despaired of God’s justice in their pitiable situation. But hey, it turns out that the people have abandoned their part of the bargain. God is all willing and prepared.

He has no equal and so is His power. The boundless vastness and wonder of creation easily establishes God as the Greatest. Ignore all else, if you will, and just look at the stars of heaven: who leads them across the sky like an army one after another? It’s the Almighty God, Yahweh! And how does He get them all into that orderly moving ensemble? He calls them out by name;

He uses the simple mechanism of command! And not one rogue star is missing from the luminous heavenly parade because of the sheer greatness of His might and power!

Indeed, ¹“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands handiwork. ²Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. ³They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. ⁴Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun. ⁵it is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course” (Ps. 19:1-5 NIV).

The heavens alone are enough tribute to the infinite power of God.

Be that as it may, you have issues for Him to deal with – healing for your aching body, a job opening, business prosperity and His help and guidance in a thousand other areas. Whatever you think of God in relation to your problems and challenges, never doubt or underestimate His power to fulfill your desires. The question of lack of power with regard to God does not come in.

If it has escaped you in your over-anxiety, “the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth” never gets tired and is never short of power. He revives those who are on the point of death, and those sapped of all energy and vitality He strengthens and revitalizes.

Convincing, impressive! But you are still not satisfied. He has refused to uphold your rights; He has refused to take up your case, despite all His awesome power and abilities. In fact, He has failed to notice your plight at all!

But that’s only your wretched, self-pitying opinion. You are operating at a far lower level of understanding which sees little, understands little and discerns little. But poor you, your finite mind is not engaged with another finite mind of comparable cognitive ability. It’s engaged with divine understanding which is unfathomable, which can’t be searched out. God perceives and discerns realities we could never come to grasp; He sees far into eternity. The inevitable result is a clash of perceptions and realities between the higher divine understanding and the lower human one. He says in Isaiah 55:8-9 to correct the apparent misunderstanding of His people about His thoughts and ways:

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts”.

So you totally misread God’s intentions towards you. The depth of His understanding is impenetrable. You cannot know more than He does. He always knows best and always acts in a perfect manner at just the right time.

To you, He may seem to have delayed to show you His power in your hour of need, but do defer to His flawless yet unfathomable wisdom and understanding, and you will be glad you did: You'll soon discover that you were mistaken to question His timing. You never came up late; you emerged first! The Lord knows all about your condition, and He has a great plan for you.

Waiting on God never means Late; it means Unstoppable Strength!

So far, you have come to appreciate the great power of God evident in the creation as well as His boundless understanding. But why does it still feel like He has abandoned you? Why has He not as yet acted on your case?

Not that He's too tired to deal with and bring a closure to your matter, He answers, but actually *He is looking to you*. You hold the key to His intervention. You're anxious, yes; you're hurting, yes; you want immediate answers. But He says relax; don't fret. Be still and look to Him (Ps. 46:10; Isa. 30:7). Pin your hopes on Him. If you wait on Him as He says – pray, seek His face, rely and order your life around Him – you'll personally experience His power in your life; He'll renew your strength to be like an eagle's. You'll soar high above all problems and obstacles in the divine strength of His power.

Beloved, it's not enough to acknowledge the supreme matchless power of God and the mysteriousness of His ways. Before we see *actual results*, our attitude towards Him must change in reflection of what we now know of Him: we must learn to trust Him looking to Him for salvation and succor at all times. And He'll give us super-strength. He'll "renew our strength" unlike we've ever felt in our life and bones before! He who made the eagle to fly nonstop for hundreds of miles over several hours at a time will equip us with the stamina and velocity of the sturdy bird to "run and not be weary", to "walk and not faint".

And it wouldn't matter what we are, how life has treated us, whether our peers are ahead of us in life or even how others perceive us or we perceive ourselves, we'll soar like an eagle. We may be old, less smart, the rank underdog in our family and circle of friends, but we'll still outrun those running the race in their own strength—"the young men". They—young men who trusted in their own strength— will fall by the wayside panting, exhausted, while we sprint past! We're not supermen, no; we simply met the condition. We waited on the Lord, and He did His part: He renewed our strength; He re-energized us in His own untiring power. The eagle strength, after all, was a metaphorical allusion to the unchanging power of "the everlasting God, Yahweh, the Creator of the ends of the earth" who, "fainteth not, neither is weary".

What we realize then is that, the LORD is neither powerless nor unwilling to uphold our rights. His promise is firm that if we wait on Him He will renew our strength to achieve much more beyond our natural abilities. He will give whatever is ours by right rooted in His promises to us (Jer. 29:11; Eph. 1:3).

He allowed others to take the lead and further instructed us to wait on Him – not to unduly delay us – but to demonstrate in His own time that all true and enduring success is from Him. Those who wait on Him don't end up late or failures; they come out on top—from behind! So then, by His understanding those who wait on Him are first, whereas those who draw strength from their 'inner selves' and blast off on their own are last. The latter are mere also-rans; they soon use up their finite strength and fall aside.

The last shall indeed be first and the last first (Matt. 20:16; Luke 13:30) – but only on His terms! That is, if we wait upon Him.

“They Looked to Him and were not Ashamed”

Look through the Bible – it boasts an impressive galaxy of 'waiters'! Which of these men and women of faith who waited on Him was put to shame or fell behind his peers?

It turned out the Lord's position was vindicated time and time again. The believers who waited on the Lord all put their (nameless) contemporaries in the shade to date, although these 'waiters' were clearly underdogs. Certainly, “It's good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD” (Lam. 3:26). This speaks of a time of trial and trouble when people are wont to fret and try all sorts of remedies. But this is the time to look to Him in a prayerful attitude of joyful hope and patience: “Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer” (Rom. 2:12).

David sings in praise of Yahweh:

“I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

“He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

“And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

“Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies” (Ps. 40:1-4).

This is the posture God recommends, not an impatient spirit that bursts out in frustration at God for not granting their request as though He never will, despite all His power. If you look to Him as He directs, you stand to emerge a champion from your underdog position. None of the old saints ever waited in vain. They waited and their lives were changed! When Sarah waited on the Lord, she laughed with the birth of Isaac, though at 90 years she was past the age of child bearing; when Hanna waited on God she had an illustrious son in the person of the Prophet Samuel; and when Joseph waited he emerged from prison to overnight royalty; indeed he swapped places his former persecutors (Ps. 105:19-22). They waited upon the LORD and He made them soar (high) on the wings of His power like eagles.

So will you if you wait on the LORD:

“They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed” (Ps. 34:5).

King David exhorts us, “Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD” (Ps. 27:14).

Beloved, it’s settled then. Say now to your soul, ‘O my soul, my heart is fixed in the LORD’ (Ps. 57:7; 108:1; 112:7). Amen!