

# Isaiah 40:31 Commentary

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Isaiah 40:31 Yet those who [wait](#) for the [LORD](#) will [gain new strength](#). They will [mount](#) up with [wings](#) like [eagles](#). They will [run](#) and not [get tired](#). They will [walk](#) and not [become weary](#). ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**English Translation of the Greek** (Septuagint): but they that **wait** (continually) on God shall renew their strength; they shall put forth new feathers like eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not hunger. (Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton).

**Amplified:** But those who **wait** for the Lord [**who expect, look for, and hope** in Him] shall change and renew their strength and power; they shall lift their wings and mount up [close to God] as eagles [mount up to the sun]; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired. [He 12:1, 2, 3.] ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**ESV:** 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.

**KJV:** 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;

**NET:** But those who **wait** for the Lord's help find renewed strength; they rise up as if they had eagles' wings, they run without growing weary, they walk without getting tired. ([NET Bible](#))

**NIV:** but those who **hope** in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

**NJB:** but those who **hope** in Yahweh will regain their strength, they will sprout wings like eagles, though they run they will not grow weary, though they walk they will never tire. ([NJB](#))

**NLT:** but those who **hope** in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Young's Literal:** But those **expecting** Jehovah pass to power, They raise up the pinion as eagles, They run and are not fatigued, They go on and do not faint!

**Yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength**

- Is 8:17; 25:9; 30:18; Ps 25:3,5,21; 27:14; 37:34; 40:1; 84:7; 92:1,13; Ps 123:2; Lam 3:25,26; Ro 8:25; 1Th 1:10
- **Gain/renew/exchange** - Jdg 16:28; Job 17:9; 33:24, 25, 26; Ps 103:5; 138:3; 2Co 1:8, 9, 10; 2Co 4:8, 9, 10,16; 2Co 12:9-note, 2Co 12:10-note
- Isaiah 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## WAITING FOR JEHOVAH

**Beloved, how do we wait? Or better yet, why would we choose to wait on anyone or anything? And finally, and more to the point, in the present passage what is required to wait for Jehovah?** Is this wait not a wait of faith? Is it not a faith that lays hold of the "fringes of His ways" (cp Job 26:14, read context Job 26:6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13)? Is it not a faith which sees the unseeable (He 11:1-note, faith "sees" God = He 11:27-note, cp 2Co 4:18, Ps 73:25-note, Ps 73:26-note). Is it not a faith which obeys (note on relationship between faith and obedience) in spite of the external (or even internal) turmoil (related to circumstances and/or people). Indeed, faith sees the tumult which is sorely tempting us not to wait on Jehovah, and chooses to see the temptation through the grid of the promise giving, covenant keeping God (His great Name Jehovah even emphasizing and undergirding the truth that He is a covenant keeping God.) Faith is the convinced, convicted heart reaching out to the Almighty (Shaddai) to readily receive His free grace in one its many and variegated forms (in this verse depicted as flight like an eagle! cp the availability of manifold/multicolored grace for manifold/multicolored trials - 1Pe 4:10KJV-note, 1Pe 1:6KJV-note). And so just as there is saving faith, there is also "waiting faith", faith that relies on and recalls the record of what God has done and/or declared, rather than relying on "an arm of flesh" (2Chr 32:8a). A waiting faith is a faith that allows one to sit still and know that Jehovah is God (Ps 46:10-note), the Living God

(Ps 42:2-note), Who alone can be relied on to accomplish His good will and work in and through our life. And sometimes His method of achieving His goal is to have us wait. In sum, the wait of faith is not easy for it may bring death to our desires and dreams (Mk 8:34, Lk 9:23, but it is a wait that is necessary if we would "mount up with wings like eagles". Faith is often challenged by waiting, but we are able to wait if we really believe what God has told us. In the present context, those who wait (hope in Isa 40:31NIV) for Jehovah are those who place their faith in Him and ultimately in His Messiah, i.e., those Jewish believers who constitute the faithful remnant.

**William Barclay** explains it this way...

Faith begins with receptivity. It begins when a man or woman is at least willing to listen to the message of the truth (cp Ro 10:17-note). It goes on to mental assent. A man or woman first hears and then agrees that this is true. But mental assent need not issue in action (**Ed**: specifically in God honoring righteous action, cp Titus 1:16-note). Many an individual knows very well that something is true, but does not change his or her actions to meet that knowledge (cp Titus 1:1NIV-note). The final stage is when this mental assent becomes total surrender (cp Jn 1:11, 12, 13). In full-fledged faith, the individual hears the (truth about Jehovah), agrees that it is true, and then casts himself or herself upon it in a life of total yieldedness. (In this present passage this surrender is manifest as a willingness to wait upon Jehovah, trusting totally in His timing and sufficiency to meet every need in time and eternity. cp Php 4:19-note)

Nothing before, nothing behind,  
The steps of faith  
Fall on the seeming void, and find  
The rock beneath.

--Whittier

The precious truths in **Isaiah 40:31** have given comfort and encouragement to countless numbers of saints over the centuries. Although the truths in this passage can be applied in the life of all believers, it behooves us to be sure that we interpret the passage in its context.

First, recall that Isaiah the prophet is primarily addressing **Judah and Jerusalem** (Isa 1:1) and although the first 39 chapters dealt primarily with **judgment**, in Isaiah 40-66 the prophet changes the focus to that of **comfort**, addressing these words of encouragement to the Jewish exiles in Babylonian captivity. It is not surprising therefore that Isaiah 40-66 is replete with a number of great Messianic prophecies pointing the Israel (and all mankind's) ultimate source of strength, Messiah, the Holy One of Israel.

The words of **William Cowper's** great hymn could have just as well been written to Israel as to modern believers...

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust Him for His grace;  
Behind the frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face.

Blind unbelief is sure to err  
And scan His work in vain;  
God is His own Interpreter,  
And He will make it plain.

## CONTEXT: Isaiah 40:25-30

Isaiah 40:31 is one of those famous, favorite passages that we cannot read or hear enough because of the encouraging promises God gives us. The problem however is that too often we read this great text out of its proper **context** and as a result lose some of the meaning which God intended. So be sure to take some time to ponder the passages preceding Isaiah 40:31 to help you appreciate and appropriate the God's great promises.

The **immediate context** is Isaiah 40:27-30 (in fact slowly read Isaiah 40:1-24 to help understand the context)...

**25** "To whom then will you liken Me That I should be his equal?" says (literally "keeps saying" as in Is 40:1) the Holy One. **26** Lift up your eyes on high and see Who has created these stars, the One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name. Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power not one of them is missing (The third mention of His incomparable power as Creator, Is 40:12, 21, 22).

(Read these 2 passages again and make a list of what you learn about God. Why is this so important? Because He is the One Who stands behind the promises of Isaiah 40:31. And so we need first to really know Him, His character, His attributes, His capability... and not just know about Him.) 27 Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and the justice due me escapes the notice of my God (Elohim)"? 28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting (eternal) God, the LORD (Jehovah - the covenant keeping God), the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable (not readily investigated, interpreted, or understood). 29 He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power. 30 Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly 31 Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary. (Isaiah 40:25-31) (Play the beautiful melody [Do You Not Know? \(Scroll Down\)](#)) ([If you like a bit of a beat play Lincoln Brewster - The Everlasting God - and as you do please read Scriptures posted with the video](#))

Here are a few brief comments on **Isaiah 40:25-30**:

## Isaiah 40:2-5

God Himself asks a rhetorical question (reiterating the truth in Is 40:18) which begs the answer that there is no one like Him! None is His equal! God identifies Himself as the Holy One, the one who is separate from His creation and is to be distinguished from those He has created. And by extension He is indescribably superior to all so called gods (including the pantheon of Babylonian idols)!

**Motyer** notes that

Holy One is the killing blow to any thought of a comparison! It is not only his power (Is 40:12), wisdom (Is 40:13,14), dignity (Is 40:15, 16, 17), sovereignty (Is 40:22, 23) and authority (Is 40:24) that put Him beyond compare. Of far more significance is His unattainable, unassailable moral perfection. The Holy One is here an adjective without the definite article, as though 'Holy' were another name for the Lord: 'Holy keeps saying'. ([The Prophecy of Isaiah- An Introduction & Commentary](#))

As **Young** rightly states...

Only God can ask these questions, for only God is holy. The creature is finite, temporal, and, because of sin, mortal; God is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable.

**Constable** adds that God declares...

Not only is God infinitely superior to anyone else in power, wisdom, dignity, sovereignty, and authority, but, far more significantly, in His holiness. He is unattainable and unassailable in His moral perfections; He is wholly other. ([Isaiah - Expository Notes](#))

## Isaiah 40:2-6

God strikes a fatal blow against the astral worship that plagued Babylon (cp Dt 4:19, cp what happened to Israel - 2Ki 17:16, 21:3). God is the Creator and the Sustainer of everything by virtue of His great might and power. As innumerable as the stars are He knows every one and has named every one. And so the night sky with its "twinkle, twinkle little star" gives clear testimony concerning Jehovah's creative ability (cp Ps 19:1, 2-[note](#), Ro 1:19-note, Ro 1:20-note). Such a great truth should prompt wonder, awe and worship by the creature! Like a general who brings out his armored host to the battle field, God causes the stars to "come forth" night after night.

**Vine** comments that...

Omnipotence alone is requisite for the whole constant, glorious and orderly procedure. The heavenly host exists and moves, not simply by natural laws. The Son of God is Himself the sustaining Center, Upholder and Controller of all: "all things have been created through Him, and unto Him: and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist" (i.e., hold together), (see Col 1:16-note, Col 1:17-note). He upholds "all things by the word of His power" (Heb. 1:3-note). While what has just preceded is retrospectively a protest against idolatry in the nation, it is also introductory to a message of comfort to the remnant of the godly who are cast down and despairing. ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

## Isaiah 40:27

God has just testified to His might and power (Is 40:25, 26) and now the prophet is addressing **Jacob and... Israel** (Note: This combination of names occurs 21x in Isaiah = Isa 9:8;10:20;14:1;27:6;29:23; 40:27; 41:8;41:14; 42:24; 43:1; 43:22; 43:28; 44:1; 44:21; 44:23; 45:4; 46:3; 48:1; 48:12; 49:5; 49:6) - Given the fact that this prophecy could have been uttered prior to the Assyrian conquest of the Northern Kingdom in 722BC and certainly before the Babylonian conquest of the Southern Kingdom in 586BC, the designations **Jacob and... Israel** could be directed at both the Northern and Southern kingdoms. **Lange** writes...

The Prophet sees that the long chastisement of the Exile would call up doubts in the spirits of the Israelites. Carried off into a heathen land, they will suppose that God's eyes do not penetrate to them, and that the wrong they suffer escapes His notice (Is 40:27). (A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Isaiah).

And so God Who sees the beginning from the end, has His prophet Isaiah utter words that He knows will bring comfort to the Jews in captivity who would otherwise become disillusioned and downcast thinking that Jehovah no longer saw and no longer cared for their miserable plight!

**Have we not all been here, beloved, thinking surely God must have forgotten about my current miserable lot in life, whatever might be the specific details?** Focusing **inward**, rather than **outward** and especially **upward** (Godward on the One above, the things above, the eternal rather than the temporal - cp Col 3:1-note, Col 3:2-note, 2Co 4:18, fixing our eyes on Jesus - He 12:2-note), we instead have chosen to have a "pity party" and declare "God is not really concerned with my miserable state?" One antidote at times like this is to remember Who God is, recalling past blessings from His gracious hand (cp La 3:20, 21, 22, 23, 24, Ps 42:5-[Spurgeon's note](#))

"When the water-floods of grief  
Round your helpless head shall rise,  
When there seems no relief,  
Lift your gaze to yonder skies;  
There behold how radiantly  
Beams the star of HOPE divine!  
Yesterday it shone for thee,  
And today it still shall shine.  
Ask no aid the world can give,  
LOOKING UNTO Jesus, live!"

**Charlie Dyer** writes that...

Isaiah's readers were under the threat of Assyria. Years later Isaiah's readers during the Babylonian Captivity were under the domination of a godless empire. So Isaiah encouraged the people to remember that God never relaxes; He is always watching His people. ([Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., et al: The Bible Knowledge Commentary. 1985. Victor](#))

**Look around and be distressed.**

**Look inside and be depressed.**

**Look at Jesus and be at rest.**

([Listen to Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus by Alan Jackson](#))

**Vine** adds that...

Any of us who are tempted to despondency because of the pressure of adverse circumstances should lay hold of the facts which we have accepted by faith, as well as gather from our experiences of God's merciful dealings with us, that He, the Creator of all things, is "the same yesterday and today, yea, and forever," (He 13:8-note) and therefore has the same power at our disposal as He manifested in His creative acts (cp the power of His living Word = Lk 1:37ASV, He 11:3-note and Is 50:4). He never suffers from overexertion (Is 40:30); and since His understanding is infinite, He knows (Omniscient) all about us. Our most trying experiences, whether from without or within, are not only known to Him, but are under His absolute control (Sovereign). He appoints the time for His

interposition and our deliverance (Sovereign). ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

## Isaiah 40:28

Two rhetorical questions are calculated to cause the reader to recall God's character. ([Listen to the Song - Do You Not Know?](#)) He is **everlasting** (cp His name El Olam in Ge 21:33). God is **Eternal** (see [study of this attribute](#)).

**Comment:** So in contrast to the dark judgment of the preceding chapters, this last section shines with the light of the promises of restoration to the land (Isa 40-48), of the coming of Messiah (Isa 49-57), and of millennial blessings for Israel (Isa 58-66). Keep in mind also that Israel had not yet gone into exile but God allowed the prophet Isaiah to see not only to their exile (Isaiah wrote this amazing prophecy over 150 years before the Jewish believing remnant would ever need it for their encouragement) and subsequent restoration to their land but to see far beyond that terrible time to future blessings. Why? Because God had made a promise, a covenant to Abraham hundreds of years before and those promises had yet to be fulfilled. God foreordained and orchestrated events so that the promises of the Abrahamic covenant were brought to fruition in the New Covenant (Je 31:33 cp Zec 13:9, Ro 11:26,27). Our omniscient, omnipotent God is indeed providentially in control of all of human History for ultimately it is "His-story".

**Wiersbe:** As the remnant in Babylon looked back, they saw failure and sin, and they needed encouragement...

The Jews were few in number, only a remnant, and facing a long and difficult journey. The victories of Assyria, Babylon, and Persia made it look as though the false gods of the Gentiles were stronger than the God of Israel, but Isaiah reminded the people of the greatness of Jehovah. When you behold the greatness of God, then you will see everything else in life in its proper perspective... Someone has defined "**circumstances**" as "those nasty things you see when you get your eyes off of God." If you look at God through your circumstances, He will seem small and very far away, but if by faith you look at your circumstances through God, He will draw very near and reveal His greatness to you.

The circumstances within us (Is 40:27, 28, 29, 30, 31). Instead of praising the Lord, the nation was complaining to Him that He acted as though He did not know their situation or have any concern for their problems (Is 40:27; 49:14). Instead of seeing the open door, the Jews saw only the long road before them, and they complained that they did not have strength for the journey. God was asking them to do the impossible

## Isaiah 40:29

The prophet plainly presents the pattern for a life of power. We must receive His gift of strength and power, supernatural gifts which He continually, graciously gives, but only to those who recognize and acknowledge their personal need. The Hebrew word for **weary** means faint, exhausted, especially emotionally and spiritually, a need met only by Jesus Who speaks a word of encouragement to the weary soul (Is 50:4)

### THE CONTRAST...

#### "YET"

**Yet - Hint:** Whenever you encounter a **term of contrast** like "**but**" or "**yet**", use that as an opportunity to pause and ponder the text (**query** the text using the 5W/H'S). This exercise will force you to examine the preceding **context** and slow you down giving you time to **meditate** on the text and allowing your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, time to illuminate the passage. While this discipline takes some practice, as you become more skilled, you will be amazed at how much your understanding and retention of the Scripture will improve. Too often we get in a hurry reading the Word, trying to make certain that we read our chapters for the day in our through the Bible in a year program. But because we are forced to read so fast, at times we remember very little of what we read by the end of the day. One verse "swallowed" and "digested" is far better than several chapters read hastily! See Related Resource: inductive Bible study.

Now back to Isaiah 40:31 - Using "yet" Isaiah is presenting a **contrast** between the "**youths... and vigorous young men**" in the

preceding context (Is 40:30) and men and women who **wait** on Jehovah. The former live in their natural strength in contrast to the "waiters" who live in God's sufficient supernatural strength. **This begs the question beloved -- In whose strength are you living the Christian life - yours or His? If you are living the Christian life like the youths and young men (and are tired and worn out), then this verse is for you!**

**Ed Young** observes that...

The contrast (**yet**) is between the youths and the waiters upon the Lord, those who fully believe in God's power to deliver, and manifest their confidence in Him by patiently waiting for Him to bring His promise to fulfillment. During the Old Testament dispensation this designation would apply to those who longed for the fulfillment of the promises and in patience waited for them (cf. Luke 2:25, 38) (**Ed**: I.e., the believing remnant). Nevertheless, what the prophet sets forth is also a general truth, applying to the strength that comes to those who at any time wait in patience for God's purposes to be carried out. ([Young, Ed: The Book of Isaiah - 3 Volume Commentary. Eerdmans Pub. 1992-hardcopy](#))

**Keil and Delitzsch** explain

even young men in the early bloom of their morning of life, succumb to the effects of the loss of sustenance or over-exertion and any outward obstacle is sufficient to cause them to fall. "Even though this may happen, it is different with those who wait for Jehovah," i.e., those who believe in Him; for the Old Testament applies to faith a number of synonyms denoting **trust**, **hope**, and **longing**, and thus describes it according to its inmost nature, as fiducia and as hope, directed to the manifestation and completion of that which is hoped for.

**Calvin** writes that in contrast to the strength God imparts...

men's strength easily fails, but God's strength never fails. It is indeed certain that all the vigor which naturally dwells in us proceeds from God; but since men claim as their own what God has bestowed generally on all, the Prophet thus distinguishes between the strength of men which appears to be born with them, and that strength by which God peculiarly supports his elect; for God's kindness, which is diffused throughout all nature, is not sufficiently perceived. And thus by "men's strength" he means that which is generally possessed by mankind

**Matthew Henry** writes that God...

will help the willing, will help those who, in a humble dependence upon Him, help themselves, and will do well for those who do their best, Is 40:30, 31. Those who trust to their own sufficiency, and are so confident of it that they neither exert themselves to the utmost nor seek unto God for His grace, are the youth and the young men, who are strong, but are apt to think themselves stronger than they are. And they shall faint and be weary, yea, they shall utterly fail in their services, in their conflicts, and under their burdens; they shall soon be made to see the folly of trusting to themselves.

### **The Red Sea Place**

Have you come to the Red Sea place in your life,  
Where, in spite of all you can do,  
There is no way out, there is no way back,  
There is no other way but through?

### **Then wait on the Lord with a trust serene**

Till the night of your fear is gone;  
He will send the wind, He will heap the floods,  
When He says to your soul, "Go on."

**--Annie Johnson Flint**

**God's timing is always right—  
wait patiently for Him.**

### **THE CONDITION: WAITING ON GOD**

**Wait** ([06960](#)) (**qavah** from a root meaning twisting or winding a cord) means to wait for, to hope for, to look eagerly for; to lie in wait for; linger for, to expect. The basic idea is to wait for or look for with eager expectation.

**Motyer** adds that...



**Hope** (with its biblical dimension of certainty) is one facet of **qavah**, which also includes **waiting** (patience) and **resting** (trusting). The participial form points to those in whom this relationship (of expectation, patience and trust) with the Lord is unchanging.

**Ed Comment:** The **Septuagint** translates **qavah** with the Greek verb **hupomeno** in the **present tense** picturing a **continual** [unchanging] relationship of patiently remaining or abiding under.

To **wait** for Jehovah is not simply a matter of patience, or even of longing, but includes the ideas of trust and the confidence which characterize hope.

The **ESV Study Bible** explains that when we **wait for Jehovah** we are "savoring God's promise by faith until the time of fulfillment." ([ESV Online Study Bible Crossway](#)).

**Oswalt** notes that to **wait on Jehovah** speaks of...

complete dependence on God and a willingness to allow Him to decide the terms.

**Warren Wiersbe** comments that in the midst of our trials and difficult circumstances...

God knows how we feel and what we fear, and He is adequate to meet our every need. We can never obey God in our own strength, but we can always trust Him to provide the strength we need (Php 4:13-note). If we trust ourselves, we will faint and fall; but if we wait on the Lord by faith, we will receive strength for the journey. The word **"wait"** does not suggest that we sit around and do nothing. It means **"to hope,"** to look to God for all that we need (Is 26:3; 30:15). This involves **meditating** on His character and His promises, praying, and seeking to glorify Him. (Wiersbe, W: Be Comforted).

**David McCasland** asks...

Is there an obstacle between you and something that is rightfully yours? You believe it's God's will, but the method of obtaining it and the timing don't seem right. Think long and pray hard before taking a bad path toward a good goal. **Waiting** for God to act is the best opportunity for the right things to happen His way.

O God, make me one of those rarest of souls  
Who willingly wait for Thy time;  
My impatient will must be lost in Thine own,  
And Thy will forever be mine. —Bowser

As discussed at the outset of this note, clearly **patiently waiting for Jehovah** reflects an attitude of trusting and hoping in Him. **John Calvin** explains this interrelationship noting that "patience is the fruit and proof of **faith**" and "hope is the foundation of patience". **Calvin** goes on to say that "There is no place for **faith** if we expect God to fulfil immediately what He promises." (cp Ro 8:24, 25-note) In other words such a person is not trusting and thus is unwilling to **wait patiently** on Jehovah to fulfill His word.

His strength upon thy weakness waits,  
His power for thy task.  
What more, O child of all His care,  
Could any great one ask?  
--Annie Johnson Flint

The **TWOT** explains that...

**Waiting** with steadfast endurance is a great expression of faith. It means enduring patiently in confident hope that God will decisively act for the salvation of his people (Ge 49:18). Waiting involves the very essence of a person's being, his soul (nephesh; Ps 130:5). **Those who wait in true faith are renewed in strength so that they can continue to serve the Lord while looking for his saving work** (Isa 40:31). There will come a time when all that God has promised will be realized and fulfilled (Is 49:23; Ps 37:9 **Ed: When? In the Millennium**). In the meantime the believer survives by means of his integrity and uprightness as he trusts in God's grace and power (Ps 25:21). His faith is strengthened through his testings, and his character is further developed (Ps 27:14). Israel is encouraged to hold fast to love and justice, i.e. they are to follow the law faithfully and maintain consistently the standards of justice, at the same time preserving an attitude of godly love (Ho 12:6; cf. Ps 37:34; Job 4:6). During times of visitation and judgment, the righteous must exercise great faith (Is 26:8; La 3:19-33). **Thus Isaiah confidently asserts,**

I **will wait** (chakah) for the LORD, Who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob, and I

**will hope** (put my trust in [Is 8:17NIV]; Lxx = peitho [word study]) in Him (Is 8:17). (**Ed:**  
Note the clear association of waiting and hoping/trusting.)

When God arrives on the scene with redemptive power, the response of those who have waited will be jubilant joy and great singing (Isa 25:9). ([Harris, R L, Archer, G L & Waltke, B K Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. Moody Press](#))

**Qavah** - 45v in the **OT** - Gen. 1:9; 49:18; Job 3:9; 6:19; 7:2; 17:13; 30:26; Ps. 25:3, 5, 21; 27:14; 37:9, 34; 39:7; 40:1; 52:9; 56:6; 69:6, 20; 119:95; 130:5; Pr 20:22; **Is 5:2, 4, 7; 8:17; 25:9; 26:8; 33:2; 40:31; 49:23; 51:5; 59:9, 11; 60:9; 64:3** ([see brief exposition of some of these verses above](#)); Jer. 3:17; 8:15; 13:16; 14:19, 22; La 2:16; 3:25; Hos. 12:6; Mic. 5:7 and rendered in the **NAS** as -- eagerly waits for(1), expect(1), expected(3), hope for(2), hope in(1), hoped for(1), hopefully wait for(1), hoping for(1), look eagerly for(1), look for(1), looked for(2), wait for(21), wait on(1), waited(4), waited for(3), waited for eagerly(1), waited patiently for(1)

Lamentations 3:25 The LORD is good to those who **wait** for Him, to the person who seeks Him. (**Ed:** Waiting is not passive but in this verse is related with seeking God, clearly a active process, whether by seeking Him in His Word as we study it or in prayer as we commune with Him.)

### **Patience is a virtue that carries a lot of wait!**

Later in Isaiah's prophecy, Jehovah gives other promises using the verb **qavah**...

And kings will be your guardians, and their princesses your nurses. They will bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of your feet; and you will know that I am the LORD; **Those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame.** (Isaiah 49:23) (John MacArthur writes and I agree with him that ultimately this passage will be fulfilled in the **Millennium**)

"My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth, and My arms will judge the peoples; The coastlands will **wait** (Hebrew = qavah; ) for Me, and for My arm they will wait expectantly. (Isaiah 51:5)

**Spurgeon** writes that...

Everything comes to the man who can **wait**. It is only a matter of time. Patience beholds great wonders. In spiritual things, if we watch and **wait**, we shall see glorious things.

God waits to be gracious, and the gracious wait on God. God, who feeds his ravens, will feed his doves.

Knock at mercy's gate, but wait till it opens to you. Too many prayers are a sort of runaway knock, for they are not attended with expectant waiting upon God.

Fret not in a hurry. Tarry a bit and see what time will do. "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it."—James 5:7. In spiritual things we must learn to wait patiently.

"Our husbandmen for harvest wait and stay;  
Oh, let not any saint do less than they!"

Patient waiters are no losers. Everything comes to the man who is able to wait for it.

With patience I the storm sustain,  
For sunshine still doth follow rain.

Pray and stay are words for every day. Good words and wise. Practise both. Worship and wait. God's answers are not always immediate. His delays are not denials. Erskine rightly says:—

I'm heard when answered soon or late;  
And heard when I no answer get:  
Yea, kindly answer'd when refused,  
And treated well when harshly us'd.

**A W Tozer** writes...

As children of God, we can always afford to wait. A saint of God does not have to be concerned about time when he is in the will of God. It is the sinner who has no time. He has to hurry or he will go to hell, but the Christian has an eternity of blessedness before him.

Adrian Rogers on "waiting"...

you've got to learn to wait upon the Lord. Now what does that mean? I'm going to tell you in a moment, but I'm



going to tell you what it doesn't mean, first of all. It does not mean inactivity. It does not mean sitting around, saying, "Well, I'm waiting on God. If He wants to do something, He can." No, no, no, no. Listen. In the olden days when a boy was courting a girl, do you know what the old timers would say? They'd say, "That young man's waiting on that young lady." What did he mean by that? It means he's pursuing her. He's pursuing her. He's waiting on her. I'll guarantee you that was not inactivity. Now he may have been waiting on her to fix her face or something, but that's not what they meant by that. He is pursuing her. He is, he's waiting on her.

## FOUR WAYS OF WAITING ON THE LORD

Let me tell you four things it means to wait on the Lord and we'll be finished.

**(1) First, waiting on the Lord means to long for the Lord.** Look at Psalm 62:1. David says "My soul waits upon God; from Him cometh my salvation." David is in distress. David has some industrial-strength problems, and he's saying, "O God, I need You. You are my hope, my salvation." Do you believe that, sir, or do you believe that you are your salvation? Do you believe that you can read some book by some business guru or some pop psychologist? I'm telling you that you need to long for God. You need God! You need God! (amen). To wait upon God means to long for Him. That's what David said.

**(2) Not only does waiting mean to long for the Lord, but it means to listen to the Lord.** Here's a great verse. This is one for the refrigerator door. Proverbs 8:34: "Blessed is the man that hears Me [now underscore that, that hears me], watching daily at my gates, waiting, waiting at the posts of my doors." Waiting at the posts of my doors. He who hears Me. He's waiting. That is, he has reported for instruction. He's there at the gate when the Lord comes out, like a servant. "Good morning, my Master. Here I am reporting for duty. I'm at Your gates, Lord. I am listening at the posts of Your doors. As you step out the door this morning, what do You have for me this morning as I open the door of the morning and enter into your service? I want to hear from You." **The reason that many of us are stressed is we're doing things God's never assigned us to do. And the reason we're doing things God never assigned us to do is we haven't been listening to God. We have not been waiting upon the Lord.** Do you have a daily quiet time? He says, "... waiting daily at my gates..." Do you have a time when you listen? Do you "report for duty," or are you doing things that you've assigned yourself, or others have assigned you, but you're not doing what God wants you to do?"

Now what does it mean—see if you can remember. First of all, to long for the Lord. Secondly, to listen to the Lord. Now let me tell you the third thing that it means. Ah, and, o, before, before I leave this thing of listening, let me tell you a story I shared with the earlier congregation. It's a wonderful story.

Back during the Great Depression... Jobs were very hard to get. And, so a newspaper advertised for a telegraph company needing somebody as a telegraph operator. And they communicated through the telegraph. And this man said, "I can do that. I'm trained for that." And he went down to apply for the job. He was so happy. When he got there, the outer office, was filled with people who had come there to try to get that one job. This man was so discouraged. He thought to himself, "They were all here before me. Someone will be hired even before I get interviewed." But as he said that to himself, he heard a noise coming out of the, back room, and as he listened, he recognized it. It was the dots and the dashes of the Morse Code—dot, dot, dash, dash, etc. He listened. Then a smile came across his face. He got up and went in the inner office, came back with an even wider smile, and said, "I've got the job!" They said, "Wait a minute! How could you have the job? We were here first." He said, **"But you weren't listening."** He said, "In Morse Code they said, 'If you can understand this, come inside. You've got the job'". That's how the company separated the room full of men to be interviewed. There was a man just sitting there but he was tuned in. I wonder how many people are missing opportunities, because they are missing what the "Great Telegraph Operator" is saying in code (dot, dot, dash, dash). In short, they are not listening to God.

What does to wait on the Lord mean? It means to **long** for the Lord. It means to **listen** to the Lord.

**3) Waiting on the Lord means to look to the Lord.** In Psalm 104:27, speaking of the animals, the beast of the field. "These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their food in due season." The little animals, they look to the Lord by instinct. They all wait upon thee, O God. They are looking to thee. Do you look to the Lord? I mean, where is the source of your supply? Have you ever said, "Lord, You are, indeed, the strength of my life, and You are the source of my supply You are my hope and my expectation, and I truly believe that every need will be met in You?" Now look, folks.

**Someone has said that a college lecture is where the information that is in the professor's head and**

**the professor's notebook gets into the notebook of the student without really going through the head and the heart of either one of them.**

Are you listening? You say, "Yeah, pastor, yeah, sure, I need to **long** for the Lord. I need to **listen** to the Lord. I'm to **look** to the Lord. Yeah, I know that." But are you really listening? Do you really long for Him? Do you have a time when you really listen to Him? Do you really **look** to Him? I mean, will you say it and mean it, "God, You are the source of my supply. You, my God, will supply all my needs according to your riches in glory." (Php 4:19)

Waiting on the Lord means to look to the Lord. Look to Him. Not to look to anybody else, but to look to the Lord.

4) And here is the clincher... Waiting on the Lord means **to live for the Lord**. Let me give you the verse that points that out and makes that true. Proverbs 27:18: "Whoso keeps the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof; so he that waits on his master shall be honored." Now what does it mean to wait on your master? It means to serve him. When you go to the restaurant, you have a waitress or a waiter. They're there to serve you. And, by the way, have you ever noticed sometime how hard it is to get their attention? You want another cup of coffee, or you dropped your fork, or you need a napkin, or you want to pay your bill. You can't get their attention. An epitaph of a waitress' tombstone,

**"God finally got her attention.  
God finally caught her eye."**

What is it? Now listen. They are there to serve you, to wait upon you. And they are there for whatever you require. Do you want God to give you strength to fly like an eagle? Do you want God to give you strength to run like an athlete? Do you want God to give you strength to walk like a soldier day by day? I ask why? Why should God give me more strength to serve the devil? (amen). I mean, if I don't intend to wait upon Him, if I'm not His waiter, if I'm not His server, if I'm not there for His glory, why should God give me strength to glorify the devil? (amen). What does it mean to wait upon the Lord?

To wait upon the Lord means  
to long for the Lord,  
to listen to the Lord,  
to look to the Lord, and  
to live for the Lord.

## **"WAITING" IN THE SEPTUAGINT**

The **Septuagint** translates **qavah** in Isaiah 40:31 with the Greek verb **hupomeno** [ word study] which is derived from **hupó** = under, as in under the rule of someone + **méno** = to abide or remain (see also study of noun **hupomone**) and means literally to remain under not simply with resignation, but with a vibrant hope. The **present tense** and **active voice** pictures this **remaining under** as one's continual practice, continually willing to yield one's will to Jehovah and abide under (and in) His good and acceptable and perfect will.

The idea of **enduring** is not just to "grin and bear it" but to remain under trials in a such a way that we glorify God (Mt 5:16note) as we learn the lessons the trials are meant to teach us, instead of seeking ways to get out from under (cf the prefix preposition "**hupo**" = under) the trials and be relieved of the pressure.

And so waiting is not passive (not simply "letting go and letting God") but involves our participation as for example "participating" by praying while we patiently wait. As **John Blanchard** rightly says...

Waiting for an answer to prayer is often part of the answer.

**Peter Marshall** offers this prayer for impatient believers...

Teach us, O Lord, the discipline of patience, for to wait is often harder than to work.

**Wayne Detzler** recounts an amazing true life example of Christian perseverance writing that...

True Christian **perseverance** is not tied to tenacity. It is rather the work of God the Holy Spirit in a believer's life. The starch in a saint's spine is shown by Scripture to be nothing less than the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Only in this way can one explain the work of **Gladys Aylward**, a London parlor maid. Societies scorned

her missionary application. She seemed too dull to master Chinese and fulfill her vision of serving in China. Realizing this, she scoured up her own fare to China and sailed in 1930. After slogging her way across Siberia she reached her field in remote Yangcheng. When the Japanese invaded in 1940 she led 100 children on an epic journey that caught the imagination of Hollywood (**Ed**: Watch the movie about her life - [The Inn of the Sixth Happiness](#) or [DVD](#)). In 1947 failing health forced her back to England where she crusaded for missions until her death in 1970. That was tenacity, not just British grit. It is **God's persevering grace**. ([Detzler, Wayne E: New Testament Words in Today's Language. Victor. 1986](#))

Another great example of a Christian who endured (persevered) under trials in a God honoring way is **William Wilberforce** ([biography in Wikipedia](#) or [short bio in Christian History](#)) the 19th-century parliamentarian, who was moved by the Lord to oppose the lucrative but humanly degrading slave trade. In 1807 Wilberforce brought about the banning of the slave trade in England but it was not until 1833 was slavery as an institution abolished, this news reaching Wilberforce even as he lay on his deathbed. Talk about persevering!

**Thomas Brooks** wrote this exhortation on **waiting**...

**Waiting souls**, remember this:—assurance is yours, but the time of giving it is the Lord's; the jewel is yours, but the season in which he will give it is in his own hand; the golden chain is yours, but he only knows the hour wherein he will put it around your necks. Well, **wait patiently and quietly, wait expectantly and believingly, wait affectionately, and wait diligently, and you shall find that scripture made good with power upon your souls**, "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (He 10:17). The mercies of God are not styled the swift, but the sure mercies of David; and therefore a gracious soul patiently waits for them.

As someone has said life is a symphony, and we lose a third of it by cutting out the slow movement.

**Francis Burkitt** wrote that...

The hand of faith never knocked in vain at the door of heaven. Mercy is as surely ours as if we had it, if we have but faith and patience to wait for it.

## **OTHER INSTANCES OF WAITING IN ISAIAH**

**Waiting** is a repetitive thought in Isaiah as shown by the following passages (and the fact that 1/3 of the OT uses of the verb [qavah](#) are used by Isaiah)...

**(Isaiah 25:9)** And it will be said in **that day** (At the beginning of the Messiah's Millennial Kingdom), "Behold (interjection used to arouse or heighten the reader's attention), this is our God for Whom we have **waited** (**qavah** - waited with eager expectation and steadfast endurance which is a manifestation of their genuine saving faith and expresses their confidence that Messiah will save them; Lxx translates it with the verb **elipzo** = to look forward to something transpiring in the future, with the implication that one is confident the event will come to pass, and so includes the sense of counting on something, expecting it, awaiting its arrival) that He might save us. This is the LORD for Whom we have **waited** (**qavah**); Let us rejoice (Lxx = *agalliao* = exceedingly joyful, "jumping for joy" is the the idea!) and be glad in His salvation."

**Comment:** Those who express their **eager and patient waiting** for Jehovah are the saved Jewish remnant who will enter into Messiah's Millennial Kingdom at which time there will be great rejoicing over His salvation.

**MacArthur:** To **wait** for God entails an ultimate **trust** in Him, not becoming impatient when His timetable for final salvation differs from ours (cf. Is 26:8; 33:2; 40:31). (**Ed: A corollary thought is that willingness to wait on the Lord is a barometer of our trust in His faithfulness to keep His Word. What's your spiritual "barometric pressure" reading in regard to patience... is it rising or falling?**)

**(Isaiah 26:8)** Indeed, while following the way of Thy judgments, O LORD, we have **waited** for Thee **eagerly** (**qavah**); Thy Name, even Thy memory, is the desire of our souls.

**Comment:** The Septuagint translates **waited for... eagerly** with the verb **elpizo** which means to hope for something with assurance it will come to pass (not like the world's

"hope so!") (Eg, see Ro 8:24, 25-note)

**MacArthur:** The future remnant divulges the key to its redemption—their complete dependence on the Lord, not humanly devised schemes.

**Motyer:** The Lord's people wait for him, exercise believing patience till the Lord performs his final act. They do not long for altered circumstances but for fuller experience of him. To desire his name means that true experience is controlled by revelation (the name of the Lord is what he has revealed himself to be)

**John Oswalt:** Waiting is very difficult for most people, for it is an admission that there is nothing we can do at the moment to achieve our ends. Yet that admission is the first requirement for spiritual blessing. Until we have admitted that we cannot save ourselves, God cannot save us. (The New International Commentary on the Old Testament Series. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986)

(Isaiah 33:2) (Context: Assyria was threatening invasion of Judah. **What "Assyria" is threatening you at this moment beloved? What fear has gripped your heart so that you are almost incapacitated, "frozen with fear" as they say? Then memorize Isaiah 40:31ESV, NASB so that you might be able to meditate upon it beloved, "chewing" this great truth until it becomes part of your very soul [God's Word - the best "Soul food" for growing our faith, cp 1Pe 2:2-note, Job 23:10, 11-note, Job 23:12-note, Josh 1:8-note, Ps 1:2-note, Ps 1:3-note]) O LORD, **be gracious** (in the form of a command. By faith [cp He 11:1-note] and that faith manifest by prayer these Jewish believers were "claiming" the promises or truths that Isaiah just spoke Is 30:18,19 - **Beloved are you pleading with God based upon His precious and magnificent promises?** 2Pe 1:4-note) to us (the believing/faithful Jewish remnant); we have waited for Thee (this proves this refers to believers for unbelieving Jews would not wait for Jehovah, because waiting takes faith - to walk by faith not by sight). Be Thou their (If this is the correct translation, it suggest that Isaiah says a prayer for the remnant. Most versions have "our" instead of "their" which would reflect the faithful remnant praying for God's salvation from their enemy) strength every morning, our salvation also in the time of distress.**

**Comment:** **Waited** is the same Hebrew verb **qavah**, and as in Is 8:17, the Septuagint (LXX) translates qavah with the verb peitho [word study] .emphasizing that waiting for Jehovah equates with trusting in Jehovah, placing one's confidence in Him to undertake on our behalf (in His perfect timing, not our proposed timetable!) ([Listen to Ron Kenoly sing "We Will Wait"](#))

**Time of distress** - This is the identical phrase (and identical Hebrew words) which is found in Jer 30:7 and is commonly known as the "**time of Jacob's distress**" which the more literal, conservative expositors interpret as a description of the coming **Great Tribulation**. This phrase certainly could have a near (Assyria) and far fulfillment (Antichrist). (see KJV Commentary note below).

**Motyer:** Long (qavah), 'wait'; (Is 8:17) is a mark of the remnant, combining the restfulness of waiting with the confidence of sure expectation. Our strength/'their arm' is the organ of strong personal action (Is 52:10), strength for life. (Motyer, J. A. The prophecy of Isaiah: Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press)

**The KJV Commentary** sees a definite eschatological intent: While the passage certainly has some parallels to the Assyrian invasion, it extends so far beyond it that even Young (II, p. 421) admits the messianic nature of the king in Is 32:17 and in the closing verses of the chapter. To fail to see the invasion of the Antichrist as the subject of the opening verses of the chapter is to miss its entire point! While he is not named as such in the passage, we should remember that he is only called by that designation in a few passages (1Jn 2:18,22; 4:3; 2Jn 7). Compare the "man of sin" (2Th 2:1-12) with the "woeful king" (Da 11:36-45). ([Dobson, E G, Charles Feinberg, E Hindson, Woodrow Kroll, H L. Wilmington: KJV Bible Commentary: Nelson](#))

The prophet **Habakkuk** understood waiting on the LORD writing...

For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal, and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay. (Habakkuk 2:3)

The prophet **Isaiah** like all good teachers is not calling his readers to do something that he himself had not practiced for earlier he

stated...

I will **wait** (chakah; Lxx = meno = I will abide, tarry) for the LORD Who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob (clearly a sign of God's disfavor); I will even **look eagerly for** (qavah) Him. (Is 8:17, note context = written Word in Is 8:16 - which grows our trust and willingness to wait on the LORD's timing - cp Ro 10:17-note)

**Comment:** **Look eagerly** is the same Hebrew verb (**qavah**) which in Isaiah 40:31 is rendered **wait for** a translation which gives one a sense of what waiting for Jehovah entails. The Septuagint translates **look eagerly for** with the verb *peitho* [word study] which speaks of firm persuasion and pictures Isaiah as so convinced that he puts his confidence in Jehovah. In a sense Isaiah is looking with eyes of faith, much like Moses when "*he endured as seeing Him Who is unseen.*" (He 11:27-note, see the translation in He 11:27NLT)

**Motyer:** Faith is made for the dark day.

**John MacArthur:** The speaker is Isaiah whose disposition was to await the Lord's deliverance, the national salvation promised the faithful remnant (Is 40:31; 49:23)

**New Living Translation Study Bible:** Waiting for the Lord requires submission, prayer, hope, and faith (see Is 25:9; 26:8; 33:2), resulting in a quiet spirit and a renewal of inner strength (Is 40:31).

## WAITING IN THE PSALMS

The psalmist **David** who had learned about **waiting on Jehovah** in the wilderness wrote...

(**Context** = Ps 25:2 = a prayer) Indeed, **none** (**How many?**) of those who **wait for** (**qavah** - Lxx = hupomeno) Thee will be ashamed (humiliated, disgraced, disappointed). Those who deal treacherously without cause will be ashamed... 5 **Lead** (command) me in Thy truth and **teach** (command) me, For Thou art the God of my salvation; For Thee I **wait** (**qavah** - Lxx = hupomeno) all the day... 21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, For I wait for Thee. (Psalm 25:3, 5, 21 - Psalm of David)

**Spurgeon: Patience** is the fair handmaid and daughter of **faith**; we cheerfully **wait** when we are certain that we shall not **wait** in vain. It is our duty and our privilege to wait upon the Lord in service, in worship, in expectancy, in trust all the days of our life. Our faith will be tried faith, and if it be of the true kind, it will bear continued trial without yielding. We shall not grow weary of **waiting** upon God if we remember how long and how graciously He once **waited** for us.

**Wiersbe:** In Psalm 25 David points out that we can experience God's guidance if we meet certain spiritual conditions. The first is confidence. We give evidence of our confidence in God through worship. We need to pray so that we might have our hearts right with Him. **Waiting is another evidence** (Ps 25:3, 5, 21). Every time I've rushed ahead, I've gotten into trouble. (Warren Wiersbe. Prayer, Praise and Promises).

**Wait for** (qavah = Imperative mood = not a suggestion, a command, because this is ever our need!) the LORD; **Be strong** (Lxx = andrizo = behave like a man! Act like a man! Present imperative = make this your continual practice), **and let your heart take courage** (be of good courage; Lxx = krataioo = present imperative = make this your lifestyle! Same verb used in Eph 3:16 [note] where Paul prays for the Spirit to be the saint's Source of strengthening!). Yes, **wait for** (qavah = imperative) the LORD (**Jehovah**). (Psalm 27:14 - Psalm of David)

**ESV Study Bible** note: To wait for the LORD is to look to Him with dependence and trust, not passivity. This is what enables one to be strong and courageous. (cp Dt 31:6)

**Wiersbe:** The evidences of faith are rather obvious. First, we seek the Lord. "When You said, 'Seek My face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, Lord, I will seek'" (Ps 27:8). Do you want to build your faith and be able to walk by faith and war by faith? Then seek the Lord. Second, call on the Lord. "Teach me Your way, O Lord, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies" (Ps 27:11). That's prayer. Third, do the hardest thing of all - wait on the Lord.

"Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart" (Ps 27:14). Believing is seeing. Trust the Lord today. **One of the most difficult aspects of the Christian life is waiting on God. It is**

**especially difficult in the midst of trials. But that is when He builds your faith. Don't faint under your circumstances. Wait on the Lord, and He will strengthen you.** (Warren Wiersbe. Prayer, Praise and Promises).

**Spurgeon:** **Wait** at His door with prayer; **wait** at His foot with humility; **wait** at His table with service; **wait** at His window with expectancy. Suitors often win nothing but the cold shoulder from earthly patrons after long and obsequious waiting; he speeds best whose patron is in the skies.

**Be of good courage (Be strong).** A soldier's motto. Be it mine. Courage we shall need, and for the exercise of it we have as much reason as necessity, if we are soldiers of King Jesus. And he shall strengthen thine heart. He can lay the plaster right upon the weak place. Let the heart be strengthened, and the whole machine of humanity is filled with power; a strong heart makes a strong arm. What strength is this which God himself gives to the heart? Read the "Book of Martyrs," and see its glorious deeds of prowess; go to God rather, and get such power thyself.

**Wait, I say, on the Lord.** David, in the words "I say," sets his own private seal to the word which, as an inspired man, he had been moved to write. It is his testimony as well as the command of God, and indeed he who writes these scanty notes has himself found it so sweet, so reviving, so profitable to draw near to God, that on his own account he also feels bound to write, "Wait, I SAY, on the Lord."

For evildoers will be cut off, but those who **wait** (**qavah** - Lxx = hupomeno) for the LORD, they will inherit the land... 34 **Wait for** (**qavah** = Imperative mood = not a suggestion, a command; Lxx = hupomeno) the LORD (**Jehovah**), and **keep** His way (two commands - conditional portion of the promise), and He will exalt you to inherit the land. When the wicked are cut off, you will see it. (Ps 37:9, 34 - Psalm of David)

**Spurgeon:** Verse 34. Wait on the Lord. We have here the eighth precept, and it is a lofty eminence to attain to. Tarry the Lord's leisure. Wait in obedience as a servant, in hope as an heir, in expectation as a believer. This little word "**wait**" is easy to say, but hard to carry out, yet **faith** must do it.

I **waited patiently for** (**qavah** - Lxx = hupomeno) the LORD (**Jehovah**); and He inclined to me, and heard my cry. (Psalm 40:1 - For the choir director. A Psalm of David)

**Spurgeon:** I **waited patiently for the Lord**. Patient waiting upon God was a special characteristic of our Lord Jesus. Impatience never lingered in His heart, much less escaped His lips. All through His agony in the garden, His trial of cruel mockings before Herod and Pilate, and His passion on the tree, He waited in omnipotence of patience. No glance of wrath, no word of murmuring, no deed of vengeance came from God's patient Lamb; He waited and waited on; was patient, and patient to perfection, far excelling all others who have according to their measure glorified God in the fires. Job on the dunghill does not equal Jesus on the cross. The Christ of God wears the imperial crown among the patient. Did the Only Begotten wait, and shall we be petulant and rebellious?

I will give Thee thanks forever, because Thou hast done it, and I will **wait on** (**qavah** - Lxx = hupomeno) Thy name (Meditate on that thought - E.g., How can one wait upon God's "name"? What would be a prerequisite? See **Name of the LORD, a Strong Tower**), for it is good, in the presence of Thy godly ones. (Psalm 52:9 - [note](#))

**Spurgeon:** God shall still be the psalmist's hope; he will not in future look elsewhere. He whose name has been so gloriously made known in truth and righteousness, is justly chosen as our expectation for years to come.

**For it is good before thy saints.** Before or among the saints David intended to wait, feeling it to be good both for him and them to look to the Lord alone, and wait for the manifestation of his character in due season. Men must not too much fluster us; our strength is to sit still. Let the mighty ones boast, we will wait on the Lord; and if their haste brings them present honour, our patience will have its turn by and by, and bring us the honour which excels.

May those who **wait** (**qavah** - Lxx = hupomeno) for Thee not be ashamed through me, O Lord God of hosts; May those who seek Thee not be dishonored through me, O God of Israel, (Ps 69:6-[note](#))

**Spurgeon:** If he were deserted, others who were walking in the same path of faith would be discouraged and disappointed. Unbelievers are ready enough to catch at anything which may turn humble faith into ridicule, therefore, O God of all the armies of Israel, let not my case cause the enemy to blaspheme -- such is the spirit of this verse. Our blessed Lord ever had a tender concern for his people, and would not have his own oppression of spirit become a source of discouragement to them.



(A Song of Ascents) I **wait** (**qavah** - Lxx = hupomeno) for the LORD, my soul does **wait** (**qavah** - Lxx = hupomeno), And in His word do I hope. (Psalm 130:5)

**Spurgeon:** I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait. Expecting Him to come to me in love, I quietly wait for His appearing; I wait upon Him in service, and for Him in faith. For God I wait and for Him only: if He will manifest Himself I shall have nothing more to wait for; but until He shall appear for my help I must wait on, hoping even in the depths. This waiting of mine is no mere formal act, my very soul is in it, -- "**my soul doth wait.**"

**I wait and I wait** -- mark the repetition! "**My soul waits**", and then again, "**My soul waits**"; to make sure work of the waiting. It is well to deal with the Lord intensely. Such repetitions are the reverse of vain repetitions. If the Lord Jehovah makes us **wait**, let us do so with our whole hearts; for blessed are all they that **wait** for Him. He is worth **waiting** for.

**The waiting itself is beneficial to us: it tries faith, exercises patience, trains submission, and endears the blessing when it comes.**

The Lord's people have always been a **waiting** people: they **waited** for the First Advent, and now they **wait** for the Second. They **waited** for a sense of pardon, and now they **wait** for perfect sanctification. They **waited** in the depths, and they are not now wearied with **waiting** in a happier condition. They have cried and they do **wait**; probably their past prayer sustains their present patience.

**Dan Fortner** writes that...

To **Wait upon the Lord** is-- to know your need of Him! To believe Him! To commit yourself to Him! To walk by His direction in His will! ([Isaiah 40:27-31 Hope Thou In God!](#))

Father, I wait Thy daily will;  
Thou shalt divide my portion still;  
Grant me on earth what seems Thee best,  
Till death and heaven reveal the rest.

**Isaac Watts**

### **EXCHANGING NATURAL STRENGTH FOR SUPERNATURAL STRENGTH**

**The LORD** ([03068](#)) (YHWH = **Yahweh** = **Jehovah** [see study]) is the great "I Am".

Silently now I wait for Thee,  
Ready, my God, Thy will to see; Open my eyes—illumine me,  
Spirit divine! —Scott

**Will gain new strength** - Literally they will keep putting on fresh strength. And from the context this is not natural strength for that strength could not accomplish the actions described in the last half of Isa 40:31. This "new strength" is God's supernatural empowerment.

### **THE 100/100 PRINCIPLE**

Now think with me for a moment - Let me change the picture from an eagle to a pelican (I'm at the beach writing). As I was out yesterday I looked up and there were five pelicans seemingly motionless in the sky. The sea breeze was its usual 20 miles per hour. But what struck me was how effortless the birds floated in the breeze. And then the secret hit me -- they have do their part and God does His part. Their responsibility is to make sure their wings are spread out. It doesn't take much effort, but it is absolutely critical because unless they did their part, they could not be empowered by God's provision of wind power! And then I thought about us as believers -- God does His part providing us with the "powerful wind" of His indwelling Spirit (cf Jn 3:8), but we are still responsible to "spread our wings" so to speak and do our part if we desire to experience His powerful provision. Our part is to make the decision moment by moment to work out our salvation in fear and trembling (Php 2:12-note) and God's part in us is to give us not only the power but even the desire to work out our salvation in fear and trembling! (Php 2:13NLT-note) Is it mysterious? Of course, the supernatural cannot be explained naturally, but it is still true and valid. Jerry Bridges calls this the "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)"! What a way to fly!

**See related resources** - These studies describe the fascinating and pragmatic "exchange" of garments and weapons that occurs when one enters into covenant with the Everlasting God...

- Covenant: The Exchange of Robes
- Covenant: The Exchange of Armor and Belts

**Will gain new** ([02498](#)) (**chalaph/halap**) means to pass on, go by or pass away (speaking of motion past); to change (eg, clothing), change for better (but sometimes for worse - Ge 31:7, 41), renew (make like new, restore to freshness). **Chalaph** means to pierce or strike through - in Jdg 5:26 and Job 20:24. **Chalaph** can convey the idea of changing clothes, taking off the old and putting on the new. In context of Isa 40:31 the meaning is figurative and speaks of "taking off" our weakness and exchanging it for God's strength. A good exchange!

**Chalaph** translated in **NAS** - change(2), changed(5), gain new(2), go(1), move past(1), over(1), passed(1), passes(1), pierce(1), pierced(1), renewed(1), replace(2), slip(1), sprout(1), sprouts anew(2), sweep(2), sweep through(1), vanish(1), violated(1).

Here are the 27 uses...

Genesis 31:7 "Yet your father has cheated me and **changed** my wages ten times; however, God did not allow him to hurt me.

Genesis 31:41 "These twenty years I have been in your house; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock, and you **changed** my wages ten times.

Genesis 35:2 So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods which are among you, and purify yourselves and **change** your garments;

Genesis 41:14 Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and **changed** his clothes, he came to Pharaoh.

Leviticus 27:10 'He shall not **replace** it or exchange it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good; or if he does exchange animal for animal, then both it and its substitute shall become holy.

Judges 5:26 "She reached out her hand for the tent peg, And her right hand for the workmen's hammer. Then she struck Sisera, she smashed his head; And she shattered and **pierced** his temple.

1 Samuel 10:3 "Then you will **go** on further from there, and you will come as far as the oak of Tabor, and there three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a jug of wine;

2 Samuel 12:20 So David arose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and **changed** his clothes; and he came into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he came to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate.

Job 4:15 "Then a spirit **passed** by my face; The hair of my flesh bristled up.

Job 9:11 "Were He to **pass** by me, I would not see Him; Were He to move past me, I would not perceive Him.

Job 9:26 "They **slip** by like reed boats, Like an eagle that swoops on its prey.

Job 11:10 "If He **passes** by or shuts up, Or calls an assembly, who can restrain Him?

Job 14:7 "For there is hope for a tree, When it is cut down, that it will **sprout** again, And its shoots will not fail.

Job 20:24 "He may flee from the iron weapon, But the bronze bow will **pierce** him. (cp Jdg 5:26)

Job 29:20 'My glory is ever new with me, And my bow is **renewed** in my hand.'

Psalms 90:5 You have swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep; In the morning they are like grass which **sprouts anew** (ESV = "like grass that is renewed"). 6 In the morning it flourishes and **sprouts anew**; Toward evening it fades and withers away.

Psalms 102:26 "Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing You will **change** (Lxx = **allasso**) them and they will be **changed** (**allasso**).

Song of Solomon 2:11 'For behold, the winter is past, The rain is **over** (ended) and gone.

Isaiah 2:18 But the idols will completely **vanish**. (pass away)

Isaiah 8:8 "Then it will **sweep** on into Judah, it will overflow and pass through, It will reach even to the neck; And the spread of its wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:10 "The bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with smooth stones; The sycamores have been cut down, But we will **replace** them with cedars."

Isaiah 21:1 The oracle concerning the wilderness of the sea. As windstorms in the Negev **sweep** on, It comes from the wilderness, from a terrifying land.

Isaiah 24:5 The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, **violated** (overstepped, "went past", Young's Literal = "changed a statute") statutes, broke the everlasting covenant.

Isaiah 40:31 Yet those who wait for the LORD Will **gain new (allasso)** strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.

Isaiah 41:1 "Coastlands, listen to Me in silence, And let the peoples **gain new (allasso)** strength; Let them come forward, then let them speak; Let us come together for judgment.

Habakkuk 1:11 "Then they (Babylonians invading Judah) will **sweep through** like the wind and pass on. But they will be held guilty, They whose strength is their god."

The **Septuagint** translates **chalaph** with the verb **allasso (word study)** has the basic sense of to make something other than it is. It means to to change, to cause one thing to cease and another to take its place, to exchange one thing for another. The idea is to exchange one thing for another as in Romans 1 where it describes a **bad exchange** of

the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (Romans 1:23-note)

**Allasso** is used to translate **chalaph** in Isaiah 41 in a phrase virtually identical to Isa 40:31...

Coastlands, listen to Me in silence, and let the peoples **gain** (chalaph; Lxx = allasso) **new strength** (koah; Lxx = ischus [word study]); Let them come forward, then let them speak; Let us come together for judgment. (Is 41:1)

**Wiersbe** writes that...

The word "**renew**" means "to exchange," as taking off old clothing and putting on new. We exchange our weakness for His power (2Co 12:1-10, see especially 2Co 12:9-note, 2Co 12:10-note). As we **wait** before Him, God enables us to soar when there is a crisis, to run when the challenges are many, and to walk faithfully in the day-by-day demands of life. (Be Comforted)

Speak, Lord, in the stillness  
While I wait on Thee;  
Hushed my heart to listen  
In expectancy. —Grimes

**Strength (03581) (koah/koach)** means power, capacity or ability and thus speaks of power in the sense of the inherent potential to perform some function. Koah is the capacity to act and be able to produce. The Lord's right hand is magnificent in strength (**koah**). The Lxx translates **koah** with the Greek noun **ischus [word study]**, which describes the capability to function effectively. **Beloved, is this not continually our great need? How else can we live a supernatural life unless we live it with supernatural strength, God's strength?**

**What kind of strength exchange does Isaiah refer to?** Another use of **koah** in this same chapter helps us understand the **strength exchange**...

Isaiah 40:26 Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these stars, the One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His **power** (**koah**; Lxx = **ischus [word study]** = conveys the sense of endowed power or ability), not one of them is missing.

**Koah** - 118v in OT -

Ge 4:12; 31:6; 49:3; Ex 9:16; 15:6; 32:11; Lv 26:20; Nu 14:13, 17; Dt. 4:37; 8:17, 18; 9:29; Jos. 14:11; 17:17; Jdg 6:14; 16:5f, 9, 15, 17, 19, 30; 1Sa 2:9; 28:20, 22; 30:4; 1Ki. 19:8; 2Ki. 17:36; 19:3; 1Chr 26:8; 29:2, 12, 14; 2Chr 2:6; 13:20; 14:11; 20:6, 12; 22:9; 25:8; 26:13; Ezra 2:69; 10:13; Neh 1:10; 4:10; Job 6:11, 12, 22; 9:4,

19; 23:6; 24:22; 26:2, 12; 30:2, 18; 31:39; 36:5, 19, 22; 37:23; 39:11, 21; 40:16; Ps 22:15; 29:4; 31:10; 33:16; 38:10; 65:6; 71:9; 102:23; 103:20; 111:6; 147:5; Pr 5:10; 14:4; 20:29; 24:5, 10; Eccl 4:1; 9:10; **Is 10:13; 37:3; 40:9, 26, 29, 31; 41:1; 44:12; 49:4; 50:2; 63:1**; Je 10:12; 27:5; 32:17; 48:45; 51:15; La 1:6, 14; Da 8:6, 7, 22, 24; 10:8, 16, 17; 11:6, 15, 25; Ho 7:9; Amos 2:14; Mic 3:8; Nah. 1:3; 2:1; Hab 1:11; Zech 4:6

The **NIDOTTE** writes that **koah**...

has different meanings, depending on the context, but its primary meaning is strength, power, and it often occurs in close association with other words belonging to the same semantic realm.

God equips people with the strength required for certain tasks. Empowered by Yahweh, Gideon was instructed to go in his might and deliver Israel from the Midianites (Jdg 6:14). Acting on instructions from the Philistines, Delilah sought to cajole Samson into disclosing the secret of his great strength and the way in which he could be overpowered (Jdg 16:5, 6, 9, 15, 17, 19). Eventually captured by the Philistines, Samson, having prayed to be empowered one last time, grasped the two middle pillars bearing the weight of the building in which the Philistines were celebrating and bowed with all his might, causing the structure to collapse and crush all those within (Jdg 16:30). In the strength of the food miraculously provided in the wilderness, the frightened, weak, and despairing Elijah was re-empowered and was able to walk forty days and forty nights (a conventional round number, which is also used of the duration of Moses' sojourn on Mount Sinai [Ex 24:18; 34:28]) to Mount Horeb (1Ki 19:8). The prophet Micah was empowered by Yahweh to proclaim God's judgment on Israel (Mic 3:8).

In the overwhelming majority of occurrences (of **koah**), the reference is either to the power of God or to the strength he gives to human beings. With God are knowledge, power, and glory. God's power is incomparable. Unlike human strength, which is barely existent and which is shattered by the experience of inadequacy, real power is demonstrated through God's **koah** - By it God created the earth, destroys the enemy, and empowers frail humans with enduring strength. The hope of humankind lies in the combination of God's power and mercy. It is appropriate that worshipers should respond to God with thanksgiving "according to the greatness of his power and the fulness of his wonders" (TDOT 7:128).

The **Theological Lexicon of the OT** writes that...

the chief meaning... may best be defined as "vital power" (the dead are described in Job 3:17 as "bereft of power"). Thus **koah** means the human capacity to reproduce (Ge 49:3) and the farmland's capacity to yield produce (Ge 4:12; Job 31:39), as well as food's capacity to nourish (1Sa 28:22; 1Ki 19:8); ordinarily, however, it refers to the physical power of an animal (Job 39:11; Pr 14:4) or a person (of the human hand, Job 30:2; of the arm, Is 44:12; in general, Jdg 16:6, 7, 8; 1Sa 28:20; 30:4; Is 44:12, etc.; of a people, Josh 17:17). Mental power is also often intended (Ge 31:6; Isa 40:31; 49:4; Ps 31:11), so that **koah** (often in conjunction with "to retain") can develop the meaning "competence, suitability, capability" in later literature (Chron, Dan). One's power is concretely manifested in one's material wealth (Job 6:22; Pr 5:10; Ezra 2:69; of the people's military and economic reserves, Hos 7:9).

**A W Pink** exhorts us declaring that...

It is vitally essential to remember that we need to have our strength and courage renewed daily. Be strong in the Lord: seek His strength at the beginning of each day—"those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31). God does not impart strength to us wholesale: He will not give me strength on Monday morning to last through the week. No, there has to be the renewing of our strength, and that strength has to be drawn from the Lord by the actings of faith, appropriating from His "fullness." The enemies we have to contend with cannot be overcome by human wisdom and might. Unless we go forth to the conflict continually looking to Christ for all needed supplies of grace, deriving all our vitality from Him, we are sure to be defeated. ([THE CHRISTIANS ARMOR](#))

**John MacArthur** commenting on Isaiah 40:31 writes that...

There is a general principle here that patient, praying believers are blessed by God with strength in their trials (cf. 2Co 12:9- note, 2Co 12:10-note). The Lord also expected His people to be patient and await His coming in glory at the end to fulfill the promises of national deliverance, when believing Israel would become stronger than they had ever been. ([MacArthur, J.: The MacArthur Study Bible Nashville: Word](#))

**MY WEAKNESS FOR  
HIS GRACE AND POWER**

**Paul's** experience of being taken up to the third heaven (2Co 12:1, 2, 3, 4) and his subsequent abasement and importuning (2Co 12:7, 8) was met with the paradoxical (to the natural man 1Co 2:14) reply from the Lord Jesus Christ...

"My **grace** (charis - word study) is **sufficient** (present tense = continually enough - listen to [Your Grace Is Enough - Chris Tomlin](#)) for you, for (My) power (dunamis [word study] - inherent power) is perfected (present tense = continually; teleioo - see related word teleios = accomplished, carried out to the full, brought to its intended goal) in weakness (impotence)." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses (note plural - incapacities), that (hina - purpose clause) the power (dunamis) of Christ may dwell in (tabernacle upon, rest or abide upon, take up lodging on) me. Therefore **I am well content** (take pleasure - only with hearts and eyes of faith can we do this beloved!) with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong (dunatos). (2Cor 12:9-note, 2Co 12:10-note) (Ponder the great truth of Paul's affirmation as you listen to **Chris Tomlin's Everlasting God - Strength Will Rise**)

See related **devotionals** [Serving With Limitations](#); [Tensile Strength](#); [The Strongest Weak People](#); [The Advantage Of Weakness](#) ; [A Good Stretch](#) ; [The Power Of Our Limits](#) ; ['The Big Sissy!'](#) ; [A Fragile Stone](#))

Give me, Savior, a purpose deep,  
In joy or sorrow Thy trust to keep;  
And so through trouble, care, and strife,  
Glorify Thee in my daily life. —Bell

Does all the world seem against you  
And you're in the battle alone?  
It's often when you are most helpless  
That God's mighty power is known. -Anon.

**James** has a similar "formula" for the **supernatural race of grace** in this one brief life explaining that God...

**gives a greater grace** (Greater grace in view of the greater requirement). Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED (antitassomai = literally arrayed against, continually setting Himself against, military term picturing army arrayed against enemy forces) TO THE PROUD (huperephanos from huper = above + phaino = shine -- picture is that of a man with his head held high above others) , BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE (tapeinos = low, not high, not rising far from the ground)." (Jas 4:6-note , quoting Pr 3:34, cp 1Pe 5:5-note)

### **He Giveth More Grace**

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,  
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase;  
To added affliction He addeth His mercy;  
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,  
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,  
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,  
Our Father's full giving is only begun.

Fear not that thy need shall exceed His provision,  
Our God ever yearns His resources to share;  
Lean hard on the arm everlasting, availing;  
The Father both thee and thy load will upbear.

His love has no limit; His grace has no measure.  
His pow'r has no boundary known unto men;  
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,  
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again!

**Annie Johnson Flint**

**John Calvin** writes that the...

Hebrew writers employ the phrase, "exchanging strength," to denote "gathering new strength," and thus "being restored." The Prophet therefore shows, that godly persons, who shall hope in God, will not be deficient in strength; and he confirms what he formerly said "In rest and silence shall be your strength." (Isaiah 30:15.)

We must not become agitated, or throw ourselves forward rashly, but "wait" patiently. In this passage, therefore, waiting means nothing else than patience. Violent men dash themselves to pieces by their own eagerness, but the vigor of godly men, though it has less display, and often appears to lie buried while they calmly "wait for" God's assistance, is refreshed and renewed.

**Scott Grant** writes that...

**wait** contains within it the concept of hope. It means to wait confidently for something. The people **Ed**: in context speaking to those would be taken captive to Babylon) are supposed to wait for the Lord to administer justice and fulfill His promise to liberate and vindicate His people (**Ed**: cp prophecy of 70 years captivity in Babylon - Je 25:11, 12, Je 29:10, 11, Da 9:2). This is how they (**Ed**: Judah and Jerusalem) will "gain new strength." They will not gain new strength when the Lord acts to liberate them; they will gain new strength as they wait for the Lord to liberate them. The weary and weak are strengthened as they wait for the Lord. They find supernatural strength to endure captivity and even flourish within it: "They will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary." **The Lord is not looking to change the circumstances of Israel in exile; He is looking to change Israel in exile He has sent Israel into exile for the purpose of spiritual reformation. The scene of this reformation is, of all places, Babylon, the place of oppression.** ([Reference](#))

**Fortner** writes that...

"renew" means "change"— We find our strength only in Christ! We have none in ourselves! But the word also means "renew." They shall constantly have renewed strength, as they trust Christ—

To Do His Will! To Labor in His Vineyard! To Resist the Devil! To Overcome Temptation! To Bear their Trials! To Endure Hardship! To Help the Brethren! ([Isaiah 40:27-31 Hope Thou In God!](#))

**Morris** rightly comments that...

Those who look to the infinite, omniscient, omnipotent Creator for their supply of order, intelligence and power shall exchange their weakness and foolishness for His strength and wisdom. This is a marvelous energy conversion process.

Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
I in my Savior am happy and blest;  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love. —Crosby

**Time spent "waiting on God"  
is never wasted.**

**Harry Ironside** asks...

Why, we may well ask, has GOD thus truly described Himself? It is because those over whom He has such a tender care are faint and weary, without strength, so He turns them to Him as the Source of power, simply to wait upon Him, for this divine GOD has an interest in everyone.

It is not because of lack of power that GOD does not give immediate release from trial and tribulation. His understanding is infinite and He is working out His own counsels for our blessing when He permits affliction to fall upon us and continue to oppress us.

We must learn the lesson put before Job, that man cannot fathom His plans, so should seek to submit without question to His providential dealings. It is easy, when distress or suffering becomes prolonged, to think that GOD has forgotten or is indifferent to what one is going through. But this is always wrong. He is ever concerned about His people, and in His own time will give deliverance; and until then His grace is available to sustain and strengthen the soul, that one may endure as seeing Him who is invisible.

"He giveth power to the faint." It was this that enabled Paul to glory in his infirmities, that the "power of Christ might rest upon" him (2Co 12:9- note).



He will supply the needed strength to meet every test He permits us to face.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." Mere natural and physical powers will not avail in the hour when one is called upon to face great mental and spiritual emergencies. But they who have learned to refer everything to GOD and to wait quietly upon Him will be given all needed strength to rise above depressing circumstances, thus enabling them to mount heavenward as eagles facing the sun, to run their race with patience, and to walk with GOD with renewed confidence and courage, knowing that they are ever the objects of His love and care.

It is one thing to wait on the Lord. It is quite another to wait for Him. As we wait on Him we are changed into His likeness. As we wait for Him in patience we are delivered from worry and fretfulness, knowing that GOD is never late, but that in His own time He will give the help we need.

Someone has suggested that we may apply Isaiah's words, verse 31, as representing Christians or children of GOD in different ages. The young believers mount up with wings of hope and expectancy as eagles flying into the height of heaven. The middle-aged ones are running with patience the race set before them, while those who have reached old age have come down to a quiet walk with GOD as they near the portals of the eternal Home of the saints. (Online - [Isaiah 40 - God the Comforter](#))

## SUPERNATURAL FLYING

### They will mount up with wings like eagles:

- Ex 19:4; Ps 84:7; Song 8:5; Zech 10:12; Re 4:7

The English translation of the Greek (Lxx) is picturesque "they shall put forth **new feathers** like eagles!"

**Mount up** ([05927](#)) ('alah) basically suggests movement from a lower to a higher place. The first use is in Ge2:6 where Eden was watered by a mist that "went up" over ground. Thus 'alah means to ascend, mount up, go up, rise. In Isa14:13 it describes what the king of Babylon said in his heart "I will ascend into heaven". In Ps 24:3 'alah describes the righteous ascending God's holy hill. As with the verbs **run** and **walk**, the idea of **mount** is clearly a metaphor to describe life on a higher plane, a soaring supernatural life which is always available to **every** believer, regardless of whether they lived before and after the Cross of Christ.

Remember that Isaiah was writing to Jews who lived in Judah and Jerusalem prior to the destruction of God's holy city and the removal of His chosen people to Babylon. And so God through His prophet Isaiah seeks to encourage and edify His believing remnant (cp Is 3:10, 11-note - "forewarned is forearmed"). Those Jews who were stiff necked and rebellious would also hear these words but they would lack the **ears to hear what the Spirit** was saying through Isaiah (cp Mt 11:15, Lk 8:8, 14:34, 35, Ro 11:8-note, Re 2:7-note). One might ask whether we have any **Old Testament examples** of those who heard and heeded and were lifted up by passages like Isaiah 40:31? I think the answer is indeed there were some examples whose lives we as NT believers can ponder and seek to emulate (He 6:12-note, He 13:7-note, cp Ro 15:4-note). Recall that Isaiah is prophesying between 740-680BC and it was not until 605, 597 and 586BC, that Babylon began to fulfill the prophecies against **Judah and Jerusalem** in three sieges and exiles. In 605BC, four Jewish boys were taken to Babylon, **Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah** (Da 1:11, young men with "great hearts" Da 1:8 who knew God intimately not just knew about God! cp Da 11:32b). Subsequently all four of these young men were given opportunities to "live out" the promises of Isaiah 40:31, promises I believe they had read or heard expounded (cp Daniel's knowledge of Jeremiah's prophecy Da 9:2, not to mention that the prophet Ezekiel was one of their contemporaries in Babylonian exile). Undergirded by the truth about Jehovah, these young men were empowered by God to mount up, to run and to walk in ways that can only be described as supernatural, and in so doing provided for believers of all ages a glorious testimony that the promises of God are indeed "yea and amen" in Jesus Christ = Yeshua Mashiach, cp 2Co 1:20KJV, 2Pe 1:3, 4-note). And so having girded their minds for action (cp 1Pe 1:13KJV-note), they refused to bow down and worship the golden image Nebuchadnezzar had set up (Da 3:1, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)...

**Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego** answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire (**Ed**: They understood and may actually have read or heard Is 40:25, 26, 27, 28); and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." (Da 3:16, 17, 18)

**Comment:** Did not God enable **Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego** (their Babylonian names) to mount up

with wings like eagles, to run, to walk? Indeed, He did! Hallelujah! And this **Jehovah Jesus** is the **same yesterday and today, yes and forever** (He 13:8-note). So even though we may have to walk through fiery trials (1Pe 4:12-note, cp Ps 23:4-note), He Himself is with us (as the fourth "Man" in the fire, Da 3:25KJV, cp He 13:5,6-note)

**Paul** experienced the presence and power of **Jehovah Jesus** Who enabled him to mount up with wings like eagles testifying...

At my first defense no one supported me (**Ed**: imagine the fiery missiles that must have come against him - missiles of discouragement, disillusionment and despair to the point of giving up. In the midst of this "fiery trial", Paul choose to **wait upon the LORD** to meditate on His presence and His power), but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. But **the Lord stood with me** (aorist active indicative = Paul testifies that this was a real event and not a figment of his imagination!), and **strengthened** me (cp renew your strength... mount up with wings as eagles Is 40:31), in order that (this should encourage us for God always has a purpose in strengthening us) through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the lion's mouth. The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen. (2Ti 4:16, 17, 18-note) (And all God's people echo "Amen"!)

Indeed **Paul** alludes to the exchange of strength given to the waiting soul writing...

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves; 8 we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death works in us, but life in you.

**Comment:** In proportion to our faith or trust in the greatness and sufficiency of our God (Is 40:25, 28), we will be willing and enabled to die to self (cp Lk 9:23, Php 3:8, 9, 10, 11-note), so that His life might flow through us (cp Jn 4:14, 7:37, 38, 39) and be manifest to a world dead (Ep 2:1-note), desperate and hungering to see the supernatural life in God's saints. Although it is a different context, the principle applies that **to live is Christ, and to die is gain** (Php 1:21-note), a gain which is manifest in life which is abundant (Jn 10:10b) and which "smells" like Jesus to a dying world (cp 2Co 2:14, 15, 16, cp Ep 5:2-note).

**Wings** (083) (**eber**) means pinions (the terminal section of a bird's wing including the carpus, metacarpus, and phalanges) or wings and is translated in the Lxx by **pterophueo** which means to grow feathers or put forth new feathers (and so the **Septuagint** translates it "they shall put forth new feathers like eagles")

**Eber** - 3v in the OT - Ps 55:6; Is 40:31; Ezek 17:3

**Jamieson** writes that mount up with wings like eagles can also be rendered "They shall put forth fresh feathers as eagles" are said to renovate themselves; the parallel clause, "renew their strength," confirms this. The eagle was thought to moult and renew his feathers, and with them his strength, in old age (so the Septuagint, Vulgate, Ps 103:5-note). However, English Version is favored by the descending climax, mount up--run--walk; in every attitude the praying, waiting child of God is "strong in the Lord" (Ps 84:7-note; Mic 4:5; Heb 12:1-note).

## ON EAGLE'S WINGS

**Eagles** (05404) (**nesher/nešer**) is any of various large diurnal birds of prey of the accipiter family noted for their strength, size, speed, long feathers, keenness of vision, and powers of flight. Eagles were considered unclean and were not to be eaten (Lev 11:13, Dt 14:12). **Eagle** is used "figuratively in the descriptions of God's strength, vigor, and gentleness in the handling of His people." (NIDOTTE) On the other hand God's enemies shall experience God Himself even as a bird of prey (Jer 49:22). The **Eagle** was used figuratively to prophesy of Babylon's invasion of Judah some 800 years later in 605-586BC (Dt 28:49, cp Jer 4:13, Jer 48:40, Lam 4:19, Hab 1:8), of Assyria's defeat of Israel in 722BC (Hos 8:1) and of Edom's downfall (Ob 1:4).

**My soul is often a chariot without wheels,  
clogged and hindered in sin's miry clay;  
Mount it on eagle's wings  
and cause it to soar upward to thyself.**

--Valley of Vision

The truth of Isaiah 40:31 should have stirred the readers' memories to recall their ancestors stories of similar figurative language used to describe the miraculous Exodus from Egypt (first use of eagle in Scripture)...

**Exodus 19:4** You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on **eagles'** wings, and brought you to Myself. ([Play Eagles Wings He will raise you up on Eagles Wings](#))

So not only was the **eagle** used to picture Israel's deliverance from bondage but God's provision for her safety in her subsequent wilderness sojournings...

**Deut 32:11** "Like (See terms of comparison simile) an **eagle** that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions. ([See Spurgeon's sermon on Deut 32:11, 12 The Divine Discipline](#))

**Spurgeon comments:** WHAT great condescension it is on God's part that he should compare himself to anything that he has made, for the Creator must always be infinitely grander than the created (**Ed:** See the Creator's sovereignty over the eagle in Job 39:27!). Greater condescension still is it that the Eternal should liken himself to birds — to a bird of prey, and then to the familiar domestic fowl. He whom neither time nor space can compass, nor imagination conceive, yet speaks of fluttering with wings and covering with his feathers. Does not this assure us of the willingness of the Lord to reveal his love to us? Does it not prove his desire that we should understand his providential dealings with us? He does not aim at dazzling us by displaying his inconceivable glory, but his object is to comfort us by manifesting his gracious condescension. He uses these images that he may instruct our ignorance, and that our feeble minds may grasp those majestic truths which otherwise must remain veiled in mystery, sublime but incomprehensible. (**For full article in The Sword and the Trowel on Deut 32:11 and Mt 23:37 click [The Eagle and the Hen](#)**) John Piper

**Psalms 103:5** Who satisfies your years with good things, **so that** (terms of conclusion should prompt a pause and a pondering = John Piper exhorts us to always query the text) your youth is renewed like the eagle.

**Comment:** The renewal like the eagle might refer to to the phenomenon of molting, the process by which the eagle grows new feathers.

**See Spurgeon's sermon on Psalm 103:5 - [Our Youth Renewed](#)**

**See Spurgeon's sermon on Psalm 103:5 - [Owl or Eagle?](#)**

**Proverbs 23:5** When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. **For** (Pause, ponder and query this term of explanation) wealth certainly makes itself wings like an eagle (terms of comparison simile) that flies toward the heavens.

**Nesher** - 26v in OT - Ex. 19:4; Lev. 11:13; Deut. 14:12; 28:49; 32:11; 2Sam. 1:23; Job 9:26; 39:27; Ps. 103:5; Pr 23:5; 30:17, 19; Is 40:31; Jer 4:13; 48:40; 49:16, 22; Lam 4:19; Ezek. 1:10; 10:14; 17:3, 7; Hos. 8:1; Obad. 1:4; Mic. 1:16; Hab. 1:8

**NIDOTTE** writes that the eagle "plays a significant role in the description of Ezekiel's vision of God's glory (Ezek 1:10; 10:14). In other passages vultures are used as metaphors for swiftness (2 Sam 1:23; Job 9:26; Jer 4:13; Lam 4:19), high-flying (Pr 23:5; Obad 4), soaring on wings (Job 39:27; Isa 40:31), ever-renewing might (Ps 103:5), pride (Jer 49:16; Obad 4), and atrociousness in attacking preys (Jer 48:40; 49:22; Hos 8:1; Hab 1:8)." (New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis)

**TWOT** - The superb protection and care of the Lord for Israel is appropriately likened to that of **anešer** (Ex 19:4–6; Deut 32:11–13). Their nests are built on inaccessible ledges with great skill, and the parent bird guards it with great ferocity sometimes by using its talons and beak. It also takes care of its young by shielding the nestlings from too much sun and warming them when a cold wind blows, and feeding them until they are large enough to fly. Then the parent stirs up the nest and lures the fledglings out of it for their first flight. Sometimes the adult birds hover over them and flutter encouragingly around them. When the poet, however, speaks of the nešer bearing the young, he is speaking phenomenologically, for the fledglings only appear to be carried at times on a parent's wings but there is no reliable report of any bird actually flying with a smaller bird on its back. David likened the speed of Saul and Jonathan to the nešer and may have had in mind the golden eagle which pressing its wings against its sides, power dives from great heights upon its victim usually taking it by surprise and striking it dead in an instant with its powerful, sharp talons (II Sam 1:23). Jeremiah warned of a foe that would approach with the speed of an eagle (Jer 4:13; cf. Hab 1:8) and Job lamented that his days go by like an eagle swooping on its prey (Job 9:25–26). Timed by a stop watch a golden eagle chased by peregrine falcons achieved a speed of 120 miles per hour (A. Parmelee, All the Birds of the Bible, 1969, p. 200). ([Harris, R L, Archer, G L & Waltke, B K Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. Moody Press](#))

An interesting illustration is thus recorded by **Sir Humphry Davy** - I once saw a very interesting sight above the crags of Ben Nevis. Two parent eagles were teaching their offspring, two young birds, the maneuvers of flight. They began by rising from the top of the

mountain in the eye of the sun. It was about mid-day, and bright for the climate. They at first made small circles, and the young birds imitated them. They paused on their wings, waiting till they had made their flight, and then took a second and larger gyration, always rising toward the sun, and enlarging their circle of flight so as to make a gradually ascending spiral. The young ones still and slowly followed, apparently flying better as they mounted; and they continued this sublime exercise, always rising till they became mere points in the air, and the young ones were lost, and afterwards their parents, to our aching sight.

The psalmist writes that Jehovah "satisfies your years with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the **eagle**. (Ps 103:5)

**Spurgeon:** Renewal of strength, amounting to a grant of a new lease of life, was granted to the Psalmist; he was so restored to his former self that he grew young again, and looked as vigorous as an eagle, whose eye can gaze upon the sun, and whose wing can mount above the storm. Our version refers to the annual molting of the eagle, after which it looks fresh and young; but the original does not appear to allude to any such fact of natural history, but simply to describe the diseased one as so healed and strengthened, that he became as full of energy as the bird which is strongest of the feathered race, most fearless, most majestic, and most soaring. He who sat moping with the owl in the last Psalm, here flies on high with the eagle: the Lord works marvellous changes in us, and we learn by such experiences to bless his holy name. To grow from a sparrow to an eagle, and leave the wilderness of the pelican to mount among the stars is enough to make any man cry, "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

**Like eagles** - This is a **term of comparison**, specifically a **simile**, which presents a beautiful picture of an eagle spreading its magnificent wings that it might take advantage of the updraft and glide almost effortlessly through the sky. As applied to those who wait on, depend on, rest in, believe in Jehovah, His gracious power will uplift them in a figurative sense, which could include physically, emotionally and/or spiritually.

Savior, let me walk beside Thee,  
Let me feel my hand in Thine;  
Let me know the joy of walking  
In Thy strength and not in mine.  
—Sidebotham

**W E Vine** offers a slightly spiritualized interpretation writing that "**To mount up with wings** is to rise above difficulties, to fly above the mists and darkness of earth into the clear sunshine of God's presence. Would that we more readily entered into this delightful experience. We shall do so, if Christ is a reality to us. Some suggest that the meaning is that of putting forth fresh feathers, as birds do after molting, but the rendering in our Versions seems better. The eagle is characterized by three things: rapidity of flight, power of scent, keenness of vision. So our mounting up is not only a matter of rising above difficulties, it involves a joyous and quick discernment of the will and way of God for us and the keen vision of Himself by faith."

**Ben Patterson** - Isaiah must have watched eagles closely to see the way they soar. As birds go, eagles' wings are big, but the muscles that make them flap aren't. Pound for pound, an eagle's strength is no match for the strength of a hummingbird. The strength of eagles is not in their flapping but in their soaring. An eagle will perch high atop a canyon below. When the rising wind is just right, the eagle will fold its wings to its sides, literally cast itself into the chasm and plummet into the abyss... (When the speed is just right) the bird will spread its wings, catch the thermals, rise up into the sky and soar. Isaiah didn't know the mechanism, but he could see the effect. This is a great picture of hoping in God. Through no strength of our own, we cast ourselves upon God, fall into His mercy and soar on His promises. Our strength comes from trusting and soaring, not flapping and working.

**Adam Clarke** comments that "He will help the willing, will help those who, in a humble dependence upon him, help themselves, and will do well for those who do their best, Is 40:30, 31. Those who trust to their own sufficiency, and are so confident of it that they neither exert themselves to the utmost nor seek unto God for his grace, are the youth and the young men, who are strong, but are apt to think themselves stronger than they are. And they shall faint and be weary, yea, they shall utterly fail in their services, in their conflicts, and under their burdens; they shall soon be made to see the folly of trusting to themselves.

**Warren Wiersbe** summarizes the Isaiah 40:25-31 observing that "You may be weak like grass (Is 40:6, 7, 8), sheep (Is 40:11), dust (Is 40:15), grasshoppers (Is 40:22), and even worms (Is 41:14); but if you trust the power of God, you can be like an eagle, a runner, and a patient pilgrim (Is 40:28, 29, 30, 31). In the emergencies of life, God helps you soar; in the daily routine of life, He helps you patiently walk. Both are the working of His mighty power (Ep 3:20,21).

**John Angell James** writes "How full of encouragement is the language of the prophet Isaiah, "But those who hope in the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not be faint." Isaiah 40:31

This beautiful passage contains a promise of continued supplies of grace and strength to all who really desire to serve the Lord with

integrity and simplicity. In the image of the eagle, the prophet alludes to the strength of wing and of vision possessed by this noble bird—whereby it ascends to a lofty height, untired and undazzled—soaring even above the fogs and mists of the lower regions of the air, mounting above the very clouds, undeterred by the lightning, and floating in the pure azure above!

Thus shall all who hope in the Lord rise higher and higher, upon the mighty wings of strong devotion, and with the unblinking eye of faith—into the regions of heavenly mindedness; and shall approach nearer and nearer to God—the sun of our spiritual day.

"They will run" in the heavenly race, for the crown of immortal glory, "and not grow weary." Their strength, instead of being exhausted, shall, contrary to what occurs in bodily effort—be increased by exertion. No length nor greatness of labor shall be too much for them. God shall pour into their souls, fresh energy for every fresh effort.

"They will walk and not be faint." Their pilgrimage may be arduous; the road may be long and rugged; often up steep ascents, and down into deep and rocky crags, where every step is a labor—but they shall not lose heart or hope; they shall not swoon, nor halt, nor turn back—but go forwards, sustained by a power greater than their own!

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**LIKE AN EAGLE** - I was watching an eagle in flight when for no apparent reason it began spiraling upward. With its powerful wings, the great bird soared ever higher, dissolved into a tiny dot, and then disappeared.

Its flight reminded me of Isaiah's uplifting words: "Even the youths all faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isa 40:30-31).

Life's heartbreaks and tragedies can put an end to our resilience, our endurance, our nerve, and bring us to our knees. But if we put our hope in the Lord and rely on Him, He renews our strength. The key to our endurance lies in the exchange of our limited resources for God's limitless strength. Oh, what an exchange—God's infinite strength for our trite weakness! And it is ours for the asking.—D. H. R. ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

GOD GIVES STRENGTH IN PROPORTION TO THE STRAIN.

## SUPERNATURAL RUNNING

### They will run and not get tired:

- Isaiah 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

O God, make me one of those rarest souls  
Who willingly wait for Thy time;  
My impatient will must be lost in Thine own,  
And Thy will forever be mine. --Bowser

### Related Resource: Metaphor of the Athlete in Scripture

**They will run** ([07323](#)) (**rus**) means to hasten, move very quickly or to run. To make haste by running. The **Septuagint** translates **rus** with the Greek verb *trecho* which describes rapid linear movement in the literal sense. In context Isaiah is referring to running in a figurative sense using a metaphor taken from runners in a race, who exert themselves, who strive hard and who spend their strength performing or attaining some goal. This same picture occurs in Greek writings, where it denotes a willingness to brave extreme peril, which in turn requires the exertion of all one's efforts to overcome.

Paul used the figure of a runner in a race to describe his own ministry, his great desire in Acts 20:24 being to finish his **course** (Gk = *dromos* = race course, a stadium) with joy, a goal he was enabled to achieve as he testifies in the last words of his last letter (2Ti 4:7-note, 2Ti 4:8-note), because he ran not in his natural, innate power but in complete dependence upon God's sufficient supply of supernatural strength (eg, 1Co 1:18, 15:10, 2Co 12:9-note, 2Co 12:10-note). Other allusions to the metaphor of running are found in Ga 2:2; Php 2:16-note; Php 3:12, 13-note, Php 3:14-note and Hebrews 12:1-note. The point is that the race each of us has been called to run requires supernatural strength if it is to be run with joy in a way that brings glory to our Father and attains to the goal He has set before each of us to be more like His Son.

Beloved the greatest "Runner" to ever run the race of life is Jesus Christ and He has given us His example to follow (1Pe 2:21-note, Jn 13:15, 1Co 11:1), even to the point of emptying Himself of His intrinsic omnipotence and relying upon the empowerment of the Holy Spirit...

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**Jerry Hullinger** discusses **spiritual running** in his article on the Historical Background of Paul's Athletic Allusions...

One of the apostle Paul's favorite methods for applying and illustrating Christian responsibility was through the use of athletic metaphors. For example he used words for "running" and the "race" on numerous occasions (Acts 13:25; 20:24; Ro 9:16; 1Co 9:24; Gal. 2:2; 5:7; Php 2:16; 2Th 3:1; 2Ti 4:7).

The History of the Games - The Olympic Games - The chief athletic contest in Greece was the Olympic games. Founded in 776 B.C., these games were held every four years. In 472 B.C. the Olympics were extended to five days. The first day was occupied with sacrifices to the gods and the taking of oaths by the judges and competitors. The second morning began with the naming of the competitors by the herald, and was followed by chariot races, horse races, and the pentathlon for men. Contests for boys were held on the third day. On the fourth day the men's games in foot racing, jumping, wrestling, boxing, and pankration were held. The final day of the games was spent in sacrifices and an evening banquet in which the victors were entertained. ([Jerry Hullinger - Historical Background Paul's Athletic Allusions from Bibliotheca Sacra 161:643 July 2004](#)) ([Theological Journal Subscription info](#)) ([List of 22 journals - 500 yrs of articles searchable by topic or verse! Incredible Online Resource!](#))

The **psalmist** expresses the figurative sense writing...

I shall **run** the way of Your commandments, for You will enlarge my heart. (Ps 119:32-[note](#))

**Spurgeon writes:** I will run the way of thy commandments. With energy, promptitude, and zeal he would perform the will of God, but he needed more life and liberty from the hand of God.

When thou shalt enlarge my heart. Yes, the heart is the master; the feet soon run when the heart is free and energetic. Let the affections be aroused and eagerly set on divine things, and our actions will be full of force, swiftness, and delight. God must work in us first, and then we shall will and do according to his good pleasure. He must change the heart, unite the heart, encourage the heart, strengthen the heart, and enlarge the heart, and then the course of the life will be gracious, sincere, happy, and earnest; so that from our lowest up to our highest state in grace we must attribute all to the free favour of our God. We must run; for grace is not an overwhelming force which compels unwilling minds to move contrary to their will: our running is the spontaneous leaping forward of a mind which has been set free by the hand of God, and delights to show its freedom by its bounding speed.

What a change from Psalms 119:25-[note](#) to the present, from cleaving to the dust to running in the way. It is the excellence of holy sorrow that it works in us the quickening for which we seek, and then we show the sincerity of our grief and the reality of our revival by being zealous in the ways of the Lord.

For the third time an octave closes with, "I will." These "I wills" of the Psalms are right worthy of being each one the subject of study and discourse.

Note how the heart has been spoken of up to this point: "whole heart" (Ps 119:2-[note](#)), "uprightness of heart" (Ps 119:7-[note](#)), "hid in mine heart" (Ps 119:11-[note](#)), "enlarge my heart." There are many more allusions further on, and these all go to show what heart work David's religion was. It is one of the great lacks of our age that heads count for more than hearts, and men are far more ready to learn than to love, though they are by no means eager in either direction.

**Not** ([03808](#)) (**lo'**) describes factual negation (in contrast to '**al**' which describes potential negation). Often **lo'** is used to express an unconditional prohibition, thus having the force of an imperative. The **Septuagint** translates **lo'** with the Greek particle **ou** which signifies absolute negation. So the idea is that those who mount up will run and **absolutely** not get tired, which describes supernatural enablement. The same description is used of those who walk in God's power, for they shall **absolutely** not get weary.

**Get tired** ([03021](#)) (**yaga'**) means to labor or toil and then to be weary, grow tired or be in need of rest because of either physical or emotional needs. Some see this word as related to the Arabic word waji meaning to have trouble or to be in pain (Halot).

**Yaga'** is a favorite word with Isaiah who accounts for most of the OT uses.

One source says the primary idea is to grasp and hence to be exhausted or grow tired (New Strong's Dictionary of Greek & Hebrew



Words).

**Yaga** can refer to being physically spent as a result of prolonged labor, travel, or other activity and can also refer to emotional disturbance (i.e., a sense of being annoyed) or exhaustion resulting from the persistent stresses, sorrows, and trials of life (cf. Ps 6:6; 69:3; Is 49:4; Jer 45:3). In the sense of having diminished physical or emotional energy, the Lord cannot become "weary"; He is a source of strength to the weary (Isa 40:28, 29, 30, 31). But since being "weary" may imply prolonged and often unpleasant activity that is soon to stop, the verb can be used figuratively of God.

**Yaga'** - 25v in the OT - Jos. 7:3; 24:13; 2Sa 23:10; Job 9:29; Ps. 6:6; 69:3; Pr 23:4; Eccl. 10:15; Is 40:28, 30, 31; 43:22, 23, 24; 47:12, 15; 49:4; 57:10; 62:8; 65:23; Je 45:3; 51:58; La 5:5; Hab 2:13; Mal 2:17. **NAS** = become weary(1), get tired(1), labor(1), labored(4), tired(3), toil(4), toiled(1), wearied(4), wearies(1), weary(5), worn(1).

**Not grow tired... not become weary** - Note that this pair of Hebrew verbs (**tired... weary**) are used three times in this section (Is 40:28, 30, 31) clearly indicating a relationship. And thus we see that in Is 40:30 the prophet describes the best efforts which man can offer regarding natural strength (the vigor of youths and young men) but it cannot compare with God's untiring, unwearying strength (Is 40:28 - *God... does not become **weary** or **tired***). Isaiah's point is that the man or woman (genuine believers) who place their trust and hope in Jehovah, exchange their natural strength for the supernatural unwearying, unfainting strength of the Everlasting God and are enabled to tap into inner resources that will not fail in the storms and demands of life. In the immediate context, those Jews who had truly believed in Yeshua and choose to wait on **Jehovah** in the midst of the coming Babylonian invasion and exile would be supernaturally strengthened to fly, run and walk even through the nation as a whole would be experiencing God's purging, disciplining fire. The principle of course is applicable to all believers of all ages who make the continual conscious choice to wait upon the LORD.

**Grogan** has an interesting thought that...

The threefold description forms a climax, not its opposite; for the exceptional flying and the occasional running do not require, as does the constant walking, an ever-flowing stream of grace.

**Dan Fortner** opens his message on Isaiah 40:31 asking...

Is your heart heavy? Are you downcast, despondent, and depressed? Do you feel that God has both forsaken you and forgotten you? That he has forgotten to be gracious? That his mercy is clear gone forever?

Most of us would never use such language. We are too hypocritical to speak honestly and too proud to admit weakness. But, I dare say, there is not a man or woman in this building who has not felt in their heart the things I have described. Either for fear of dishonoring God, or for fear of being misunderstood, or for fear of leading others into gloom, we do not often speak of our bouts with despondency; but all believers do experience these tedious and tasteless hours of darkness and gloom (Ps. 40:5, 11; 43:5). Proposition: The only cure for despondency, the only comfort for downcast hearts is faith and hope in the Lord our God. ([Isaiah 40:27-31 Hope Thou In God!](#))

### **The Threefold Promise**

Oh, wonderful promises given  
To those who wait on the Lord;  
Strength for the faint who have fallen,  
Power for weakness outpoured.

Blessed the threefold assurance  
Thrilling the soul like a song:  
They shall mount up as the eagles  
On wide wings and swift wings and strong;

Run with the stride of the racer,  
Leaping unwearied and free,  
Till he comes to the end of his journey  
And the crown of his effort shall see.

But the word for the worn and the weary,  
Who know not the rapture of wings,

Who know not the joy of the runner,  
What infinite comfort it brings!

Walk and not faint; the slow steppings,  
The plodding dull round of the days,  
The toil and the heat and the burdens,  
The wearying halts and delays.

Oh, promise for those who are walking,  
Who falter and stumble and fall,  
The courage, the strength and the patience,  
This is the sweetest of all.

**Annie Johnson Flint**

### They will walk and not become weary:

- not faint - Psalms 27:13; Luke 18:1; 2 Corinthians 4:1,16; Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 12:1; Revelation 2:3
- Isaiah 40 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SUPERNATURAL WALKING

**They will walk** ([01980](#)) (**halak**) is the common Hebrew verb for walk or travel from one place to another. Clearly in context, Isaiah uses **halak** as a metaphor because walking pictures our daily conduct or behavior, as it does so often in the New Testament (see word study on the NT verb for walk = peripateo). The way we walk is the way we live our life day to day, moment by moment. And as believers we are called to walk in a manner worthy (axios [word study] = having the same weight as) of the gospel of Christ (Php 1:27) and worthy of the Lord (Col 1:10). Note that in Colossians the context (Col 1:9) is a prayer - this walk is possible only as we yield our will to the Spirit and are filled with a knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding! Beloved, don't try to live the Christian life, the "Christ life" without Christ, for we can accomplish this holy walk only as we learn to wait on **Jehovah Jesus** and are "strengthened with all power according to His glorious might" which is given to us "for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience" (Col 1:11).

**John** exhorts us writing that...

the one who says he abides in Him (Christ, the Vine [Jn 15:5], the Source of our supernatural strength to continue to walk even when the winds of affliction and trial blow hard against us) ought himself to **walk** in the same manner as He (Jesus) **walked**. (1Jn 2:6)

**Paul** gives us the NT parallel to Isaiah's OT picture of a supernatural**walk**...

But I say, **walk** (**present imperative** = Not a suggestion but a command to make this your continual or habitual practice. And how is it possible to fulfill this command? Not by natural means, such as the strength of young men who grow weary and tried but... ) by the Spirit (by surrendering our will to His will, in each of those "pop tests" that God sends/allows to grow us in grace and make us more like His Son), and (What is God's promise to those who "walk" by His Spirit?) you will not carry out the **desire** of the **flesh** (word study). (Gal 5:16-see in depth study)

**Comment: Beloved, can you see the parallels between Isaiah 40:31 and Gal 5:16?** In the Old we are called to "wait", in the New we are charged to "walk". In the Old we will not become weary; in the New we will not fulfill the desire of the flesh. Both promises have conditions to which believers must choose to submit. Both promises result in a supernatural life. **What are you "waiting" for?** May we all learn to **"wait for"** and **"walk by the Spirit"** so that His supernatural enablement of our daily life gives a clear, irrefutable testimony to a lost and dead world (Ep 2:1-note) of our Father in heaven, Who is otherwise invisible to them (Mt 5:16-note).

The **psalmist** writes...

And I will **walk** at liberty (real freedom is not the right to do as you please, but the power to do as you should, cp 1Co 2:14), for I seek Your precepts. (Ps 119:45-[note](#))

**Spurgeon comments:** And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts. Saints find no bondage in sanctity. The Spirit of holiness is a free spirit; He sets men at liberty and enables them to resist every effort to bring them under subjection. The way of holiness is not a track for slaves, but the King's highway for freemen, who are joyfully journeying from the Egypt of bondage to the Canaan of rest. God's mercies and His salvation, by teaching us to love the precepts of the word, set us at a happy rest; and the more we seek after the perfection of our obedience the more shall we enjoy complete emancipation from every form of spiritual slavery...

The verse is united to that which goes before, for it begins with the word **"And,"** which acts as a hook to attach it to the preceding verses. It mentions another of the benefits expected from the coming of mercies from God. The man of God had mentioned the silencing of his enemies (Psalms 119:42-note), power to proceed in testimony (Psalms 119:43-note), and perseverance in holiness (Psalms 119:44-note); now he dwells upon **liberty**, which next to life is dearest to all brave men.

He says, **"I shall walk,"** indicating his daily progress through life; **"at liberty,"** as one who is out of prison, unimpeded by adversaries, unencumbered by burdens, unshackled, allowed a wide range, and roaming without fear. Such **liberty** would be dangerous if a man were seeking himself or his own lusts; but when the one object sought after is the will of God, there can be no need to restrain the searcher. We need not circumscribe the man who can say, **"I seek Thy precepts."** Observe, in the preceding verse he said he would keep the law; but here he speaks of seeking it. Does he not mean that he will obey what he knows, and endeavour to know more? Is not this the way to the highest form of **liberty**, -- to be always labouring to know the mind of God and to be conformed to it? Those who keep the law are sure to seek it, and bestir themselves to keep it more and more.

**Become weary** (03286) (ya'aph/yaep) is a primitive root which means to grow tired or faint as from physical exhaustion. To tire as if from wearisome flight (Strong). To be fatigued, something that does not happen to Jehovah (Isa 40:28, 30)! To exhaust oneself fruitlessly (Hab 2:13, cp Jer 51:58, 64).

**Ya'aph/yaep** is used to describe a strong man who works with iron to the point of exhaustion, and for what? All to make an empty, useless idol (Isa. 44:12; cf. Jer. 51:58, 64; Hab. 2:13). **Beloved, are you laboring to the point of exhaustion building your reputation, your bank account, your dream house, etc, etc? Instead, in the spirit of Isaiah 40:31, you might try waiting on and resting in the Lord, Who will strengthen you for His work, work the fruit of which shall endure throughout eternity! God give us grace to wait and then work. Amen**

Note the concentration of this word in Isaiah 40 (Is 40:28, 30, 31)

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become **weary** (ya'aph) or tired (yaga'). His understanding is inscrutable. (Is 40:28)

Though youths grow **weary** (ya'aph) or tired (yaga'), And vigorous young men stumble badly, (Isa 40:30)

The **Septuagint** translates **ya'aph** with the Greek verb **kopiao** (see this word study) which means to engage in hard work and can imply difficulties and trouble. It speaks of intense toil even sweating and straining to the point of exhaustion if necessary. Paul uses **kopiao** to describe the quality of labor involved in ministering for the Lord (toil, word hard - used in all these passages - Ro 16:6,12, 1Co 4:12, 15:10, 16:16, Ga 4:11 Php 2:16 Col 1:29 1Th 5:12, 1Ti 4:10, 5:17). **Kopiao** was sometimes used to refer to athletic training. It was also common used among the down-trodden masses of the Roman world. Figuratively, **kopiao** pictures one becoming emotionally fatigued and discouraged so that they lose heart and give up. **We've all been there haven't we?** And here in Isa 40:31 the prophet prescribes the antidote for this emotional fatigue.

**Ya'aph** - 9v in the OT - Is 40:28, 30, 31; 44:12; Jer 2:24; 51:58, 64; Da 9:21; Hab 2:13. **NAS** = become exhausted(2), become weary(3), becomes weary(1), extreme(1), grow weary(2).

**WEARY:** make or become unable or unwilling to continue; stresses tiring until one is unable to endure more of the same thing

**FAINT:** lacking courage and spirit (cowardly); weak, dizzy, and likely to faint; lacking strength or vigor; lose consciousness because of a temporary decrease in the blood supply to the brain

**Octavius Winslow** writes...

**Because Jesus is the Almighty God, His saints have AN ALMIGHTY BURDEN-BEARER** We are a burdened people; every believer carries a burden peculiar to himself. "Your burden," is the language addressed to each child of God. What is your burden, O believer? Is it indwelling sin, or some natural infirmity of the flesh? Is it a constitutional weakness, or some domestic trial? Is it a personal or relative trial? Is it the

loss of property, the decay of health, soul-anxiety, or mental despondency? Come, oppressed and burdened believer, ready to give up all and sink!

Behold Jesus, the Almighty God, omnipotent to transfer your burden to Himself, and give you rest. It is well that you are sensible of the pressure, that you feel your weakness and insufficiency, and that you are brought to the end of all your own power. Now turn to your Almighty Friend, who is the Creator of the ends of the earth, even the everlasting God, who does not faint, neither is weary. How precious is the promise addressed to you!

He gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak. Even youths will become exhausted, and young men will give up. But those who wait on the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:29, 30, 31

Oh, what strength there is in Jesus for the weak, and faint, and drooping of His flock! You are ready to succumb to your foes, and you think the battle of faith is lost. Cheer up! Jesus, your Savior, friend, and brother, is "the Almighty God," and will perfect His strength in your weakness. The battle is not yours but His, and you have no need to fight, but to stand still and see the salvation of God! (From [EMMANUEL, or Titles of Christ by Octavius Winslow](#) )

**John MacDuff** applies Isaiah's passage in a devotional entitled **"Reviving Grace"**...

**"Will You not revive us, O Lord?" My soul! are you conscious of your declining state? Is your walk less with God, your affections less heavenly? Have you less conscious nearness to the mercy-seat, diminished communion with your Savior? Is prayer less a privilege than it has been?—the pulsations of spiritual life more languid, and fitful, and spasmodic?—the bread of life, less relished?—the seen, and the temporal, and the tangible, displacing the unseen and eternal? Are you sinking down into this state of drowsy self-contentment, this conformity of your life with the world, forfeiting all the happiness of true religion and risking and endangering the better life to come?**

Arise! Call upon your God! "Will you not revive us, O Lord?" He might have returned nothing but the withering repulse, "How often would I have gathered you; but you would not!" (Mt 23:37)) "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone!" (Ho 4:17) But "in wrath He remembers mercy." (Hab 3:2) "They shall revive as the corn." (Ho 14:7) "The mouth of the Lord has spoken it." (Is 1:20, 40:5, 58:15, Je 9:12)

**How and where is reviving grace to be found?** He gives you, in this precious promise (Is 40:31), the key. It is on your bended knees—by a return to your deserted and unfrequented chamber! "Those who wait upon the Lord!" "Wait on the Lord; be of good cheer, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord! (Ps 31:24YLT)" ([THE FAITHFUL PROMISER by John MacDuff](#))

**Scott Grant** has an analysis that relates to our application of Isaiah 40:31...

Weariness and weakness, then, are prerequisites to spiritual reformation. When the pressures of life cause us to realize that we lack the resources to live fruitfully, we are motivated to wait for the Lord. **Weakness does not preclude faith; it's a reason for it. Waiting is anything but passive. It involves an active application of mind and heart to the task of hoping in the Lord to fulfill his promise to deliver us.** We throw ourselves at the Lord, believing that if he doesn't catch us, all is lost. We bank on His goodness. Waiting for the Lord involves directing mind and heart to prayer, scripture and worship.

We have trouble disciplining ourselves in such a way, but weariness and weakness motivate us (cp Ps 119:67-[note](#), Ps 119:71-[note](#)). Until we grow weary and acknowledge our weakness, we tend to choose anything but heartfelt, desperate dependence on the Lord (cp Jas 4:6-note , 2Co 12:9- note, 2Co 12:10-note). As Ben Patterson says, "When you're well, you think you're in charge. When you're sick, you know you're not." In our weariness, we turn to the Lord.

The widow in Jesus' parable in Luke 18:1-8 is a symbol of weakness. Jesus told the parable

"to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart."

That's exactly what Isaiah is encouraging the exiles to do when he tells them to wait for the Lord. The widow, in her desperation, persistently appeals to a judge, the only one who can grant her justice. Her desperate, persistent appeals to the judge are used as an illustration of the "faith" Jesus is looking for (Luke 18:8). When we in our weakness pray to the Lord and wait for the Lord, the Lord finds what He's looking for.

When we turn to the Lord, He gives us his strength; we gain new strength. Waiting for the Lord-hoping in His

deliverance-is the means by which the Lord strengthens us. In the process of actively waiting for the Lord, we are exercising spiritual muscles, if you will. **Connecting with what the Lord will do in the future gives us strength for today.** This means you cannot only survive oppressive circumstances, you can flourish spiritually-even soar like eagles-in the middle of them.

**The Lord takes us to Babylon, where we feel oppressed, constricted and closed in, so that we will recognize our weakness, and actively wait and hope for Him. This is how the Lord brings about spiritual reformation in our lives. This is how He forms men and women who are spiritually strong. This is how He is forming you into the man or woman he wants you to be.** (Ed: cp "Babylon" with our trials - Jas 1:2-note, Jas 1:3, 4-note)

Note the progression-or what actually appears to be a regression-in the last three lines of Is 40:31. As a result of the supernatural strength given by the Lord, we will soar like eagles, run and not get tired, and walk and not become weary. We go from flying, to running to walking. It seems as if it should be the other way around: We start out walking and eventually fly. But **walking in the strength given by the Lord is seen as the most advanced spiritual exercise.** There will be moments in the spiritual life when we feel as if we're soaring, as if we've risen above it all. There will also be moments, probably more frequent, when we feel as if we're running, as if we've hit some kind of stride. But most of life consists of walking (**Ed:** eg, The apostle Paul, on the basis of the priceless spiritual wealth that has been granted to believers as detailed in Ephesians 1-3, the apostle then exhorts his readers to "**walk**" in Ep 4:1-note, cp Ep 5:2-note where he uses the present imperative commanding believers to walk in love as a lifestyle. See also word study of the verb *peripateo* used frequently to describe the NT believer's walk or conduct). It may not feel like much of an accomplishment; it's not glamorous; and it doesn't get much attention. But as we wait and hope in the Lord, he gives us the strength to put one foot in front of the other. To live in faithful dependence on the Lord step by step is the greatest accomplishment of all.

He will deliver us. He will lead us to freedom. But for now, He's forming us into the people who will be ready for freedom and can live in it.

**Is there some form of oppression in your life at the moment? Do you feel somehow constricted and closed in? Does it feel in any way as if you're in captivity, living in exile? Are you therefore weary, lacking in strength?** Life in the Silicon Valley can make you feel that way. It can wear you out. Perhaps, even as a vigorous young person, you've already stumbled badly. You're tired of the pressure; you're tired of the pace of life here; you're tired of your workplace; you're tired of your living arrangement; you're tired of living under a weight of expectations; you're tired of being single; you're tired of your fears. You're in a situation in which you feel trapped, and it's sapped you of strength. If you feel weary and weak, give thanks! (cp 1Th 5:18-note) **You are now a candidate for God's strength.** (2Co 12:10b-note)

**Are you wondering what the Lord is doing with all His power and wisdom? Are you, like Israel, asserting, "My way is hidden from the Lord, and the justice due me escapes the notice of my God"? Wait for the Lord! What does the Lord do with His power and wisdom? His power and His wisdom are for us! He doesn't change the circumstances; he changes us. The key at first lies not in liberating ourselves from oppressive circumstances; it lies in waiting for the Lord.** (cp 1Co 10:13-note) In that way the Lord enables us to transcend our circumstances.

**Jim Cymbala**, pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, writes of the discovery he made as he acknowledged his weakness:

"That evening, when I was at my lowest, confounded by obstacles, bewildered by the darkness that surrounded us, unable even to continue preaching, I discovered an astonishing truth: God is attracted to weakness. He can't resist those who humbly and honestly admit how desperately they need him. Our weakness, in fact, makes room for his power." (**Ed:** Read Jim Cymbala's testimony to God's reviving power in [Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire](#))

That "astonishing truth" is the one taught in Isaiah 40:27-31.

Remember, in Jesus Christ,

"we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (He 4:15-note, He 4:16-note , cp similar truth in He 2:18-note).

Paul calls Christ, particularly "Christ crucified" (1Co 1:23), "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1Co 1:24). In Christ, God in His wisdom lavished the riches of his grace on us (Ep 1:7, 8-note), and His power toward us is surpassingly great (Ep 1:19-note).

The twin themes of Isa 40:12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26-the power and wisdom of the Lord-resurface in the final section, Isa 40:27, 28, 29, 30, 31. Whereas his power and wisdom are seen in creation earlier, they are now seen in his people. This passage, then, first invites us to consider the universe and to imagine the power and wisdom responsible for its creation and maintenance. Then it invites us to believe that the one responsible for creation makes that very same power and wisdom available to us. In his wisdom, he does a powerful work in our lives.

The passage also invites us to specifically consider the stars, which the Lord leads, names and protects like a shepherd. The stars remind us of the Lord's promise to deliver us. He causes the stars to shine. He will do the same for us. Believing that he will do that, we wait for him. In his wisdom, he gives his power to those who wait for him, and they will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not get tired; they will walk and not become weary.

So, start boring those holes-wait for the Lord-and watch for the explosion. ([Reference](#))

**Rich Cathers** observes that...

There are three things mentioned here. And they go from the great to the ordinary. It's a wonderful thing to fly like an eagle, but it can be down right ordinary to just walk. William Carey, the father of modern missions wrote, "I can plod. That is my only genius. I can persevere in any definite pursuit. To this I owe everything."

**Illustration** -John Claypool, when he was the preacher of the Crescent Hill Baptist Church here in town, had a little daughter who suffered with leukemia. When she went into remission, everybody thought maybe God had healed her. On an Easter Sunday morning she went into a terrible recurrence. In his book, *Tracks of a Fellow Struggler*, Claypool relates how for two weeks his daughter was wracked with pain, her eyes swollen shut. She asked him, "Daddy, did you talk to God about my leukemia?"

He said, "Yes, dear, we've been praying for you."

She asked, "Did you ask him how long the leukemia would last? What did God say?"

What do you say to your daughter when you can't help her, and the heavens are silent? Emotionally and spiritually he was exhausted. A few hours later, she died. The following Sunday morning, John Claypool got into the pulpit to preach. It was powerful. He preached on Isaiah 40:31 ...

Dr. Claypool said something to the effect, "There are three stages of life. Sometimes we mount up with wings as an eagle and fly. We're on top of the world. Sometimes we run, and we don't grow weary. We just go through the routine. Sometimes it's all we can do to walk and not faint, and I need your prayers and your encouragement." At the moment John Claypool was at his lowest, he preached probably his most influential sermon. Perhaps his greatest contribution came at his darkest hour. He could have said like Paul, "For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2Co 12:9- note, 2Co 12:10-note) -- R. L. Russell, "Triumphing over Trials," *Preaching Today*, Tape No. 119. ([Reference](#))

**Chambers** in his devotional entitled **Dependent On God's Presence** writes that...

There is no thrill in walking; it is the test of all the stable qualities. To "walk and not faint" is the highest reach possible for strength. The word "walk" is used in the Bible to express the character - "John looking on Jesus as He walked, said, Behold the Lamb of God!" There is never any thing abstract in the Bible, it is always vivid and real. God does not say - Be spiritual, but - "Walk before Me."

When we are in an unhealthy state physically or emotionally, we always want thrills. In the physical domain this will lead to counterfeiting the Holy Ghost; in the emotional life it leads to in ordinate affection and the destruction of morality; and in the spiritual domain if we insist on getting thrills, on mounting up with wings, it will end in the destruction of spirituality.

The reality of God's presence is not dependent on any place, but only dependent upon the determination to set the Lord always before us. Our problems come when we refuse to bank on the reality of His presence. The experience the Psalmist speaks of - "Therefore will we not fear, though ... " will be ours when once we are based on Reality, not the consciousness of God's presence but the reality of it - Why, He has been here all the time!



At critical moments it is necessary to ask guidance, but it ought to be unnecessary to be saying always - "O Lord, direct me here, and there." Of course He will! If our common-sense decisions are not His order, He will press through them and check; then we must be quiet and wait for the direction of His presence. ([Reference](#))

## DEVOTIONALS RELATED TO WAITING ON JEHOVAH

At times you may feel so worn out and stressed that you are not sure you can take another step. You may seem to spend all your time running from crisis to crisis and to be constantly giving your time and energy to others. Your Lord wants to renew your strength and enable you to enjoy the abundant life He intends for you. The key is to wait upon Him to do so.

Our generation does not enjoy waiting. We are harried by all the commitments we have made and the many responsibilities we hold. We rush through our lives without stopping to evaluate our activities. Sometimes in our haste to get on with our work, we race ahead of God. Part of God's restorative process is to slow us down and make us listen to Him. As we wait on Him, God will remind us of our utter dependence upon His strength. When we slow down and seek His will, He will reveal His plans.

Biblically, waiting on the Lord is never passive; it is always active. Waiting requires us to cease our own pursuits and give God our complete attention. We may have to give up some of the activities we have allowed to inundate our lives. We may need to take an entire day to sit quietly before the Lord. If we ask Him, God will show us the resources He has provided to help with the work we have been attempting on our own. God may address feelings of guilt that have motivated us to do things that He has not asked us to do. - Experiencing God Day by Day (November 9)

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Ever watch an eagle learn to fly? The mother pushes the baby eaglet out of the nest, and the baby bird falls, desperately flapping its wings. Before the baby hits the ground, however, the mother eagle swoops under her baby and lifts it back to safety. She'll continue the lesson over and over again until her eaglet learns to fly. She doesn't push the baby out of the nest to abuse it; she pushes the baby out of the nest because she cares for it. She wants it to learn to fly. If the mother eagle never pushed the baby out of the nest, the eaglet would never leave the nest!

Learning to trust in God is similar to an eaglet trusting its mother when learning to fly. The similarities for us are obvious. God sometimes pushes us out of our comfortable lives to teach us to trust him. We may fall a little, but he doesn't let us hit the ground. If we were never uncomfortable, we'd never learn to trust him. (God's Word for Students - July 14)

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**Andrew Murray in his devotional "Waiting on God" - Day 21—The Almighty One** - 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. (Isaiah 40:31)

Waiting always partakes of the character of our thoughts of the one on whom we wait. Our Waiting on God will depend greatly on our faith of what He is. In our text, we have the close of a passage in which God reveals Himself as the everlasting and almighty One. It is as that revelation enters into our soul that the waiting will become the spontaneous expression of what we know Him to be—a God altogether most worthy to be waited upon.

Listen to the words, "Why sayest thou, O Jacob... My way is hid from the Lord... speakest thou as if God doth not hear or help?

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?". So far from it: "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint... and the young men shall utterly fall". And consider that "the glory of young men is their strength". All that is deemed strong with man shall come to nothing. "But they that wait upon the Lord," on the Everlasting One, who does not faint, and is not weary, they "shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and"—listen now, they will be strong with the strength of God, and, even as He, they will "not be weary; and they shall walk, and" even as He, they will "not faint."

Yes, "they shall mount up with wings as eagles." You know what eagles' wings mean. The eagle is the king of birds; it soars the highest into the heavens. Believers are to live a heavenly life, in the very Presence and Love and Joy of God. They are to live where God lives; they need God's strength to rise there. It will be given to them that wait on Him.

You know how the eagles' wings are obtained. Only in one way—by the eagle birth. You are born of God. You have the eagles' wings. You may not have known it; you may not have used them; but God can and will teach you how to use them.

You know how the eagles are taught the use of their wings. See yonder cliff rising a thousand feet out of the sea. See high up a ledge on the rock, where there is an eagle's nest with its treasure of two young eaglets. See the mother bird come and stir up her nest, and with her beak push the timid birds over the precipice. See how they flutter and fall and sink toward the depth. See now how she "fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings" (Deuteronomy 32:11), and so, as they ride upon her wings, brings them to a place of safety. And so, she does this once and again, each time casting them out over the precipice, and then again taking and carrying them. "So the Lord alone did lead him". Yes, the instinct of that eagle mother was God's gift, a single ray of that love in which the Almighty trains His people to mount as on eagles' wings.

He stirs up your nest. He disappoints your hopes. He brings down your confidence. He makes you fear and tremble, as all your strength fails, and you feel utterly weary and helpless. And all the while He is spreading His strong wings for you to rest your weakness on and offering His everlasting Creator strength to work in you. And all He asks is that you sink down in your weariness and wait on Him. Allow Him in His Jehovah strength to carry you as you ride upon the wings of His omnipotence.

Dear child of God, I pray you, lift up your eyes, and behold your God! Listen to Him who says that He "fainteth not, neither is weary" (Isaiah 40:28), who promises that you too will not faint or be weary, who asks nothing but this one thing, that you should wait on Him. And, let your answer be, With such a God, so mighty, so faithful, so tender,

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

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**A W Tozer (in the Size of the Soul)**-Isaiah 40:31 - It is possible to work far beyond the normal strength of the human constitution and yet experience little or no fatigue because the energy for the work has been provided, not by the burning up of human tissue, but by the indwelling Spirit of power. This has been realized by a few unusual souls, and the pity is that they are unusual.

Attention has recently been focused upon the fact that ministers suffer a disproportionately high number of nervous breakdowns compared with other men. The reasons are many, and for the most part they reflect credit on the men of God. Still I wonder if it is all necessary. I wonder whether we who claim to be sons of the new creation are not allowing ourselves to be cheated out of our heritage. Surely it should not be necessary to do spiritual work in the strength of our natural talents. God has provided supernatural energies for supernatural tasks. The attempt to do the work of the Spirit without the Spirit's enabling may explain the propensity to nervous collapse on the part of Christian ministers.

There is a place where strength can always be renewed; that place is the presence of the Lord. (Tozer - The Life of Elijah)

There is mighty power in prayer. It has much to do with our obtaining fullness of power in Christian life and service. The one who will not take time for prayer may as well resign all hope of obtaining the fullness of power God has for him. It is "they that wait upon the Lord" who "shall renew their strength" (Isa. 40:31). Waiting upon the Lord means something more than spending a few minutes at the beginning and close of each day running through some stereotyped form of request. "WAIT UPON THE LORD." True prayer takes time and thought, but it is the great timesaver. At all events, if we are to know fullness of power, we must be men and women of prayer. (Tozer - How to Obtain Fullness of Power)

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**E M Bounds** - In the Book of the prophet Isaiah these words are written: Isaiah 40:31. This is the genesis of the whole matter of activity and strength of the most energetic, exhaustless and untiring nature. All this is the result of **waiting on God**.

**There may be much of activity induced by drill, created by enthusiasm, the product of the weakness of the flesh, the inspiration of volatile, short-lived forces. Activity is often at the expense of more solid, useful elements, and generally to the total neglect of prayer. To be too busy with God's work to commune with God, to be busy with doing Church work without taking time to talk to God about His work, is the highway to backsliding, and many people have walked therein to the hurt of their immortal souls.**

Notwithstanding great activity, great enthusiasm, and much hurrah for the work, the work and the activity will be but blindness without the cultivation and the maturity of the graces of prayer.

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**Jonathan Edwards** - **Waiting on the Lord**, waiting for His salvation, and the like, are terms used as being equivalent to trusting in God in the Scripture. Ps 25:2, "O my God, I trust in thee; let me not be ashamed." Ps 25:5, "On thee do I wait all the day." Ps 25:21, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for on thee do I wait." Ps 37:3, "Trust in the Lord." Ps 37:5, "Trust also in him." Ps 37:7, "Rest on the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Ps 27:13,14, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord, and be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." See also Ps 37:9, 34; Pr 20:22; Ps 39:7; Ps 52:8,9; Ps 59:9; Ps 62:1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8; Ps 130:5, 6, 7, 8; Mic 7:7; Is 30:18; Is 40:31; Is 49:23;

Is 51:5; Is 60:8; Lam 3:24, 25, 26; Hab 2:3, 4; Ge 49:18; Ps 33:18, 19, 20; Ps 40:1, 2, 3, 4; Is 33:2; Zec 11:11. (Jonathan Edwards' Works)

**Jonathan Edwards** - Unpublished MS sermon on Isa. 40:29-31, "Observe: 1. Those that have the greatest strength have no strength of their own sufficient in that way which God calls 'em to Himself," p. 6, March 1741

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**NLT Study Bible** - Waiting for the Lord requires submission, prayer, hope, and faith (see Is 25:9; 26:8; 33:2), resulting in a quiet spirit and a renewal of inner strength (40:31). The book of Hebrews applies these words to Jesus Christ (Heb 2:13).

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**Warren Wiersbe** - Why did John outrun Peter? (John 20:4) There may have been a physical reason: perhaps John was younger than Peter. But there is also a spiritual lesson here: Peter had not yet reaffirmed his devotion to Christ, and therefore his "spiritual energy" was low. Isaiah 40:31 says that those who wait on the Lord "shall run and not be weary," but Peter had rushed ahead of the Lord and disobeyed Him. Peter's sin affected his feet (John 20:4), his eyes (John 21:7), his lips (He denied the Lord), even his body temperature (John 18:18; and see Luke 24:32).

Wiersbe commenting on Elijah in 1Kings 18 - What we do with God in private is far more important than what we do for God in public. Our hidden life prepares us for our public life. Unless we are willing to go through such disciplines as the dry brook, the depleted barrel, and the dead boy, we will never have the victories of Mt. Carmel. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isa. 40:31).

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To read a portion of the Bible before retiring is fine but not sufficient. Not only should our last conscious thoughts be of the Lord but also our first thoughts. Give God the first part of the day, not the last; the best, not the worst... So- no matter who you are—new Christian, old Christian, pastor or layman—you have little hope of living triumphantly unless you seriously cultivate your quiet time. Isaiah 40:30-31. (How to Begin the Christian Life)

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#### **Daily Light on the Daily Path - SEPTEMBER 10 - EVENING**

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. (Or, change strength.) Isaiah 40:31

When I am weak, then am I strong. — God shall be my strength. — He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. — Let him take hold of my strength.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. — The arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.

I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. — Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

2Co 12:10. Isa 49:5. 2Co 12:9. Is 27:5. Ps 55:22.  
Ge 49:24. Ge 32:26. 1Sa 17:45. Ps 35:1,2.

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**John Butler on Isaiah 40:31-** Scripture speaks much about waiting on the Lord. Few things are as hard to do as waiting on the Lord. It requires a lot of patience, faith, and submission. But waiting on the Lord has many wonderful compensations. Our verse speaks of four great compensations from waiting on the Lord. They include energy, elevation, enthusiasm, and endurance.

**Energy.** "They shall renew their strength." You must wait at the gas pump for the gas to fill your car's gas tank, or you will not go far before your car runs out of energy. Likewise we need to wait spiritually if we want spiritual energy. We need to wait in His Word. Do not be in a hurry to get through your daily Bible reading. The same is true regarding prayer. The hymn says, "Take time to be holy," and it takes time.

**Elevation.** "They shall mount up with wings as eagles." Eagles rise above the world with their wings. Spiritually we need to rise about the world's standards and interests. Waiting on the Lord will give us the wings to do this. It will help us live a higher, more nobler, more godly life.

**Enthusiasm.** "They shall run and not be weary." Running pictures enthusiasm. And not being weary in running speaks of lasting enthusiasm. We need more of this at church. Some get enthused, but it does not last. Others do not get enthused about the Lord's work at all. But if these folk would take time and wait in the Word and prayer they would see their spiritual enthusiasm become greatly increased.

**Endurance.** "They shall walk and not faint." Walking speaks of the normal round of life. It is what we do most. And frankly, it is harder to live for God in the normal routine of life than in any other area. Many folk only get with it spiritually on special days at church. They have not learned to live their faith in the ordinary round of life. But when we wait on the Lord in His Word and prayer, we will gain the endurance to live our faith in the common routine of life without fainting. Our faith will endure the struggles of ordinary living. (Daily Bible Readings)

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**Butler commenting on waiting in Acts** - "But wait for the promise of the Father... the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:4,5). The great blessing of the Holy Spirit would come in Jerusalem. Be in the right place and blessings will come. Also waiting, which is very hard on the flesh, is often a prerequisite to blessing.

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**R A Torrey** from his sermon "**The Power of Prayer**" - But not only will prayer promote as almost nothing else our personal holiness, but prayer will also bring the power of God into our work. We read in Isaiah 40:31 "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 [plod right along day after day, which is far harder than running or flying], and not faint."

It is the privilege of every child of God to have the power of God in his service. And the verse just quoted tells us how to obtain it, and that is by "waiting upon the Lord." Sometimes you will hear people stand up in a meeting, not so frequently perhaps in these days as in former days, and say: "I am trying to serve God in my poor, weak way." Well, if you are trying to serve God in your poor, weak way, quit it; your duty is to serve God in His strong, triumphant way. But you say, "I have no natural ability." Then get supernatural ability.

The religion of Jesus Christ is a supernatural religion from start to finish, and we should live our lives in supernatural power, the power of God through Jesus Christ, and we should perform our service with supernatural power, the power of God ministered by the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ.

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**Illustration of waiting and obtaining Jehovah's strength** - Themistocles, who led the Greeks in the famous naval battle of Salamis, for some reason unknown to his troops delayed the engagement. It was expected that he would avail himself of the early morning hours; and when what seemed the golden opportunity had gone in inactivity, there were many who suspected him of being a traitor to his country. But he was waiting for the land breeze, which he knew would begin to blow at nine o'clock in the morning. He proposed to harness the very winds to his war-galleys, and make them waft his boats to sea; and so save the strength of his men for the fighting. Thus, those who would have been only rowers became warriors. Happy is the servant of God who, waiting for power from on high, thus uses in the work of the Lord energies that would otherwise be wasted... (S Zodhiates - A Richer Life For You In Christ - An Exegetical Commentary on First Corinthians One)

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This, my soul, is the triumph of thy being—to be able to walk with God! Flight belongs to the young soul; it is the romance of religion. To run without weariness belongs to the lofty soul; it is the beauty of religion. But to walk and not faint belongs to the perfect soul; it is the power of religion. Canst thou walk in white through the stained thoroughfares of men? Canst thou touch the vile and polluted ones of earth and retain thy garments pure? Canst thou meet in contact with the sinful and be thyself undefiled? Then thou hast surpassed the flight of the eagle!—**George Matheson**

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The eagle that soars in the upper air does not worry itself as to how it is to cross rivers.

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All creatures that have wings can escape from every snare that is set for them, if only they will fly high enough; and the soul that uses its wings can always find a sure "way to escape" from all that can hurt or trouble it.—Smith

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NET Bible Note: The metaphor of "running" to the Lord refers to a whole-hearted and unwavering trust in God's protection

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Eagles do not go in flocks. If you would mount up as an eagle, you must be willing to go alone. - Harry Ironside

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**Virginia Whitman** - The cheetah, graceful hunting leopard of Asia, can speed along at 70 miles an hour. A prong-horn antelope can do 60. A bird of India, the swift, has been timed at 200 miles per hour in a dive for prey. An ostrich can outrun the fastest greyhound on record. Race horses attain from 40 to 50 miles an hour. Sluggish man, afoot, is not capable of 25 miles an hour."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." (Isaiah 40:31). (Encyclopedia of 15000 Illustrations)

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An enterprising shop-keeper opened a shop right next to another and handled the same goods. Spurred by the new competition, the old established storekeeper painted a large sign over his shop:

"ESTABLISHED FIFTY YEARS. PROVEN MERCHANDISE."

The next day his competitor displayed a sign:

"ESTABLISHED YESTERDAY, NO OLD STOCK."

In the spiritual realm, what counts is a daily anointing with the fresh oil of the Holy Spirit. (Isaiah 40:31) (Encyclopedia of 15000 Illustrations)

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**Olympic Motto** ([Ref](#)) - In English the Olympic motto reads: "Swifter, higher, stronger." Interestingly, the Bible also has an Olympic text. It is Isaiah 40:31—"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."

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**Spurgeon** - Isaiah 40:30, 31. Shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles;

That is their first mode of progression, in which, perhaps, there is more flight than is good for them: "They shall mount up with wings as eagles;"—

Isaiah 40:31. They shall run, and not be weary;

That is an improvement upon the flying; but they shall still further improve their pace, for running is not the best pace at which a man can go. Enoch did not run with God, but he walked with him; and so, as we grow in grace, we shall advance, from flying to running, and from running to walking. This is the wise, sober, steady mode of going to heaven.

Isaiah 40:31. And they shall walk, and not faint.

It is a good, steady pace. It is the pace that Enoch kept when he walked with God. Sometimes it is easier to take a running spurt than it is to keep on day by day walk, walk, walk, in the sobriety of Christian conversation. Many under excitement can run a race, but it is the best of all to be able steadily to walk on, walking with God the Lord. The Lord bring us to that pace. "They shall walk and not faint."

The Lord help us to attain to that blessed rate of progression, in which we shall "walk, and not faint," for his dear Son's sake!

#### **Related Resources:**

- Spurgeon's Sermon on [Isaiah 40:31 The Unwearied Runner](#)
  - Spurgeon's Sermon on [Isaiah 40:31 Renewing Strength](#)
- 

**Pre-Battle Eye-ing By Napoleon** - They tell a story of Napoleon, that, on the eve of a great battle, he would summon his generals into his presence. One by one they would pass from an ante-room into the chamber where Napoleon waited. Each man as he came would find Napoleon standing to greet him, Napoleon's hand outstretched towards him, and Napoleon's eyes looking into his own. And each man would go to his battle station with the strength of ten, feeling that there was no exploit that lay beyond his powers that day. (Cf. Isaiah 40:31) (Encyclopedia of 15000 Illustrations)

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**D L Moody** - And then take up the Christian's growth in grace, Psalm 23:2 "Lie down in green pastures;" "Sitting at the feet of Jesus;" Ephesians 6:13,14, "He is able to make us stand;" Psalms, "Walk through the valley of the shadow of death;" Hebrews 12:1, "Run with patience the race that is set before us;" Psalm 18:21, and in Isaiah 40:31, "They shall mount up with wings as eagles." The Christian, these verses show, goes up higher and higher, like a balloon, till the world is lost to sight; till he becomes like Christ,

and possessed of eyes that can gaze unblinded on the glory of the City of God.

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There is one thing more beautiful than an **enthusiastic young Christian**, and that is a **faithful old Christian**. It is a glad sight to see the young pilgrim entering with enthusiasm upon his course, stripping with eager hopefulness for the race. But it is a still more beautiful sight to see an **old man**, who has borne the burden and heat of the day, still pressing toward the mark, marching boldly and bravely, even though his step be slow—'walking without fainting'. -J. D. Jones, *Elims of Life*, p. 140.

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Be it ours, then, to trust the unseen Lord, and never shall we fail. Glorious Lord, we believe; help thou our unbelief.

Fear not, nor longer be dismayed,  
Lo, I, the mighty God, am nigh;  
Thou shalt, each moment, feel my aid,  
If thou wilt on mine arm rely.

Why shouldst thou fear, when I am thine—  
When all I am, I am for thee?  
If thou art weak, my strength divine  
Is perfect in infirmity.

Without my help thou canst not stand,  
But thee I will not leave alone;  
I'll hold thee up by my right hand,  
Till thou shalt reach my heavenly throne.

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Lord, what a change within us one short hour  
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make!  
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!  
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!  
We kneel—and all around us seems to lower.  
We rise—and all the distant and the near  
Stand forth in sunny outline, brave and clear.  
We kneel—how weak: we rise—how full of power.  
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong  
Or others—that we are not always strong;  
That we are ever overborne with care;  
That we should ever weak or heartless be,  
Anxious or troubled, while with us is prayer,  
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?  
—Archbishop Trench.

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**Wait On The Lord** - In Cantonese, a Chinese dialect, the word for **wait** sounds like the word for class. Making a pun on this word, some senior folks in Hong Kong identify themselves as "third-class citizens," which also means "people of three waits." They **wait** for their children to return home from work late at night. They **wait** for the morning sun to dispel their sleepless nights. And with a sigh of resignation, they **wait** for death.

In the Bible, the word wait is more an attitude than an activity. To "wait on the Lord" is to trust Him. Psalm 27 is David's exuberant declaration of faith in God. He sees the Lord as his salvation (Ps 27:1). In times of danger, he knows for certain that God will hide him (Ps 27:5). He remembers that God has asked him to seek His face, so he asks God not to hide from him. For, like a child, he



longs to see God's approving face (Ps 27:8, 9, 10). In his darkest moments, David declares: "I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (Ps 27:13).

Though no one knows how life will unfold, we can decide to trust God and to focus our mind on Him. For to those who wait on the Lord, the promise is given: Our heart will be strengthened (Ps 27:14). — Albert Lee

I know not what the future holds—  
What in one hour may be;  
But I can wait while it unfolds,  
And trust implicitly. —Elliott

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**Anti-Aging Power** (Read: Isaiah 40:25-41:1) - Americans spend more than \$20 billion annually on various anti-aging products that claim to cure baldness, remove wrinkles, build muscle, and renew the powers of youth. Can those products deliver what they promise? Dr. Thomas Perls of Boston University School of Medicine says there is "absolutely no scientific proof that any commercially available product will stop or reverse aging."

**But there is a promise of spiritual vitality that defies the ravages of time.**

"Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on 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" (Isa. 40:30, 31).

Isaiah used the eagle as a symbol of freedom and endurance, held aloft by a source of power outside itself. As we put our hope and trust in the Lord, we are carried along by His strength and not our own. The psalmist said it is the Lord who nourishes us so that our "youth is renewed like the eagle's" (Ps. 103:5).

Are we taking advantage of God's anti-aging power? It's promised to all who put their trust in Him for strength of heart, vigor of spirit, and energy of soul.— David C. McCasland

The ravages of time cannot be stopped;  
Yes, outwardly we perish every day;  
But inner strength of heart can be renewed  
By trusting in the Lord to light our way. —Sper

**Growing old is a blessing when you're growing closer to God.**

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**Eagle Flight** (READ: Isaiah 40:29-31) - He gives power to the weak. —Isaiah 40:29

I was watching an eagle in flight when for no apparent reason it began spiraling upward. With its powerful wings, the great bird soared ever higher, dissolved into a tiny dot, and then disappeared.

Its flight reminded me of Isaiah's uplifting words: "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Is 40:30,31).

Life's heartbreaks and tragedies can put an end to our resilience, our endurance, our nerve, and bring us to our knees. But if we put our hope in the Lord and rely on Him, He renews our strength. The key to our endurance lies in the exchange of our limited resources for God's limitless strength. And it is ours for the asking.

With God's strength we can "run and not be weary," even when days become hectic and demanding. With His strength we can "walk and not faint," even though tedious, dull routine makes the way seem dreary and long. The psalmist exclaimed in the midst of his weary, tearful pilgrimage, "Blessed is the man whose strength is in You" (Psalm 84:5).

Oh, what an exchange—God's infinite strength for our finite weakness! — David H. Roper

If you are helpless in life's fray,  
God's mighty power will be your stay;  
Your failing strength He will renew,  
For He's a God who cares for you. —D. De Haan

**God gives strength in proportion to the strain.**

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**God's Darkroom** (READ: Lamentations 3:1-6,22-26) He has set me in dark places... It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. --Lamentations 3:6,26

In the development of photographs, the film must first be taken into a darkroom. Only after the chemicals have done their work in the dark is it safe to expose the negatives to light and produce the final prints. The light, which would have destroyed the film, now brings out its beauty.

God takes us through "darkroom" experiences to develop our spiritual life. As we pass through trial, sorrow, frustration, and disappointment, the image of Christ is produced in us. Then we are ready to be displayed in the light.

Too often we blame people or circumstances for our dark tunnels of despair and frustration. Although they may be the secondary causes, we need to realize that the hand of the heavenly Father momentarily shades the light from our pathway. He graciously takes us through such experiences because He wants to provide us with the benefits of darkness.

Are you in God's darkroom? Then don't despair. The Lord is developing the beauty of Christlikeness within you for display in His art gallery of eternity! Do not seek to get back into the light too soon. Await His perfect timing, or you will spoil the imprint of His love on the film of your life. — Henry G. Bosch

Still will we trust, though earth seem dark and dreary,  
And the heart faint beneath His chastening rod;  
Though rough and steep our pathway, worn and weary,  
Still will we trust in God. --Burleigh

**God takes us into His darkroom to develop godliness.**

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**On Eagles' Wings** (READ: Isaiah 40:27-31) - Isaiah's words about patiently waiting for the Lord anticipate the future with confident hope. From our place of trial, we wait for salvation that is certain to come. Jesus assured His followers, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4-note).

Knowing that our destiny is glorious, which is the sure hope of heaven, we're able to pick up our pace here on earth. Though weary, we can stretch the wings of our faith and fly! We can walk the path of obedience and not get tired. We can move through routine days and not grow weary. A better world is coming, when our spirits will call us to action and our bodies will run and leap and fly! This is our hope.

In the meantime, what will be true one day can begin to be true now. We can be steadfast, patient, and joyful in spite of deep weariness; kind and calm, less focused on our frailty and fatigue; more concerned about others than we are about ourselves; ready to speak a loving word to those who are struggling. We can get ready now for the day our souls will take flight. — David H. Roper

I am a little weary of my life—  
Not Thy life, blessed Father! Or the blood  
Too slowly laves the coral shores of thought,  
Or I am weary of weariness and strife.  
Open my soul-gates to Thy living flood;  
I ask not larger heart-throbs, vigor-fraught,  
I pray Thy presence, with strong patience rife.  
—MacDonald

**When you're weary in life's struggles, find your rest in the Lord.**

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**Think Young** (READ: Isaiah 40:25-31) - In the book **Geeks and Geezers**, authors Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas present a fascinating look at "how era, values, and defining moments shape leaders" of two very different generations—the geeks (those 21-35 yo) and the geezers (those over 70yo).

One of their findings is that among the older group of "geezers," every person who was able to continue to play a leadership role retained the qualities of curiosity, playfulness, eagerness, fearlessness, warmth, and energy. Instead of being defeated by time and age, they were "open, willing to take risks, hungry for knowledge and experience, courageous, eager to see what the new day brings."

That's a great attitude to have, but how can a Christian get it and keep it? The Bible says that our strength comes from a trusting relationship with God:

"Those who wait on 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" (Isaiah 40:31).

Our **minds** more than our **bodies** cause us to lose heart and give up. The young are not immune, because "even the youths shall faint and be weary" (Is 40:30). God gives power to young and old who place their hope in Him. He stirs our spirits to run, walk, and soar for Him.— David C. McCasland

We're often weary in life's race,  
Driven by its hurried pace,  
But when we wait upon the Lord,  
His strength becomes our sure reward. —D. De Haan  
**No one is old who is young at heart.**

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**WAITING** (by David H. Roper)- Make haste to help me, O Lord!" the psalmist David prayed (Ps 70:1). Like him, we don't like **to wait**. We dislike the long lines at super-market checkout counters, and the traffic jams downtown and around shopping malls. We hate to wait at the bank or at a restaurant.

And then there are the harder waits: a childless couple waiting for a child; a single person waiting for marriage; an addict waiting for deliverance; a spouse waiting for a kind and gentle word; a worried patient waiting for a diagnosis from a doctor.

**What we wait for, however, is far less important than what God is doing while we wait.** In such times He works in us to develop those hard-to-achieve spiritual virtues of meekness, kindness, and patience with others. But more important, we learn to lean on God alone and to "rejoice and be glad" in Him (Ps 70:4).

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**F. B. Meyer** - "What a chapter might be written of God's delays! It is the mystery of the art of educating human spirits to the finest temper of which they are capable. What searchings of heart, what analyzing of motives, what testings of the Word of God, what upliftings of soul... All these are associated with those weary days of waiting, which are, nevertheless, big with spiritual destiny."

Be still, My child, and know that I am God!  
Wait thou patiently—I know the path you trod.  
So falter not, nor fear, nor think to run and hide,  
For I, thy hope and strength, am waiting by thy side. —Hein

**God stretches our patience  
to enlarge our soul.**

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**HOW LONG?** (READ: Psalm 13-[note](#)) How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? — Psalm 13:1-[note](#)

My friends Bob and Delores understand what it means to wait for answers—answers that never seem to come. When their son Jason and future daughter-in-law Lindsay were murdered in August 2004, a national manhunt was undertaken to find the killer and bring him to justice. After 2 years of prayer and pursuit, there were still no tangible answers to the painful questions the two hurting families wrestled with. There was only silence.

In such times, we are vulnerable to wrong assumptions and conclusions about life, about God, and about prayer. In Psalm 13, David wrestled with the problem of unanswered prayer. He questioned why the world was so dangerous and pleaded for answers from God.

It's a hard psalm that David sang, and it seems to be one of frustration. Yet, in the end, his doubts and fears turned to trust. Why? Because the circumstances of our struggles cannot diminish the character of God and His care for His children. In Ps 13: 5-[note](#), David turned a corner. From his heart he prayed,

"But I have trusted in Your mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation."

In the pain and struggle of living without answers, we can always find comfort in our heavenly Father. — Bill Crowder

Not ours to know the reason why  
Unanswered is our prayer,  
But ours to wait for God's own time—  
To lift the cross we bear. —Anon.

**When we pray,  
God wraps us in His loving arms.**

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**His Hand, His Heart** (READ: Psalm 13:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6<sup>[note](#)</sup>)- Sometimes God doesn't grant our prayer requests right away. After a while we begin to feel like the psalmist who said, "How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?" (Psalm 13:1-<sup>[note](#)</sup>).

I remember feeling like that on one occasion when I had come to God, confessed my sin, and asked for forgiveness and a renewed sense of joy. It seemed as if God's ears were closed to my cry. Only after continuing to pray and wait for a long time did I regain the joy that I had sought.

In John 11, we read that Mary and Martha called for Jesus to come because their brother Lazarus was very sick (John 11:1-44). The Lord delayed and Lazarus died. When Jesus finally did come, however, He gave them a whole new appreciation of His love and power.

Why do you suppose God often delays His answers or denies our requests? I think the answer is this: When God withholds His hand, He wants us to look to His heart. In other words, He wants us to learn more about His goodness and His love, and to trust Him to do what is best.

If He's withholding an answer to a request that is very important to you, just be patient. Keep asking and believing. He may want you to look at His heart—and to gain a new appreciation for His wisdom and love. — David C. Egner

And since He bids me seek His face,  
Believe His Word and trust His grace,  
I'll cast on Him my every care,  
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.  
—Walford

**When God withholds His hand,  
trust His heart.**

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**Do Something With Nothing** - A newspaper ad showed three people waiting for a city bus. Two of them were bored and listless, while the third was happily playing a game on a small electronic device. "Do something with your nothing," the ad said. "That nothing time. The time in between everything else you have to do." The idea was to sell the portable player so people could use all those segments of wasted "waiting" time.

I suspect that many of us already constructively use those small increments of waiting time to read a book, memorize a verse, or pray for a friend. It's our longer waiting periods filled with uncertainty and indecision that may leave us anxious and frustrated.

Paul challenged the Christians in Ephesus to "**walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil**" (Ep 5:15,16-note). The Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest suggests that this refers to **time** (kairos - word study) in its "strategic, opportune seasons" and means "making a wise and sacred use of every opportunity for doing good."

During those seasons when we wonder, "How did I get here and when can I leave?" it's best to look for our God-given opportunities instead of focusing on the obstacles. That's the way to do something with our nothing. — David C. McCasland

Wait and, in waiting, listen for His leading;  
Be strong, thy strength for every day is stored.  
Go forth in faith, and let thine heart take courage;  
There is no disappointment with the Lord.  
—Anon.

**When you find time on your hands,  
put them together in prayer.**

**There are three possible answers to prayer:  
Yes, No, or Wait.**

---

**Waiting With Anticipation** - While in the military I learned to hate waiting. We were commanded to hurry out of the barracks and line up. There we would stand and wait, wait, wait for our next orders. When getting vaccinations, we would stand in line and just wait.

I also did a lot of waiting in bus and train depots when I had a leave of absence. I can't say I enjoyed it, but it was different. It was waiting with anticipation. I knew that when I arrived home I would be welcomed by my wife Ginny and my loved ones.

This describes the kind of waiting expressed by the writer of Psalm 130. He had been in the pit of despair over the guilt of his sins (Ps 130:1, 2, 3-[note](#)), and he had prayed and gained assurance of forgiveness (Ps 130:4-[note](#)). But he explained that it was the Lord Himself for whom he was waiting—not just His forgiveness (Ps 130:5-[note](#)). He waited with the anticipation of a watchman who knows that light will appear in the morning (Ps 130:6-[note](#)).

When we're hurting or in distress over our sin, we can look up and wait with anticipation. The Lord will come! Whether through a promise directly from His Word, the wise counsel from a friend, or the quiet witness of the Holy Spirit, He will meet our need—as certainly as morning light always breaks through the darkness of night. —Herb Vander Lugt

O my soul, wait on the Lord  
And know He sees your need;  
He'll make His presence known to you  
Through word or kindly deed. —D. De Haan

**Those who wait on the Lord  
will never be disappointed.**

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**Promised Strength** (READ: Isaiah 40:10,11,28, 29, 30, 31) To those who have no might [God] increases strength. —Isaiah 40:29

Jonah Sorrentino was deeply hurt at age 6 when his parents separated. As a result, he held a lot of anger and bitterness inside. At 15, Jonah learned of God's love for him and became a believer in Jesus Christ.

Jonah, also known as recording artist KJ-52, admits that he used to live like a victim of circumstances. In an interview with Christianity Today, he explained how he began to experience healing: "You definitely have to acknowledge that, no, you're not okay."

He added, "You also have to reach a point of saying, 'I'm not going to dwell on everything of the past ... on anger or bitterness or hurt. I'm going to move forward because God is going to give me the strength to do that.'" God helped him to forgive his parents. He wrote these lyrics to encourage others:

Understand you can always find strength in Christ;  
God has a plan for every single part of your lives.  
That might be hard to understand in your troubled times,  
But anywhere you go, He's there with arms open wide.

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**Beware Of Quick Fixes** (READ: Psalm 106:1-15-[note](#)) - They soon forgot His works; they did not wait for His counsel. —Psalm 106:13

Some people pray only in a crisis. They have a "quick fix" mentality that sees God mainly as a problem solver. When merciful solutions come, He is courteously thanked, then more or less forgotten until the next crisis.

The story is told of a young rich girl, accustomed to servants, who was afraid to climb a dark stairway alone. Her mother suggested that she overcome her fear by asking Jesus to go with her up the stairs. When the child reached the top, she was overheard saying, "Thank You, Jesus. You may go now."

We may smile at that story, but Psalm 106-[note](#) contains a serious warning against dismissing God from our lives—as if that were possible. Israel took the Lord's mercies for granted, and God called that rebellion (Psalm 106:7-[note](#)). They developed malnourished souls because they chose to ignore Him (Psalm 106:13, 14, 15). What a lesson for us!

Anticipate great things from God, but don't expect Him to come at your beck and call. Instead, be at His beck and call, eager to fulfill His will.

Like the little rich girl, ask God to accompany you through life's dark passageways. But instead of dismissing Him when your special needs are met, cling to Him as if your life depended on it. It does! — Joanie Yoder

If we pray with sinful motives,  
Then our heart is far from right;  
We must seek to know God's bidding—  
What is pleasing in His sight. —D. De Haan

## God is not a vending machine.

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**Slow Down And Live** (READ: Psalm 1:1, 2, 3, 4, 5-note) His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. —Psalm 1:2-note

Many of our New Year's resolutions may actually accelerate our pace of life instead of helping us to slow down. In a quest for greater productivity and efficiency, we overschedule our days, then rush through meals, drive impatiently, and wonder why the joy of living eludes us.

Carol Odell, who writes a business advice column, says that slowing down can positively affect our lives at work and at home. She believes that rushing can cloud our judgment and cause us to overlook important things and valuable people. Carol encourages everyone to slow down, and even suggests the radical idea of welcoming red traffic lights and using the waiting time to meditate.

In Psalm 1, there is no hint of a frenzied pace. It describes a person who enjoys the blessing of God. Instead of thinking and acting like those who rarely consider spiritual matters, "His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night" (Psalm 1:2-note). The result is a fruitful life and a well-nourished soul (Psalm 1:3-note).

Isaiah wrote, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You" (Isa. 26:3). Just for today, try thinking about that verse whenever you have to wait. Isn't it time for all of us to slow down and live? — David C. McCasland

If you're working hard to make a living,  
Never taking time to smell the roses,  
Now's the time to heed the Bible's wisdom:  
Find true joy before your life's day closes.  
—Hess

**Come apart and rest awhile  
or you may just plain come apart! |**  
—Vance Havner

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**The Beauty Of Silence** (Psalm 62:1-8-note) - Truly my soul silently waits for God. —Psalm 62:1

Written on the wall behind the pulpit of the church we attended in my teens were these words: "The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him" (Habakkuk 2:20). And keep silence we did! All eight of us boys said nothing to one another as we sat waiting for the service to begin.

I loved this quiet time and often succeeded in pushing thoughts about girls and the Detroit Tigers out of my mind. The best I could, I tried to reflect on the wonder of God and His salvation. And in the silence I often sensed His presence.

Today we live in a noisy world. Many people can't even drive without music blaring from their car, or the beat of the bass vibrating their vehicle. Even many church services are marked more by noise than by quiet reflection.

In ancient times the pagans cried out in a noisy frenzy to their idols (1Kings 18:25, 26, 27, 28, 29). In sharp contrast, the psalmist saw the wisdom of silence, because in quiet reverence God can be heard. In the stillness of the night under a starry sky, in a hushed sanctuary, or in a quiet room at home, we can meet the living God and hear Him speak.

The psalmist's words are relevant today: "Wait silently for God alone" (Psalm 62:5). — Herbert Vander Lugt

Speak, Lord, in the stillness,  
While I wait on Thee;  
Hushed my heart to listen  
In expectancy. —Grimes

**To hear God's voice,  
turn down the world's volume.**

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**Praying And Waiting** (READ: Nehemiah 1:5, 6, 7, 8,9, 10, 11) - Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. —Psalm 37:7-note

A Christian couple was deeply distressed because their married son and his family had quit going to church and were giving God no place in their lives. As their friend, I advised them to continue showing love, to pray, and to avoid starting arguments. But at the



family's annual Christmas gathering, the father gave his son a lecture in the presence of the other siblings. The son and his family left in anger and broke off all contact with his parents.

It's hard to rely on prayer alone when you want something to happen right now. But that is what Nehemiah did. He was distraught by the news that the Israelites in Jerusalem were in grave danger (Nehemiah 1:3, 4). He was a man with great leadership ability and in a favorable position to receive help from the king he served, so he was eager to help his people. But he knew that he could be executed for coming into the presence of a Persian king without being invited. Therefore, though he had asked God to give him the opportunity immediately, he trusted God enough to wait. Four months later, the king opened the door for him to make his request (Neh 2:1,4).

It's not always easy to be patient, but God can be trusted. Wait patiently for Him. — Herbert Vander Lugt

Praying, resting, waiting, trusting—  
These are words that tell a story;  
As we wait for God to lead us,  
He responds, "Just seek My glory." —Hess

**Delay is not denial—pray on!**

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**Riding Out The Waves** (READ: Psalm 25:1-10-[note](#)) - What can ride ocean currents for years before finally washing ashore and springing to life? According to National Geographic's World magazine, it's a nut that is native to South America and the West Indies. Some people call them "sea hearts."

These 2-inch, chestnut-colored nuts are hardy, heart-shaped seeds that grow on high-climbing vines. They often fall into rivers and float out to sea. There they may ride the currents for years before coming to shore and sprouting into a plant.

This life-bearing, time-enduring, wave-riding seed illustrates a basic spiritual principle. God's plans may include extended times of waiting for Him to act on our behalf. This was true of Noah, who endured ridicule while spending 120 years building a ship; of Abraham, who waited for the fulfillment of God's promise that he would have a son in his old age; and of David, God's anointed, who chose to wait for God's timing rather than take the life of envious King Saul.

Sea hearts can't choose to be patient, but we can. Nothing is harder or better for us than to follow the example of David, who wrote Psalm 25. By waiting on the Lord we can have peace, and our faith will grow—even while we are riding out the waves. — Mart De Haan

#### **THINKING IT OVER**

What circumstances make it hard to wait for the Lord?  
How do we know we won't be disappointed when we wait for Him?

**God stretches our patience to enlarge our soul.**

Not so in haste, my heart!  
Have faith in God, and wait;  
Although He seems to linger long,  
He never comes too late.  
-Torrey

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**Directions From Above** (READ: Pr 3:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) Trust in the Lord ... ; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. --Pr 3:5,6

During a visit to Chicago, I stayed on the 25th floor of a downtown hotel. As I gazed out the window, I was fascinated by the maze of cars flowing four lanes abreast in opposite directions.

One motorist faced an emergency. He had engine trouble and was stalled in the middle of all that traffic. From my vantage point I could see for blocks. I watched several drivers switch into the same lane as the stalled auto, unaware of what was ahead. Thinking they were gaining time, these motorists were actually crossing over into a lane that would only spell greater delay.

As we travel along life's road, we do much the same as those misguided drivers. With our limited foresight we select the route that seems best—only to find that the temporary advance has led us into a course filled with delay and heartache. But how reassuring that we can look to One who is above everything, who knows the end from the beginning! This is why the writer of Proverbs could say, "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Pr 3:6). When the Lord indicates a "stop" or a "change of

lanes" or a "wait," we should gladly obey.

Yes, look for direction from above. — Richard De Haan

He leadeth me! O blessed thought!  
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!  
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,  
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me. —Gilmore

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**The best way to know God's will is to say "I will" to God.**

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**God's Delays** (READ: Hab 1:12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, Hab 2:1, 2,3) - Waiting is hard for me. I want answers now. Postponements perplex me; deferrals daunt me. I'm baffled by God's delays, wondering why and when. "How long, O Lord?"

The prophet Habakkuk wanted answers as well, but God chose to take His time. "I will stand my watch ... to see what [God] will say to me," Habakkuk wrote (Hab 2:1). "The vision is yet for an appointed time," God replied. "Wait for it; because it will surely come" (Hab 2:3).

Faith never gives up. It knows that despite appearances, all is well. It can wait without signs or significant indications that God is at work, because it is sure of Him.

"Each delay is perfectly fine, for we are within the safe hands of God," said Madame Guyon (1648–1717).

We too must learn to view each delay as if it were "perfectly fine." Postponements are reasons to pray rather than grow anxious, impatient, and annoyed. They're opportunities for God to build those imperishable but hard-to-acquire qualities of humility, patience, serenity, and strength. God never says, "Wait awhile," unless He is planning to do something in our situation—or in us. He waits to be gracious.

So take heart! If God's answer tarries, "Wait for it; because it will surely come." — David H. Roper

Soon shall the morning gild  
The dark horizon rim,  
Thy heart's desire shall be fulfilled—  
"Wait patiently for Him."  
—Havergal

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**God stretches our patience to enlarge our soul.**

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**What's Worth Waiting For?** (READ: Psalm 40:1-17-[note](#)) I waited patiently for the Lord ... He has put a new song in my mouth. -- Psalm 40:1,3

Psalm 40 is tough to take. It recalls a time when David was forced to wait. But as he looked back with a new song in his heart, he saw that the wait was worth it. By implication, when we are in the middle of a muddle, we must wait patiently for the Lord (Psalm 40:1).

That advice looks better in the Bible than it does in life. Patience is hard for people who drive to the One-Hour Photo Shop, take their clothes to the One-Hour Cleaners, and get breakfast at a drive-through window.

We cook dinner in microwave ovens and gulp down remedies that offer "fast, fast relief." Overnight mail is too slow, and we get irritated waiting for a fax. The people we live with, work with, play with, and worship with can absolutely unnerve us. They can be obstinate, frustrating, selfish, insulting. It's hard to be patient with them, and it's harder still to wait on the Lord.

Hymnwriter Phillips Brooks admitted, "The hardest task in my life is to sit down and wait for God to catch up with me." Yet patience is part of God's strategy for maturing us as Christians. It's a lost skill we all need to cultivate.

If you have no joy because you're always in a rush, slow down. God will give you a new song--but first you must wait patiently for Him (Psalm 40:1, 2, 3). — Haddon W. Robinson