**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WAIT ON THE LORD (ISAIAH 40:31 (New American Standard Bible)**

**“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.**

 Isiah compares us to eagles (40:31) and calls us to soar to new heights in terms of our faith and commitment---consider the characteristics of an eagle.

**The King of Birds!**

Like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions, so the Lord alone did lead him (**Deuteronomy 32:11**,12).

**“Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all his benefits…He satisfies my desires with good things, so that my youth is renewed like the eagle’s (Psalm 013:2,5).**

Eagles sometimes drown while hunting. They catch a fish too heavy for it to really carry and if it can’t drag it to shore quick enough it may hang on and be dragged under the water and drown because it won’t let go.

**You can’t fly when you are weighed down.**

**Do you want to mount up with wings like eagles?**

1. Be content

a. With what you have

**Why do we have so much stuff?**

First, consider the NEST. It’s usually built on the edge of a great precipice. There the mother bird hatches her young and there for a time she nourishes and cherishes them. The nest is made of thorns, jagged stones, and sharp bones. It is covered with wool, feathers and furs from animals she has killed. When she “stirs up” the nest, the eaglets begin to feel like leaving. She also prods them with her sharp talons and then a day comes when she sweeps them out with her powerful wings and casts them over the ledge of rock. Screaming with terror, they drop like stones. But just as they are about to be dashed to pieces, she swoops down below them and bears them up. She will continue this process until they learn to fly.

In a similar manner, God deals with His people. He cherishes them, but He also challenges them. He protects and provides for them, by He also subjects them to the disciplines of disturbance—so that they can learn how to fly!

The eaglet that whimpers, “I can’t” dies on the rocks and adds its carcass to the carrion already there. But the eaglet that attempts to fly, when flight seems impossible, soon finds itself “lord of the blue.”

Secondly, consider its WINGS. An eagle is built for flight---upward flight. They soar above the storms. They keep flying until they are safe in the sunshine.

“They will soar on wings like eagles.” “They will fly high on wings like eagles.” Life is either SIGHING, or SOARING. (Depending on Our Waiting) His Strength to rise above the Distractions, the Difficulties, and the Disappointments of life. Like eagles we learn to use the winds of storms to enable us to soar higher.

In like manner, the child of God should face the darkness of storms with courage and determination. His prayer and faith can penetrate the clouds and bring him into the glory of the Son’s presence.

The wings make it possible for the eagle to perform with great speed and strength. Spiritual eagles can perform with equal speed and strength. God has promised to supply it. The believer quickly flees temptation and God’s strength is made perfect in his weakness. These wings make it possible for the believer to go swiftly to the aid of others.

In **Psalm 103:5** we read about our youth being renewed like that of the eagle. The Psalmist is referring to the molting of birds, which, in most cases, takes place annually, in which they cast their old feathers off and get a new plumage.

The third amazing feature of eagles has to do with their EYES. They are known for their keen eyesight. The expression “eagle eye” describes quite accurately one of the unique characteristics of this fascinating bird of prey. The eagle’s eyesight is three to four times stronger than that of humans.

**“Wide soaring gives wide seeing.” waiting on the Lord helps us to see things differently.**

**Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.**

When you look down from the mountain you get a comprehensive, and all inclusive view of what is happening and how it is all going to work out.

**Ex 7:9 And Moses said unto Joshua, choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek:**

**tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.**

**Paul: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18). - This, is how the eagle sees it.**

Spiritual eagles should have keen eyesight also. They are to keep their eyes centered on Jesus (**Hebrews 12:2**). They are to overlook the faults in others. They should be quick to see the needs of others as well. And, of course, they should be able to spot the enemy readily. This is often referred to as “spiritual insight.”

Another aspect of eagle life has to do with their HABITAT. They build on high ledges and live apart in the high places because they are solitary birds. Spiritual eagles pursue the lofty summits as well---they separate themselves from the principles, values, and standards of the world. They lay up treasures in heaven, not on the earth.

**Joseph Parker, a great English preacher once said, “An eagle does not roost in a sparrow’s nest.” And neither does a child of God! God has designed and empowered us to be like the eagle---ever ascending in our faith.**

 **God enables us to gain altitude.**

a. Eagles are different from other birds in many respects…especially in the way they fly.

 Some birds must beat their wings constantly to stay aloft. (the hummingbird)—many people think that spiritual growth must be accompanied by frenzied activity. In fact, getting alone with God is the primer for Christian growth. Doing must always flow out of being.

Most birds beat their wings to get aloft and glide until they need to gain more altitude.—here are Christians operating in crisis mode. It’s all ups and downs. I do well for a while and then I must work so hard to get back where I was!

 Eagles are included in a group of birds that, once aloft, can actually gain altitude without beating their wings. They ride thermals. These are rising currents of warm air. They can make the most of these thermals simply by spreading their wings.—How beautiful is this truth? Other types of flight cannot get the eagle to such great heights. Eagles can fly up to 10,000 feet! Nearly 2 miles! They do this not by frantically beating their wings but by receiving a lift from God’s design.

b. God is trying to lift us up but we are so frantically beating our wings. We are riding spiritual highs and bottoming out only to work as hard as we can to get back to where we know we should be.

c. We are running and getting tired; we are walking and becoming weary.

d. But when we place ourselves in the flow of God’s love and instruction daily we find ourselves higher and higher. We find we are gaining new strength.

e. How much time are you spending with the Lord? It is the time with God that spiritually spreads our wings and allows us to catch the lift God supplies.

…but even as we are moving higher we must know a second truth.

2. It’s not always smooth sailing, but you can make it.

a. There is no one in the Bible who was close to God that didn’t have tough times…including Jesus. You don’t sweat drops of blood as a sign of spiritual euphoria.

b. The Christian life can be turbulent. Satan comes against us. Normal highs and lows take place. But these things don’t have to stop our progress.

c. Eagles have nearly 7,000 feathers. God made them lightweight, flexible and strong. And the design of the feathers makes the eagle able to endure great turbulence in flight. The tips of the wings are tapered. When the eagle fully extends its wings the tips are widely spaced. It dramatically reduces turbulence and they can effectively hunt, fly into headwinds and soar.

**d. We may have times we think we can’t make it. The scriptures give us some beautiful reminders:**

**1 Corinthians 10:13, “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”**

**2 Peter 1:3, “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness.”**

**John 16:33, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”**

**Where is the turbulence in your life today?**

3. It’s the direction that counts.

a. We can fall into the mistaken notion that the Christian life should always be a spiritual high. This is simply not true.

b. Isaiah says sometimes we run and sometimes we walk.

c. I believe it is in the spirit of this verse that we get the direction right and know that in times of great growth (which are fewer and farther between) and in times of consistent growth (which is the ordinary, daily putting into practice of the Christian life) Godliness is the pursuit.

d. The food of eagles is on the ground. We can’t fly high all the time.

I asked you at the beginning of this series a simple question. Do you have faith enough to believe that your best spiritual days are ahead of you? Why not make that your prayer.

God help me to hope in you for my best spiritual days to lie ahead of me.

When we strive to live in the heights, we cannot help but notice several things:

(1) It’s not crowded, (2) The air is clear, the vision greater, (3) The beauty is breathtaking, and (4) a feeling of exhilaration surges through the one committed to live such a life---success, instead of failure. Perseverance and hard work paid off and we soar like the eagle.

The story is told about a farmer who caught a young eagle and placed it with his chickens. The eaglet ate with them and soon adopted itself to their ways. One day a friend was visiting the farm and noticed the eagle with the chickens in the barnyard. He said to the farmer, “What’s that eagle doing in there?” The farmer answered, “O, he doesn’t know he’s an eagle. He thinks he’s a chicken. He eats feed and does everything the chickens do. He’ll never fly!” But his friend said, “No, I don’t agree. He’s still an eagle because he was created to be one. He has the heart of an eagle and one day he will realize it.”

The farmer’s friend tried to prove it by encouraging the eagle to fly but unsuccessfully. Finally, one day he took him to the foot of a mountain just as the sun was rising. The instant the eagle got a vision of the rising sun, he uttered a wild scream of joy, stretched his wings, and flew off—never to return to the barnyard again.

O, for a vision of Jesus, the Son of Righteousness, that we may “mount up with wings as eagles…”

**FOUR RESULTS OF WAITING ON THE LORD**

A. ABRAHAM AND SARAH WAITED (FOR ISAAC)

B. NOAH WAITED (FOR THE FLOOD AND SUBSIDING WATERS)

C. JOSEPH WAITED (FOR HIS "TIME" IN POWER)

D. JESUS WAITED (FOR THE "TIME TO BE FULFILLED")

E. MARY & MARTHA WAITED (FOR JESUS TO ARRIVE WHEN LAZARUS DIED)

F. THE DISCIPLES WAITED (FOR THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT)

G. ALL BELIEVERS ARE (AWAITING CHRIST'S RETURN)

IN EACH CASE, IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT!!

**1.THOSE WHO WAIT ON THE LORD-THEY WILL HAVE INWARD STRENGTH**

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength;

"Chariots of Fire", Eric Liddell refused to run in the 100 metres race in the 1924 Paris Olympics because it involved racing in a preheat on a Sunday.

The Press and even the Prince of Wales tried to talk him into running but he refused.

Instead, he went to the Scottish Presbyterian church and read the lesson from **Isaiah 40:31**

He was given the chance to race for Britain in the 400 metres a race he had not run before. Liddell ran the 400 metres at a 100 m pace. He won with a new world record.

**2.THEY WILL HAVE UPWARD STRENGTH: they shall mount up with wings as eagles**

The eagle doesn’t like the mud and filth of this world, he will be on the highest mountain.

Boy shot an eagle which broke his wing and landed in his barnyard among the filth.

One day as the eagle heard the mating cry stretched his wings, and soared into the sky, and gave a scream of victory as he returned to the clouds.

**John 15:19**-If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

**Colossians 3:2**-Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

**3.THEY WILL HAVE OUTWARD STRENGTH: they shall run, and not be weary**

**Gal 6:9 Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.**

**Gal. 5:7-Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?**

A little boy told his father, “Today I beat a snake.” The father asked, “Did you beat him with a rock or a stick?” The little boy said, “I beat him running.”

On a plane. One of the engines caught fire.

The captain the plane could fly as well with three engines

A second engine burst into flames. Captain two engines were sufficient.

Then a third engine was suddenly ablaze. The captain said no more.

Soon the captain appeared with a parachute. "Don’t anyone panic, I’m going for help."

Today, many are jumping out of the the Lord’s work.

**4.THEY WILL HAVE ONWARD STRENGTH: and they shall walk, not faint**

God will give us strength for the long haul, to serve Him all the days of our life.

A grandfather was walking with his 6 year old grandson. The child was running ahead, and came to a creek...CHILD, WAIT FOR ME AND I’LL GET YOU ACROSS...

HE LIFTED THE CHILD UPON HIS SHOULDERS, AND WADED ACROSS.

the grandchild said, "If I hadn’t waited on you, I would never have made it across!"

**Jeremiah 29:11, “I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord.”**

Learn to let go of things. God knows what we need for our journey.

**Forgive**

 Every once in a while we hear about an eagle that has been wounded. As powerful as they are, wounded eagles are terribly vulnerable. If they can’t fly, they are susceptible to many predators.

When we don’t forgive people we are wounded. We become vulnerable to attack. We are sitting ducks for:

Bitterness

 Hatred

Depression

. **Mark 11:25**, “If you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive your sins.”

Our lack of forgiveness may not hurt the other person like we hope but it will always hurt us like we never expect.

 All of life is impacted by the lack of forgiveness and we’re in the trap of Satan when don’t forgive.

**Trust God**

We are so afraid of failure that we don’t try. In the world of eagles up to 40 percent of their young die attempting their first flight! But God doesn’t let anyone down who trusts in him.