

“STUMBLE ALONE OR FLY IN GOD’S STRENGTH”

Sermon outline: Isaiah 40:27-31

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“STUMBLE ALONE OR FLY IN GOD’S STRENGTH”

Isaiah 40:27-31 – coherent subsection “Israel and its creator”

Introduction

I Where is our God?

- Ever feel disregarded by God? Let down? Your walk with him, your very life – is pointless? Batteries run down (rabbit - Duracell)?
- I do (briefly, dryness this Autumn)

II Where was their God?

- Israelites in Babylon felt same – God had abandoned them (brief history)
- Would never see Jerusalem again.
- Psalm 37:1-4 suggest (older) congregation sing “Boney M” version

Body – whence comes our strength?

I A sense of void (v27)

- Lament of Israelites
 - o Hiddenness – God does not see
 - o Disregarded – God does not seek
- Common for God’s people – Job, 1 Kings 19 – and us?
- Attitude matters as well as circumstances – clues “complain”, “my way”, “my cause”. Focussed on ourselves? – our agenda, not God’s? (Jer 2:13)

II A God of might (v28)

- Have you not heard? – refrain in chapter – Ch 40 a “hymn” for Israel – still resonant for us
- Everlasting – unlike man (v7) and nations (v23)
- Creator – of earth (v12) and universe (v26)
- Wisdom – beyond our comprehension (v13-14) - we still try to second guess!
- And strength.....

III A source of strength (v29-31)

- God’s infinite resources (also v10)...compared to little Israel – and us
- Like Israelites, in our own strength, we stumble, fall – morally as well as physically.
- Soaring in his strength:
 - o Repent and put our **hope** in him first (wait on him), not our own wisdom (Prov 3:5-6)
 - o **Renew** (re clothe) our weariness
 - o **Soar, run, walk** in assurance of his power
 - o Flying like eagles: keen sight, freedom, speed, power – soar above pain, despair, reproaches - fearlessly jump off cliffside eyries – Christian symbol of new life

In NT God’s strength comes via Holy Spirit.....

IV A Spirit of Power (Illustrations of v29-31)

- **Disciples at Jesus' death**, demoralised, scattered....
- Coming of Holy Spirit transformed them into preachers and leaders of great power (Acts). They flew on wings....fearless, bold.
- **Heidi and Rolland Baker missionaries in Mozambique** (quotes from "There's always enough") "burnt out", overwhelmed with burden of caring for 300 orphans, planted just a few weak churches
- After encountering Holy Spirit at Toronto ministry exploded, full scale revival, thousands of churches now flourishing
- **My own house group in Germany, multiplying** - God's strength via his Spirit is available to you who believe! Not just "super-saints".

Conclusion

- Even most active Christians have periods of weariness and weakness – in ministry, work, relationships, lives....God can seem far away
- Examine roots – only circumstances or reliance on own strength, promises, understanding?

Either way we can:

- **Rely** on God's eternal presence
- **Rest** in God's understanding
- **Trust** in God's strength
- Put your **hope** in him (2 Chron 20:20) and renew your strength; you will be upheld by his **Holy Spirit** – you can **fly**.....

(Call for ministry for renewal of strength and filling with the Holy Spirit)

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