



The
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"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19, NASB).

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A Passage to Ponder

"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" (Isa. 40:31).

Jeff Strite relates an interesting story about a woman who came to a preacher for counseling. The woman said her husband had become distant. Her children were rebellious. They were deep in debt. Now she was experiencing medical problems.

The preacher said the more she talked the more depressed HE became. He wasn't sure how to advise her. He admitted that he thought, "Your case is hopeless. There is no way out." Of course, he couldn't tell her that. So as many good counselors do, he asked her a question.

"Tell me...how did you become a Christian?" While surprised by the question, the woman began to answer it. As she related her conversion story, her appearance changed from sadness to thoughtfulness, and finally to excitement as she shared how she came to know Christ. By the time she left his office her attitude and demeanor had changed. He said it was as though she had come to his office to share how much she loved Jesus.

While the woman's problems hadn't changed, her focus had changed. Instead of wallowing in self-pity about her family, financial or health issues, her eyes turned toward Jesus. And she found hope.

In the context of our passage, the prophet is speaking of a future time in which God's people would experience Babylonian captivity. Judah would be plundered and pillaged. Jerusalem would be in ruins. Their beloved temple would be utterly destroyed. And for some one hundred years, they would live in exile, under the dominion of a powerful tyrant.

They might begin to feel like God had forgotten them. Or was indifferent. Or was unable to rescue them. So, Isaiah reminds them that God is both good and great. He is all-knowing. All-seeing. Ever present. And always caring. As a result, they could take heart. Find comfort. Feel encouraged. Rely on His power. And renew their strength.

There are times in all of our lives when we may feel discouraged, despondent, or even depressed. Collectively our nation is going through a time of crisis, chaos, and corruption. Many feel that our leaders have failed us. And our cherished freedoms are slowly eroding away. As some may wonder and worry about what the future holds, it's time for us to refocus our attention. Reaffirm our faith. And renew our spirits.

--- Excerpted, Ken Weliever, The Preacherman, "Thought for Today," J. D. Tant, 4-8-22

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