

God Strengthens Those Who Wait Upon Him

(Isaiah 40:18-31)

Introduction:

1. In our lesson we are emphasizing the fact that "God strengthens those who wait upon Him."
2. Although this point is made many times in the Bible, we are concentrating on the information presented in Isaiah 40:18-31.

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST EXAMINE THE SITUATION IN JUDAH WHEN ISAIAH WROTE
 - A. We learn from Isaiah 1:1-2 that the people of Judah had rebelled against God.
 - B. We also learn from 6:8 that Isaiah volunteered to try to bring them back to God.
 - C. (39:5-7) Isaiah informed King Hezekiah that his people would be taken to Babylon.
 - D. Isaiah began a message of comfort in ch.40 -- God would forgive and restore His people.
 - E. However, the Jews would have to wait 70 years until the captivity was over (Jeremiah 29:10).
 - F. To receive strength from God while in captivity, they would have to avoid 2 practices.
 1. They would have to avoid comparing God to a graven image.
 2. They would have to avoid thinking that God did not care for them.
- II. (vs.18-24) TO RECEIVE STRENGTH FROM GOD WHILE IN CAPTIVITY, THE JEWS WOULD HAVE TO AVOID COMPARING HIM TO GRAVEN IMAGES
 - A. (vs.18-20) Images can be made of various materials, including gold, silver, and wood.
 - B. (vs.21-24) Isaiah pointed out the foolishness of comparing God to graven images.
 1. The Jews had been informed and they understood certain things about God.
 - a. He sits upon "*the circle of the earth*" -- He reigns in heaven.
 - b. The inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before God.
 - c. God stretches out the heavens as a curtain and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in.
 - d. God rules over the princes and judges of the earth.
 2. Remember: The Jews would be in Babylon while they waited upon God -- the Babylonians worshipped idols and images, and the Jews would have to guard against this influence.
- III. (vs.25-31) TO RECEIVE STRENGTH FROM GOD WHILE IN CAPTIVITY, THE JEWS WOULD HAVE TO AVOID THINKING THAT HE DID NOT CARE FOR THEM
 - A. (vs.25-26) The Jews could be reminded of God's power by observing the objects in the heavens He created.
 1. They would have to avoid thinking that God was so distant that He did not care for them.
 2. See vs.27.
 - B. (vs.28-31) Isaiah pointed out the foolishness of thinking that God did not care for His people.

1. God does not faint or become weary (Psalm 121:4).
 2. There is no searching of God's understanding.
 - a. (Psalm 147:5) God's "*understanding is infinite.*"
 - b. He knows the needs of His people, and He cares.
 3. (vs.29) God gives power to the faint, and He increases strength to the weak.
 - a. (vs.30) Eventually, even the young will faint, grow weary, and fall; however, . . .
 - b. See vs.31.
- C. God cannot be compared to any image because He reigns in heaven over everything.
- D. Even though God reigns in heaven, He cares for and wants to bless His people.

Conclusion:

1. Sometimes we are in situations that require us to wait upon God.
2. When this occurs:
 - a. we must not lose sight of God's true identity -- He is Lord of heaven and earth and cannot be compared to any image (Acts 17:24-29)
 - b. we must not think that God does not care for us (1 Peter 5:7).
3. To receive strength when we are in situations that require us to wait upon God, :
 - a. let us allow God to lead us in His truth and teach us (Psalm 25:5)
 - b. let us be of good courage (Psalm 27:14)
 - c. let us wait patiently (Psalm 37:7a)
 - d. let us hope in God's Word (Psalm 130:5).