

### 30.3 An Exchanged Life

Isaiah 40:28-31 (NKJV)

**<sup>28</sup> Have you not known?  
Have you not heard?  
The everlasting God, the LORD,  
The Creator of the ends of the earth,  
Neither faints nor is weary.  
His understanding is unsearchable.  
<sup>29</sup> He gives power to the weak,  
And to *those who have no might* He increases strength.  
<sup>30</sup> Even the youths shall faint and be weary,  
And the young men shall utterly fall,  
<sup>31</sup> 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.**

I recently read that the word *renew*, in Hebrew, literally means to exchange. In the context of this verse, Isaiah was saying God's people shall exchange their strength for God's strength. That is a powerful thought. Wouldn't you rather have His strength than your own?

The Hebrews needed His strength when they left Egypt and eventually entered the Promised Land. They could not have done those things on their own. God led the way and neutralized their enemies. They renewed or exchanged their strength for His.

The Christian life is an exchanged life, too. Jesus exchanged our place on the cross for His. He didn't deserve death and separation from God, we do. Yet, He made the exchange and took our place. He went to the cross and suffered for us what we deserve.

To gain the strength we need from God, in a simplistic way, is kind of like taking a Christmas present back to the store to exchange it. We turn in what we can't use or don't want for something you can use and do want. We can exchange our so-called strength, which is actually weakness, for God's actual strength.

Do you remember Paul's wrestling with God over his "*thorn in the flesh*"? In **2 Corinthians 12:7-10** (NKJV) he writes:

**<sup>7</sup> And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.  
<sup>8</sup> Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. <sup>9</sup> And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

Paul essentially gave up his strength, embraced his weakness so that he could be renewed by the strength of God. He made the exchange.

Likewise our strength is in reality weakness that needs to be renewed or exchanged. That comes by waiting eagerly for the LORD. We give Him our weaknesses and He gives us His strength.

It is what the same apostle Paul wrote about in **Galatians 2:20**:

**“<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”**

We see that it is more than a changed life; it is an exchanged life. Paul had it and we can, too.

Sometimes we rely on our own strength and wonder why we fail. One of the qualities of our Founders and Framers was a learned reliance on God and His strength. Do you remember when the Constitutional Convention hit its impasse and the delegates wanted to leave? **Benjamin Franklin** stepped up with an impromptu, Bible-based speech to urge times of regular prayer for the convention. Listen to his words:

**"I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth -that God Governs the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?**

**"We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that "except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that build it." I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the Builders of Babel: We shall be divided by our partial local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and by word down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing Governments by Human wisdom and leave it to chance, war and conquest. . . ."**

I think that when we look back on our history we can see the surpassing presence of God in the establishment of our nation. We also can see that our forefathers learned to rely on Him in war and in peace. There truly was no earthly reason for the success of our Declaration of Independence. The greatest army in the world should have toppled the American Militias. Yet, we prevailed. Those men knew **Psalms 33**. Notice three verses from the psalm:

**<sup>16</sup> No king is saved by the multitude of an army;  
A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.  
<sup>18</sup> Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him,  
On those who hope in His mercy,  
<sup>22</sup> Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us,  
Just as we hope in You.**

They would most likely have said that their success was due to the Providence of Heaven.

BTW, many have thought Benjamin Franklin was a Deist who believed there was a God, but He was not involved in the lives of people or nations. Do you think a Deist would have called the Convention to prayer? It seems likely that Mr. Franklin had a deeper faith than one who believes in the absence of God from the everyday lives of men.

As we face the unknown future we can be weak and terrified. Who knows what mandate is coming next; what rights will be stripped away by ungodly and tyrannical leaders. If we rely on our own strength we will falter. If we renew or exchange our strength with God's we will ***"fear no evil, for He is with us."***

Keep The Light of God's Strength Burning!