

LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Renewing Your Strength

Isaiah 40: 25-31

Objective : To discover how the Lord renews our strength in times of discouragement, weakness, failure, sickness, and worrying.

In the movie "Chariots of Fire", there is a scene in which Scottish athlete Eric Liddell is racing against some of his countrymen. During the early part of the race, another runner bumps him and Liddell falls forward with his arms outstretched and crashes against the turf. Onlookers groan disappointed assuming that he is out of the race. But even though the other runners are twenty yards ahead, Liddell gets up and begins sprinting at top speed toward the pack. As they come to the final stretch he passes one runner after another and then in typical fashion throws his head back and sprints victoriously across the finish line. Although Liddell collapses exhausted in the arms of friends, everyone knows from that day on he is destined for greatness.

Group Discussion: Have you ever felt like giving up on a task because you were too tired, weak, or discouraged?

Introduction: In the story we will see and capture God Almighty in the greatness of who he is loving, merciful, and gracious. God is that even in very troubled times due to discouragement, hopelessness, sin, sickness, and failure. Whatever the situation is that God will renew our strength in hope that he will use it for his glory.

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***** Note: There are no right or wrong answers to the questions and are intended to be discussed in a group setting that allows people to answer what they think.**

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 During their captivity in Babylon, why might the Israelites compare their God to the god's of their captures (v25)? **Because the Babylonians worshipped gods that supposedly created the heavens, air, sea, sun, moon, storms, and of love and war.**

- 2 When we are defeated or discouraged why do we tend to question God's power? **Because we lose focus when defeated or discouragement sets in our flesh, the carnal mind begin to throw questions at us about God's power if it could be trusted.**

- 3 In verse 26 God urges his people to lift up their eyes and look at the starry hosts. How can meditating on God's creation, especially the vastness and beauty of the universe renew our confidence in his power? **Just to look at the details in the sky the sun, moon, sea, landscape, humans that nothing is beyond God's restoration and hope.**

- 4 Why would being held captive for seventy years in a foreign land cause the Israelites to complain and to question God's concern for them (v27)? **Their complaints come from a blindness, they failed to see their sin, rebellion got them there.**

- 5 When something bad happens to you are you more likely to question God's power or his love and concern for you? **For myself at different times different moments even situations at times I question either or but still learning not to lean on my own understanding.**

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- 6 During the times when we question God's care, why do we need a fresh vision of his power, strength, and wisdom? **To give us hope that God is still in control and that God cares about our situation and circumstance.**

- 7 In what ways do you struggle with feeling tired, weak, weary or faint (vv29-31)? **Struggling in ways like tiredness from trying to do too much at one time.**

- 8 How might your weakened condition cause you to stumble or fall? **In frustration, defeat, and just not caring.**

- 9 What does it mean to "hope in the Lord" especially when you can't go on (v31)? **To hope in the Lord is to trust fully on the character of God, of how good he is and what he's done. It's not on the basis of feeling but the reality of the greatness of God.**

- 10 How do the images of a soaring eagle, a runner, and even a walker help us understand God's promise to renew our strength? **Like humans and animals we all tend to get tired, discouraged, and weary but as we patiently wait on the Lord he will renew our strength to continue in this journey of life, the destiny God has for us.**

- 11 How does Isaiah's portrait of God encourage you and give you hope? **It encourages me to know that God is great, that there is nothing too big or small for him to handle. It also gives me hope to keep moving forward fully trusting God.**

- 12 At this point in your life what help do you need from God in order to run and not grow weary? **I need God to give me strength from within to honor and be pleasing in his sight, like David said that God desires truth in the inward parts of the heart, mind, soul, and spirit.**

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Summary: We see in Isaiah 40 that even in Israel's state that they were in was because of their sin, and rebellion. God still promised to redeem them and give them hope. What an act of God's grace, but what a promise for all God's people, what an awesome thing to know. To know no matter how bad how big the present situation is because of our own doing, God will still rescue us if we choose to trust and surrender to the Lord.

