

## Rise Up!

Isaiah 40:31

*But those who wait for the LORD's help find renewed strength;  
they rise up as if they had eagles' wings,  
they run without growing weary,  
they walk without getting tired. NET*



The book of Isaiah speaks of knowing and hearing throughout its text. It seems to reflect that the hearers may have some struggles with what is contained within its message. This section of Isaiah was written to the people coming out of the Babylonian exile in the 530s BCE. There would have been anxiety and trepidation as this group, many of whom could not remember Jerusalem, made their way back to the former capital city. No longer did the temple stand strong. The walls surrounding the city had been laid to waste. Exile might have been hard but returning to this now unknown place was difficult too.

It is into this situation that God asserts Godself through the prophet's words. We are reminded that God is the creator of the universe and that nothing is beyond God's reach, even the exile. God shares the good news that the people will not be relying on their own power but will be blessed with God's power as they go back into their homeland. God hears the cries of God's people and empowers them! The lord does not grow faint or weary, instead God gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless.

Sometimes we are challenged in our assumptions of God's greatness. Things like cancer, violence, hatred may make us wonder if they are stronger than God. Economic woes or terrorism, our fears and doubts can seem to overpower our understanding of God. Into these very situations the prophet speaks. "Those who wait upon the Lord's help find renewed strength; they rise up as if they had eagles' wings." But how can waiting do anything, we may ask.

We are called to wait for God, but this is not a time of passive waiting. This kind of waiting is defined by the confidence that God is with us, that we are held in God's power and love. It's a kind of waiting categorized by trust. We trust that God has things in control, that the outcome is assured. And because of that trust, that waiting, we can take the time needed to be renewed, to learn how to take flight, to run and not grow weary, to walk and not faint. New life can begin because the very God who holds creation together acts in the lives of God's children for good. Thanks be to God!