

## Waiting upon the Lord (Quality: Very good)

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Date: 08 November 1987

Preacher: Relf, John

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Hymn number 327, Pyrrhonist Leicester 171, For whence do you have lost thought to us,  
that where is our courage to be, as rest is seen as raging, and struck, and war is our  
comfort of death?

[illegible]

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[4:28] . . .

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... Holy Lord, are you now pleased?

Now pray, only Him known.

Open the face of preparative and forth and forth requiring insight into practice.

[ 6 : 08 ]

Falcone■matriana The Lord's help would venture again on the word of this morning that they that wait upon the Lord it's in Isaiah chapter 40 and verse 31 that they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength they shall mount up with wings as eagles they shall run and not be weary and they shall walk and not faint but they it is spoken in a contradiction isn't it to those that do not wait upon the Lord set forth in the figure of those that are strong and healthy and young and tireless that seem to have no need to wait upon the Lord for renewal of strength set forth in the scripture so often as the strong but you know we do read don't we that the Lord taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man or in the strength of the horse there are things which rightly we could take pleasure in the feats of men and women today are commendable the stress and fitness and all that but the Lord takes no pleasure in it but the Lord takes no pleasure in it the vain glory and the strength and beauty of a horse well known and books have been written on it and of course it is a beautiful creature the Lord doesn't take pleasure in it and the Lord does take pleasure in them that fear him and that is both humbling and a cause of thanksgiving thanksgiving whatever you are in life your position in life if you can have that humble fear that you do fear God you are amongst those that the Lord takes pleasure in delights in and are blessed in God wouldn't it be a pleasure to live and die under that blessing and feeling that I may be as I am but at least I fear God and I've been kept from the powers of the destroyer my hope is in Christ my strength is in the righteousness of Christ the Lord is my defence the Lord is my son to enlighten and warm and cheer and my shield of defence to save me from all mine enemies now surely that's the blessedness of the man whose transgressions are forgiven and whose sins are covered and that from all eternity and the blessedness of the people of God that fear God but they that wait upon the Lord we often compare in our own spirit and in the ministry in the ministry those that fear God and those that fear him not and among the congregations of the righteous

and I would look on you here and I say how you come to wait upon God today if you're in an unregenerate state still and I hope it's not spoken of any of us but if you were so the Lord would say what have you come to wait upon me for is there any plea in your heart any cry in your heart any need in your heart what have you come to the house of God for today have you come to wait upon me have you come as a weary one to have your strength renewed the Lord could say I can't see any need I can't see any want I can't see any desire you seem self-sufficient all these things you see the Lord could say couldn't he for the Lord knoweth the heart and I thought as I saw you coming up to the house of God today and I thought well some of you are not running some of you are crippled now by the infirmities of age and I thought what a testimony if by divine grace you are attending the house of God for others would make many excuses well I can't really get there it's such an effort and I thought yes they may only be hobbling along but are running in the ways of the Lord their feet are hasting toward the Lord's house they're going to be there than anywhere is that true of you?

yes and they shall walk and not faint there's a beautiful parallel I feel in this waiting upon God to the psalm that we read the 84th now that's the pilgrim psalm and that's of the beauty and amability of God's tabernacle when God called his people his chosen the males thrice a year and others to Zion to worship God in his holy place you cannot but fail to notice the glory that was set before them the glory that they delighted in the the the attraction of that holy place and the worship of the

Lord's holy name that what that it was to their spirit our feet shall stand within thy gates O Jerusalem I was glad when they said let us go up unto the house of the Lord in another star that says the song which was written of course for their education and for their encouragement at such times as they ascended up to the house of God blessed is the man whose strength is in thee in whose heart are the ways of them who passing through the valley of Baker that is the way to Jerusalem make it a well the rain thereof fills the pools they go from strength to strength every one of them in Zion appearing before God now if they got no heart to go on this pilgrimage and if after all the difficulties of the way they got into

Jerusalem and if every one of them appeared in Zion before God what would the Lord say to them well you have no heart you have not been attracted by my glory or the glory of the place or the glory of grace or the glory of mercy or the glory of goodness you have not been attracted by that you have come with the others oh said the psalmist blessed is the man whose strength is in thee I draw my strength such as it is I draw it from love of God and as I spoke this morning our strength is in righteousness in God's sight his justifying mercy pardoning love and favour and he gives his people strength they stand in his sight not strong in their own strength but strong in the might of the Lord

[ 15 : 29 ] Jesus Christ with his righteousness on in the Lord have I righteousness and strength that's how I shall appear now and that's how I shall appear at last with thy righteousness on blessed is the man whose strength is in thee when called to worship God with happiness of heart rises and overcomes all the difficulties there were difficulties in the way to Zion the psalm speaks of them it would appear a well worn path there were pools made to catch the water for there was no water laid on there were resting places in the way in the valley it was a dry valley there were companies of

God's people they would meet within the way on the same way on the same journey there were resting places where they could be refreshed and refreshed not only with food and drink but refreshed with one another's company and they that feared the Lord spake often one to another now you should if you should take this of course we only meet in such circumstances but you know if we were told to go to a long pilgrimage and we all set off from here you'd think well now there's young ones that are strong and there's able-bodied men and women and there's those that are frail well now we've got to help one another and the journey's going to be too great for some and if you take a spiritual pilgrimage in the church of

God it's something like that isn't it we're pilgrims we're journeying on we come to these spots and places and there are times when we meet with God's people to encourage them and tell them of what the Lord has done for our souls how he appeared unto us in the way and how he helped us in the way and to assure others that he will be their helper too they go from strength to strength it may be said from one walking place to another from one time of refreshing to another whatever it means it has the same picture there's a strengthening when you meet for the Lord God is a sun and shield the Lord God in all the pilgrims of his people was that he was a light by night and a shield by day in his presence with the children of Israel through the wilderness and he is a sun and a shield spiritually considered like in that natural journey the sun would have been consuming and the cold by night would have been withering and they would have needed a shield from their enemies now pilgrimage journey is before us again in the thought connected with our text today and in this it's a case for waiting upon the

Lord blessed said the psalmist is the man whose strength is in thee in whose heart are the ways of them it's heart work isn't it I've said before today I shall say it again it's have we any heart for these things you say no my heart's like a stone I just don't care perhaps some of you might say well I do care but I'm not impressed I'm not moved I've no real heart to go on the pilgrimage and some that have been before might say oh I I really can't go again I really can't face up to all the heat and the cold and all the threatenings of animals by night I can't really stand up to it I've got no heart for it and when we get to the end of it ah said the psalmist oh the happiness as well as the blessedness oh the happiness of a man who has got some heart whose strength the

Lord is the Lord will lighten our darkness and the Lord will strengthen us in our weakness won't he and they that trust in the Lord shall renew their strength well that is something of the word before us but as for waiting upon the Lord take Elijah for a moment Elijah before the prophets of Baal vindicated his prophetic call and office the Lord sent down fire from heaven and the Lord did great things for Elijah but before a woman in unbelief he was weak and settled in the desert and I only am left you see he was despairing of life now you couldn't imagine one weaker could you that God's mercy was toward him we don't read that he even waited upon the

[ 21 : 42 ] Lord and he would have said surely I wasn't waiting upon the Lord I was in self pity giving up but we don't know we don't know the prayers of a righteous man until we come into them you don't know until you come into certain places what your prayers will be either but the Lord's mercy was toward him and the angel of the Lord came and said arise and eat for the journey is too great for thee in other words Elijah you were journey to go which I have appointed to you it's too great for you you'll need sustenance you'll need what is prepared for you arise and eat it don't despise it arise and eat it you'll need it he give his power to the faint and Elijah was faint hearted wasn't he to them that have no might he increases strength

Elijah would have said I've got no might Lord no he's got might to stand against 750 prophets of Baal his might fled him when he faced an adulterous woman where's our courage fed we've so haven't we where's our courage fed us sin struck it all dead unbelief struck it all dead when our Elijah went on his journey didn't he and I pondering another case of one who waited upon the Lord in a time of judgment moment you would think that waiting upon the Lord is a very holy matter that it belongs to those that are truly fearing God and in a righteous way and case and not sinful as you feel to be so often well yes I can quite see

Simeon waiting upon the Lord and Anna a devout one I can quite see them but what about David yes David a man after God's own heart David left to his unbelief and to his sin and adding sin to sin and enduring the judgment of God thou should not die but thy son shall die David waited while the child died he got weaker and weaker and died and then when the child died he arises and washes himself and goes in before the Lord and worships oh but his servant said in effect he can't act like this we expected him to go to pieces we expected him to absolutely go to grief when the child had died no but

David had had seven days in sackcloth and ashes and his friends with him David had waited upon the Lord in the way of his judgments in the way of thy judgments oh Lord have we waited for thee thou most upright just weigh the path of the just and David came into that experience the Lord had weighed his path and found him unjust and found him wanted and had judged him and in the way of God's judgments David was waiting upon his God for the death of his son and when the child died he went into the house of God and worship not what he didn't say what point is it in me rebelling what can I do about it in any case no he fell under the hand of

God and David received strength not to fall to pieces but strength to go into the house of his God confess his sin and pray that beautiful penitent psalm heal the bones oh Lord which thou hast broken see no rebellion there was there he was waiting upon the Lord I come again to this but but they that wait upon the Lord and I put these questions to you are you waiting upon the Lord then this afternoon are you waiting upon him as the only true God you say yes I wouldn't want to wait upon a God that wasn't true are you waiting upon the God that alone can hear you yes

[ 27 : 12 ] I wouldn't want to wait upon a God that doesn't hear and that cannot see or cannot deliver are you waiting upon a God who is just and holy and all wise you say yes I'm waiting upon are you only waiting upon God you say yes I can't trust myself are you waiting for his sovereign blessing oh I want him to do what he will which seemeth good in his sight blessed place to be isn't it but they that wait upon the Lord and the Lord loves such that wait upon him commanded such to wait upon him they shall not be ashamed that wait for thee God is faithful God has promised God has promised not to turn away those that wait for him but to renew their strength if I said simply this morning and of course there's a profound truth in it that the strength of every poor sinner taught by the spirit under conviction of sin to know that he has no strength at all no strength to pray no strength to present a righteousness no strength to lay hold on eternal life no strength to face the future if your strength is in alone the Lord

Jesus Christ you know those Israelites God didn't say now rise up and take up your bed and walk all he said to those that were bitten and dying of their of that venom was look and live they could do no more but must do no less look and live and it is the same when our strength is weakened in the way why we might well feel he's to destroy us no he won't destroy us he bid us look and give us strength to look and those that look lived and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is such that he came to seek and to save the lost he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance and repentance is the spirit's rising beam

I love I love that expression it is his spirit's rising beam you know we're powerless to preach to the heart but the spirit isn't the spirit can convey these words of truth and grace to your hearts as his rising beam and cause you to look away to Jesus and cause you to see in the Lord righteousness and strength and so your strength is your righteousness and standing in the sight of God how does he give you strength by giving you to hope in his mercy and to trust in his name faithfulness now if we take the graces of the spirit simple aren't they faith and hope and love if we take those graces that are exercised by the spirit's rising beam and if you take the truth that God has given his holy word and that is the word of faith from faith to faith given by God for us to believe as to strengthen our faith and take a simple view of it you say

I haven't got much faith little faith my faith is weak and I say to you from the pulpit this afternoon how is your faith increased while in the exercise of it as everything is increased in the exercise of it but in God will I praise his word God has ever given his truth in his word to guide us and to instruct us as to his name and nature and goodness and mercy and faithfulness and your faith is just like that man who saw men as trees walking it's unclear and then through faith in his word as the Holy Spirit shines upon it your faith becomes clearer shall we say no your faith becomes stronger in the exercise of it

I told a story a little while ago of a man I read it's a story I read of of a vagrant who had lived an ungodly life was blind and now dying in hospital and was visited by a young woman young lady or young girl really I would think and she said shall I read to you the scriptures and he said yes and as she read in John the blood of Jesus Christ his dear son cleanseth from all sin and he stopped and he said does it really say that and she said yes does it really say that yes he said he said well take my finger and put it on that word as you read it that was all the man seemed to want it seemed to come into his heart it seemed to fill him with hope and in a little while that man was gone well we don't know the issue and you might say well did he need to have his finger put upon that word didn't he really ought just to have trusted that word yes yes that's all he needed he didn't need to have his finger put on that word but don't you feel it was an exercise of faith in the poor man he neglected it all his life he was in need of it now he wanted to be assured it was there and the exercise of his soul was if it's there then I can trust

[ 34 : 28 ] God the God I'd neglected all my days and in his dying moments he exercised faith upon that word he no need to have put his finger there now but God is merciful it's like that man in the scriptures Lord I believe help thou mine unbelief and you know there's a good way of waiting upon the Lord to renew your strength is by faith now faith will be tried and there is the exercise of faith and there's the long patience and waiting faith and in the exercise of faith your strength is renewed don't you feel Job had something of it though he slay me yet will I trust him you know that strong faith that's a strong exercise of faith it wouldn't have appeared so did

Job but it was though he slay me yet will I trust him and you know in the trial an exercise of faith strength in God is renewed because this God is our God you see it's not just he is any God or other people's God it's my God who has called me and who is leading me and is instructing my soul and opening my understanding that my faith and my hope might be in God their faith and hope go together and so do love but Abraham hoped against hope didn't he surely nothing could seem more hopeless than what Abraham hoped in and surely there were not more things that could have come against

Abraham to kill that hope but it was hope against hope he waited upon the God of his hope let me not be ashamed of my hope would have been the language of his soul many many a time and you see it's aggravated isn't it by our cruel fall it's not worth you waiting you've got no faith you're altogether out of the secret you've sinned against light and goodness it's not worth you praying anymore you might just as well give up the Lord will be not favourable to you anymore there's enough discouragements in the way and in times of conflict and opposition of course there is a renewing of strength it's strength to look only unto God and trust only in him and your expectation only from him now there are times when not only is it conflict but there's times of rejoicing and strength is renewed now if we were to go on a pilgrimage journey like they did in that day some would say oh it's such a long way and it's such a great wide wilderness and there's so many difficulties and there's so many things to contend with when our son would say now come on we're bidden to go by a great

God and the Lord will help us he's promised to not leave us nor forsake us he's promised to defend us he's promised to be a shield around about us and so with comforting words one would encourage another and the strong would encourage the weak and bear the burdens of the weak and it isn't just a question of age or physical strength is it it's the spiritual life and vigour of those that know the Lord and those that loved the Lord feared the Lord spake often one to another and the Lord heard and hearkened you see I wonder where we are in this great matter has the Lord from time to time renewed your strength and your soul is strengthened by it that you could encourage others surely in our spiritual life and some of you have been in the way for many years now would say ah this

God is my God I get very tried but he is my God he's all my hope and all my portion and he will bring us through and you know that's good when you can get together and that's good at times when you can encourage one another in the Lord as well as encourage yourself in the Lord personally David encouraged himself in his God David no dead encouraged many others now when you look at those principal graces faith hope and love you know they're very good to ponder on that these are profitable ways to wait upon and find your strength renewed in these matters who doesn't want his faith increased oh Lord increase our faith the disciples said there are things to believe in holy doctrine that are hard to believe that are difficult to understand since we've been with the Lord what heavenly mistress has he proclaimed to us in our understanding and we still haven't grasped them what holy mysteries what solemn things has he declared and we still haven't grasped them and now he talks about forgiving seventy times seven when we'd hardly forgive seven times

[ 41 : 27 ] Lord he said increase our faith you see without faith increased your weight you can't understand heavenly things you can't understand like Nicodemus how can these things be you can't understand the resurrection of the dead that he spake of the temple of his body that he should raise up after three days you see our strength is weakened in the way without faith who doesn't want an increase in faith but it's in the trial of it and in the proving of the patience of faith where it's strengthened and the soul through it exercises itself upon the goodness and faithfulness and bounty of God you know the power of it Lord increase our faith sometimes we want our strength increased that we should be independent and the

Lord's will is never that we should be independent spiritual life is a life of dependency and it's a life in dependency of ever knowing weakness and ever needing to be strengthened oh it's a dependent life and the source of that life is not from ourselves it's from Christ and if Christ is not continually increasing our strength we should be weak when I am weak said the apostle then am I strong when I'm leaning on the Lord I'm strong when I'm trusting in his sovereign grace I'm strong the apostle Paul said this is a faithful saying worthy of all acceptation faithful saying dear old Paul all his lifetime still pleading to a faithful saying others have turned from it others have given it up others have turned to another gospel but he and others had kept to a faithful saying worthy of all acceptation he lived in it died for it glorified in it

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners now we need an increase of faith but then we need an increase of hope hope and hope against hope in times of conflict is the season when God sees fit to increase hope strengthen hope in the soul these are graces and the Lord is sometimes pleased to do these things by giving us sweet foretastes and sweet assurances in our souls now a sweet assurance of love and mercy is one of the surest ways for our strength to be renewed for faith to be renewed faith in God for hope to be renewed hope in God hope against hope and hope that will outlast all the difficulties of this present life and love why for our love to be strengthened so that our love does not fail now those that wait upon the

Lord shall renew their strength why because that strength will be renewed from the Lord himself if it wasn't for the Lord imparting of his own strength to us none of us would have ever continued when you think of his weakening of our strength in the way so that we couldn't pray we couldn't hope we couldn't look to the cross we couldn't hope that all that was wrought there was wrought for us why we became weak didn't we when the Lord brings us to the foot of his cross and I trust he has and I trust he yet will for that's his way often to bring his people to look upon him and in their weakness and languishing to be renewed by viewing him who died for them to draw strength from his strength he died in weakness was crucified in weakness he bids sinners look upon him when their languid strength is spent supplies it with his own if you get into that place of weakness

I shall pray in you too that the Lord will just bring you once more to the fellowship of his suffering once more to look on the Lord your righteousness and once more to see if there be any sorrows like unto my sorrows self-pity will flee away all concern for self and its weakness will flee away and the Lord will impart strength to your fainting spirit and to your fainting heart and should the Lord speak for you it was for you and it is finished your faith will be strengthened your hope will be nourished your love will be deeper and all the adamancy of sin and the hardness of unbelief your find will melt away they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength oh it's good to go into the house of

[ 47 : 40 ] God it's good to desire to see no man say Jesus only it's good to consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners lest ye be faint and weary in your minds you will be faint unless you consider him you can well expect to be faint unless you consider him but wait upon the Lord and keep his way and consider him who endured such contradiction against himself consider where he is now at the right hand of glory and consider his words that he has spoken for your comfort and consider the ways and the words he deals with sinners hasn't he sent forth his word and healed you hasn't he sent his grace and softened your hard heart that needed are the hammerings of the law and the guilt of conscience and even that couldn't break it but the warmth of his love has broken every barrier down thy love has broken every barrier down now to be thine and thine alone

O Lamb of God I come is that not the renewing of your strength to find every barrier that held your soul in a captive chain broken down I will run in the ways of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart there's no running without enlargement I've spoken of you that are weak now with love and desire wanting to come to the house of God surely in times past you've said with an enlarged heart I love thy courts I love thy gates let me get to the house of God for there my God dwells there is honour dwells and I will run none will hinder you when the Lord gives you a heart to run none will hinder you from going on this pilgrimage when his ways are in your heart when his honour is before your eyes when faith sees him as the

God to be exalted and hope the God that you want to dwell with with all eternity and love that can't keep you from him until he come they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength it doesn't mean to say as the world would say well you're going to get stronger and stronger you're not no weakness anymore you're not no conflict anymore unbelief anymore doesn't say that at all to be strong in the Lord is one who's strong in faith knows how to deal with these conflicts and are more than overcomers in them and that's being upheld by his strength it would be wonderful if he went from strength to strength and never knew weakness wouldn't it but I thought as I saw a dear friend on his bed weakness was troubling him but oh as he turned to the scriptures and turned to the hymn I saw there's a man who's running in the ways of God whose delight is in the things of the

Lord who wants to be right with God who's resting with the powers of darkness and yet shall be a more than overcomer you young ones might say oh but that's just weakness well there is a senile weakness he's not afflicted with that there is a weakness of body and he is afflicted with that but there's not evident weakness of soul that man knows who his God is that man knows where his salvation is from that his mercy is from knows that it's all of sovereign grace the enemy knows that he has had revealed to him to strengthen him in his life and faith on earth blessed sights of his redeemer of the covenant grace for his faith to fix upon and his hope to center in and blessed sights of a dear redeemer for his soul in love to engage with who loved me and gave himself for me well I won't speak anymore and

I must come to a conclusion everyone says the reading in that pilgrimage psalm everyone in Zion appeareth before God isn't that a beautiful thought and it's not only a thought it's truth those that had it in their heart to go on this pilgrimage journey that strengthened themselves in God and you know there's no excuse for slothfulness you well all of us know don't we in our younger days and mother in the home would say concerning a lot of work that suddenly come upon her well it's no good looking at it it's no good bemoaning it we must get on with it we must get up and go we must get up and do something about it and this isn't legality in spiritual life is it there's no legal side here it's the love of Christ constraining us the love of

[ 53 : 55 ] God is in our heart and in our heart are the ways of God and in our heart being the ways of God we will brook no interference and no denial and no hindrance and we'll go and the Lord God will go before us and the Lord God will be a sun and a shield to us and the Lord is our shield and our defence and he will be our guide and our guard and he will bring us through and at last at last we shall appear in the Sion will it be what we've done very well that it's to our credit no not unto us but unto thy great name give glory and that's where the glory will be unto his great and holy name unto him that hath loved us and washed us and redeemed us unto

God but I'll leave you with that thought everyone in Zion appeareth before God what a solemn appearing that must be and yet what a blessed appearing for the children of God those whose hearts are set on the ways of God in Zion love well one can but by faith anticipate it I think we should be sweetly surprised to feel at last that we are brought through amidst all our doubts and fears things but what a sweet surprise that will be for what is our chiefest joy in life well to know the visits of his love and enjoy his favour and at times be granted nearness to tell him all our case and what have you told him is he your best beloved is he your only

God and saviour is he your rock and refuge is he your shield and defence be sad if we haven't told him these things wouldn't it but oh how glad if we confess the law of God in our hearts how sweet if we confessed him in the church of God below how good if our testimony of our life is true that we are followers of God through faith and patience who inherit the promises sustained in hope by the precious promises of a God who cannot lie and how the Lord add his blessing Amen hymn number 1088 the



Tudor 252 shepherd divine our wants relieved in this our evil day to all thy tempted by mercy the power the trust and cry hymn number 1085 time to the LAR Mei through 5 font the high and the IAR Det ways in life h Ruben al ourselves and let them believe in come here The teaching of the Word for minute he FA albeities and guns and nonsense that I think he should walk looking for A ■■■hole that I need to vier in six a year for minutes.

In■■■ health and save Injuries and towns in an organization the results of his conc I'm the Lord of■■■ "... cz■■■ci of God." The End

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The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End service. This week will be a preaching service which you kindly know to meet tomorrow evening for our usual Tuesday evening.

God willing Mr. Jacobsfield will be with us at 7pm. Next Lord's Day, our minister will be Mr. P.

Fincher. He rang me in the week and asked if it might, whether it would inconvenience anybody due to increased responsibilities at Watford if he had the service on Monday evening instead of choosing April.

[ 62 : 28 ] Perhaps if it does, it would be at first. Let me know.