

**Weekly Devotions
South Holburn Church
8th December 2020**

READINGS

My soul languishes for your salvation; I hope in your word. My eyes grow weary watching for your promise; I ask, "When will you comfort me?"

Psalm 119:81-82 (NRSV)

Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.
Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for 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.

Isaiah 40:28-31

God does not dispense strength and encouragement like a pharmacist fills your prescription. The Lord doesn't promise to give us something to take so we can handle our weary moments. He promises us Himself. That is all. And that is enough.

Charles R. Swindoll



REFLECTION

This week the first vaccinations took place against COVID-19 and that certainly marks a significant point in the battle against the pandemic. Knowing that there are now vaccines to combat Coronavirus is indeed a source of hope. However, while those vaccinations were going on, politicians, medics and government advisors have also been warning us not to let down our guard: to maintain our social distancing, our hand hygiene, our mask wearing. At the same time as the vaccinations were going on, the first minister was outlining new levels of restrictions for many people.

The response to ongoing restrictions and limitations imposed by COVID is not usually one of anger or of agreement, of rebellion or of obedience. More often than not, at the moment I think our response is one of weariness. We are all tired of the restrictions. We recognise the dangers, we've seen the consequences, we know what we must do. But it just seems to go on and on and on. And we are tired of having to live under the control of COVID-19.

People of faith are not immune to weariness. Indeed, throughout the scriptures, God's people often cry out in weariness. The people wandering the desert often grew weary in their wanderings, the writer of the psalms, always so honest about emotions, talks of the weariness of God's people. Again and again, we see in the Bible the people of God grow weary in the midst of life and challenge and difficulty. It is not a judgement on the quality of our faith that we are weary, it is rather a part of being human.

By contrast, the God who watches over us, we are reminded, never grows weary. God never runs out of energy to care for us. Neither does God grow weary of us and turn away, no matter how often we stumble on our faith journey. And when God's people grow weary, it is God himself who offers rest, who offers hope, who brings renewal – as Isaiah says “God gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless.”

All of that means that, in these long days COVID restrictions, as weary as we might get, as much as we might feel let down by the world, we can rely on God. We can trust God's promise of light in the darkness. We can be sure that God is with us.

PRAYER

Lord our God,
Creator,
Maker of the day and of the night
For six days you created,
On the seventh you rested.

The days of COVID have been long,
The challenge to keep going has worn us out
We are tired and we are weary.

Even Jesus rested in the midst of the storm
Even the saviour needed quiet time and peace time.
Grant us rest Lord,

Grant us peace,
Grant us hope.
Make real in our lives your promise to restore us.
Lift us up again.

And restored,
May we bring renewal wherever we go.
May we point towards You,
Living, restoring, renewing God

In Jesus name
Amen

