

Isaiah 40:25-31

OUR GRIEF AND
GOD'S ETERNITY

Isaiah 40:25-26

- 25 To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing.

Isaiah 40:27-28

- 27 Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, “My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God”? 28 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.

Isaiah 40:29-31

- 29 He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. 30 Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; 31 but they 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.

Terms Concerning Grief

- **Grief** - “Grief is defined as intense emotional suffering caused by loss, disaster, misfortune, etc.; acute sorrow, deep sadness. Grief” is derived from Latin verb meaning “to burden”
- **Mourn** - “to express sorrow”; from Gothic verb meaning “to be anxious”
- **Bereave** - “to leave in a sad or lonely state, as by loss or death”; from Old English word meaning “to deprive or rob”

Scriptures Concerning Grief

- **Matthew 5:4** “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”
- **John 16:20** “Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.”
- **Psalms 42:5** “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance.”

Scriptures Concerning Grief

- **Ecclesiastes 3:4** There is “a time to weep and a time to laugh.”
- **Psalms 6:6** “I am worn out from groaning; all night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears.”
- **Isaiah 53:4a** “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.”



2 Corinthians 1:3-5

- “The...God of all comfort who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.”

J.I. Packer

- “Grief is the human system reacting to the pain of loss, and as such it is an inescapable reaction. Our part as Christians is not to forbid grief or to pretend it is not there, but to maintain humility and practice doxology as we live through it.””
- (J. I. Packer. A Grief Sanctified ((Including Richard Baxter's Timeless Memoir of His Wife's Life and Death)): Through Sorrow to Eternal Hope. Kindle Locations 36-37. Kindle Edition.)

▶ I. **The Eternal God Is More Reliable Than Anything That Wears Out**

- *25 To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One.*

Isaiah 40:18-21

- 18 To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? 19 An idol! A craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts for it silver chains. 20 He who is too impoverished for an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an idol that will not move. 21 Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?



Isaiah 40:22-23

- 22 It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; 23 who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.

II. The Eternal God Is To Be
Periscoped (Lifted Perspective)
From The Depth Of
Our Temporary Problems

- *26a Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these?*
- **When we are sunken in grief, lift our eyes to our caring Creator!**

III. The Eternal God Knows And Sustains Everyone And Everything He Created

- *26b He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing.*

- **Colossians 1:17** And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
- **Hebrews 1:3a** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

IV. The Eternal God Knows All That We Are Going Through From Beginning To End

- *27 Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, “My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God”?*

Psalm 39:4-6

- 4 “O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am! 5 Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you. Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath! Selah 6 Surely a man goes about as a shadow! Surely for nothing they are in turmoil; man heaps up wealth and does not know who will gather!

Death Is Not Part Of God's Original Design

- **Genesis 1:31** Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.
- **Genesis 2:17** But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”
- **Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned

➤ **Death Is An Enemy To Be Overcome**

- **Hebrews 2:14-15** Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.
- **1 Corinthians 15:55-57** “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Death Is A Victorious Finale In This Lifetime For Those Saved In Christ

- **Luke 2:29-30** [Simeon:] Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation
- **Philippians 1:21-24** For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.

Death Is A Victorious Finale In This Lifetime For Those Saved In Christ

- **2 Timothy 4:7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
- **Psalms 116:16** Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.
- **Revelation 21:4** He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.

▶ **The Real Questions About Death Are Not
Why, When & Who, But How And Where**

Usual Questions:

- Why am I dying?
- When will I die?
- Who will die?

How will you die?

Dying In Faith

- **1 Thessalonians 4:16** *dead in Christ*
- **Hebrews 11:13** These all *died in faith*

Dying In Sin

- **Ezekiel 3:18-19** When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die'...and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall ***die in his iniquity***.
- **John 8:24** Therefore I said to you that you will ***die in your sins***; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will ***die in your sins***

Where will you go?

- **Job 14:14** If a man dies, shall he live again?
- **Hebrews 9:27** It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.
- **Matthew 25:46** These will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

Death Is An Exercise Of Faith

- **Hebrews 11:21-22** By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

V. The Eternal God Never Gets Exhausted Sustaining Us

- *28a 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*
- **Deuteronomy 33:27** The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the **everlasting** arm

Because God Is Eternal:

God knows our future like the past and present

- **Psalm 90:4** For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night.
- **2 Peter 3:8** But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Because God Is Eternal:

- **God will never tire on us**
- *the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary;*

VI. The Eternal God Has An Infinitely Wise And Purposeful Plan For Us

- 28b *his understanding is unsearchable.*

- ▶ The Lord is intimately involved with grief
 - **Isaiah 53:3** He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.
 - **2 Corinthians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

Purposes For Suffering

- To Remind Us Of The Fallen World We Live In (Rom 8:18-25)
- To Realize We're Dependent Upon God's Deliverance (2 Cor 1:9-10)
- To Rest In The Sovereignty Of God (Rom 8:28)

Purposes For Suffering

- To Rework Our Character (James 1:4; 2 Cor 4:17; Rom 5:3-4)
- To Reflect The Strength Of God And His Sufficient Grace Through Our Weaknesses (2 Cor 12:7-10)
- To Return The Comfort We Received From God To Others Who Hurt (2 Cor 1:3-5)

VII. The Eternal God Gives Us His Strength When Our Strength Weakens

- *29 He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. 30 Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted;*
- **Isaiah 40:1** Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

VIII. The Eternal God Is Not In A Rush – Wait And Be Renewed

- *31 but they 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.*

WAIT

- **Psalm 27:14** Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; **Wait**, I say, on the LORD!

Stage 1: Denial and Isolation

- **Job 2:13** So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great.

(Norman Wright - *Crisis Counseling*)



Stage 2: Anger

- **Job 7:11** “Therefore I will not restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.”

Stage 3: Bargaining

- **Psalm 39:13** Remove Your gaze from me, that I may regain strength, Before I go away and am no more.”
- **Isaiah 38:1-3** In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, “Thus says the Lord: ‘Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.’ ” Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the Lord, and said, “Remember now, O Lord, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what is good in Your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

Stage 4: Depression

- **Psalm 42:3** My tears have been my food day and night, While they continually say to me, “Where is your God?”
- **Psalm 38:17** For I am ready to fall, And my sorrow is continually before me.
- **2 Samuel 18:33** Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: “O my son Absalom—my son, my son Absalom—if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!”



Stage 5: Acceptance

- **2 Timothy 4:6-7** For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.



Grief Work

(Norman Wright, *Crisis Counseling*)

- Emancipating oneself from the deceased (2 Sam 12:23)
- Adjusting to life without the deceased
- Making new relationships and attachments

Isaiah 40:31

...those who hope in the
LORD will renew their
strength.

They will soar
on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
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Conclusion:

- **Lift Up Your Eyes** – Ascend from our limited perspective to God's eternal perspective.
- **Wait On The Lord** – Learn the purposes of our suffering, the sufficiency of His grace and the hope of His glory.
- **Renew Your Strength** – Depend on His strength when ours has waned.



Discussion

1. How does the world's view of death bring hopelessness and despair? How does viewing God as the Eternal Creator counter this?
2. What does it mean to “wait on the Lord?” How is this profitable?
3. The solution to depression is perspective, as it is with grief. How does “lifting our eyes” to God's eternal perspective help us in dealing with loss and hurt?
4. What other “false gods” or “idols” do we tend to go to first for comfort and hope during our most hurting times? How is God better than those?
5. When is the appropriate time and best way to share the hope of God's eternal power and perspective with one who is grieving?

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