



1

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ **Do you not know?** Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning?
- ▶ **Have you not understood** since the earth was founded? (Is. 40:21)
 - ▶ **He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth**, and its people are like grasshoppers. (Is. 40:22a)
 - ▶ **He stretches out the heavens like a canopy**, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. (Is. 40:22b)



2

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ He brings **princes** to naught and reduces the **rulers** of this world to nothing. (Isaiah 40:23 NIV-GK)
 - ▶ No sooner are **they** planted,
 - ▶ no sooner are **they** sown,
 - ▶ no sooner do **they** take root in the ground,
 - ▶ **then he blows on them** and
 - ▶ they wither, and
 - ▶ a **whirlwind** sweeps them away like chaff. (Is. 40:24 NIV)



3

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ "To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the **Holy One**. (Is. 40:25 NIV)
- ▶ **Lift your eyes and look to the heavens**:
 - ▶ Who created all these?
 - ▶ He who brings out the **starry host** one by one, and calls them each by name.
 - ▶ Because of his **great power** and **mighty strength**, not one of them is missing. (Is. 40:26 NIV)



4

SCRIPTURE

- ▶ O Jacob, how can you say the **LORD** does not see your troubles? (Isaiah 40:27a)
- ▶ O Israel, how can you say **God** ignores [justice and] your rights? (Isaiah 40:27b)
- ▶ **Duh? What da matter with ya!**



5

INTRODUCTION

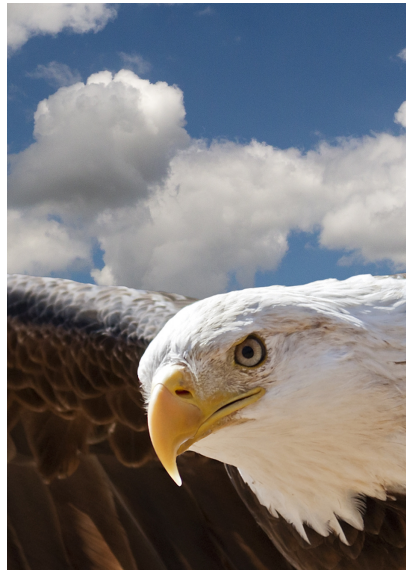
- ▶ Do you not know? Have you not heard? (Is. 40:28a)
- ▶ The **LORD is the everlasting God**, the **Creator** of the ends of the earth. (Is. 40:28b)
- ▶ He will not grow tired or **weary**, and his **understanding** no one can fathom. (Is. 40:28c)



6

INTRODUCTION

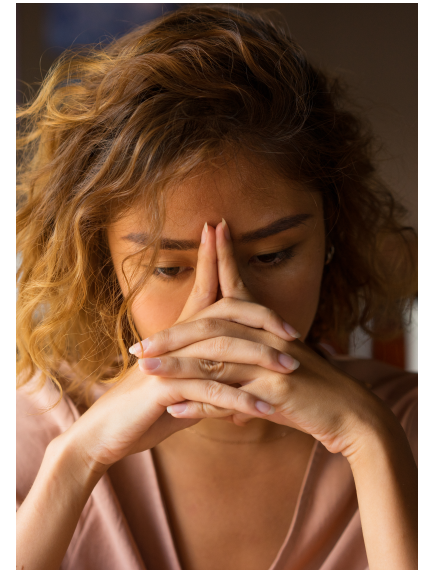
- ▶ He gives strength to the **weary** and increases the power of the **weak.** (Is. 40:29)
- ▶ Even **youths** grow tired and weary, and **young men** stumble and fall;
- ▶ But those who hope in the **LORD** will renew their strength. (Is. 40:30)
- ▶ They will soar on **wings like eagles**; they will run and not **grow weary**, they will walk and not be **faint.** (Is. 40:31)



7

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Now, with this all said, it is sure hard to fly on **eagle's wings** when this year has been such a turkey!
- ▶ So far 2020 has been a month-to-month challenge to top **bad news** with worse news.
- ▶ Initially it's been dominated by the **coronavirus** and then **social unrest** and **riots**,
- ▶ Then we had to deal with a contentious **election cycle**—and now with a **contested election** and the possibility of massive voter fraud.



8

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Add to this the likely invasion of **murder hornets** and the government's revelation of **UFO photos** – and it's no wonder we're all feeling a kind of information hangover.
- ▶ However, with all the **lockdowns** from the virus we're forced to stay home which causes us to watch more and more **news**.



9

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Many of us are old enough to remember when news outlets consisted of three TV channels, a **daily newspaper**, and the **radio**.
- ▶ When **Walter Cronkite** told us, "That's the way it is" at the end of every evening news broadcast, we had some **time to digest** what was going on.



10

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ However, now, we have a 24-hour, multi-platform, constant cycle of news that confronts us everyday.
- ▶ Unfortunately, it allows us ...
 - ▶ **no time** to **process** anything and
 - ▶ seems to **pile on** with information that's not only continuous, but controversial and shocking.
- ▶ It tends to include a lot of **conflicting information** that leaves us confused and stressed, often with no tangible way to **respond** other than to offer an opinion.



11

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Neil Postman, in his 1985 book Amusing Ourselves to Death, called this the "**loop of powerlessness**."
- ▶ This is when the **news** is presented in such a way that it is **void** of context, meaning, and application on how we should respond.
- ▶ Instead of offering **understanding** the news agencies simply put out more and more news.



12

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ According to Postman, “**news fatigue**” is a real problem.
- ▶ It leaves us feeling depressed, powerless, and distrustful of **news sources** that often seem superficial, sensationalist, inaccurate, or hopelessly biased.
- ▶ The result is that the more **news** we consume the more anxiety we feel or, on the **flip side**, the more desensitized we become to the news itself.



13

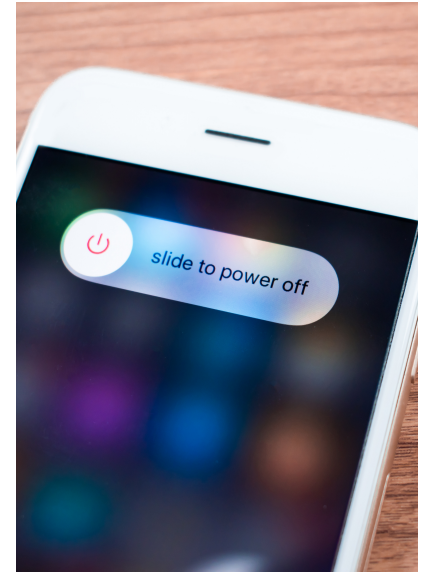
REAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

- ▶ What we need instead is a **mindset** that puts the current news within the **context** of an eternal perspective.
- ▶ According to the book of Ecclesiastes, the **bad and good** stuff happening now has happened before and will happen again.
- ▶ Rather than fret or foment yet another **personal opinion** about it all,
 - ▶ the **prophet Isaiah** calls us to remember that the only **news** that really matters is ...
 - ▶ that the **God** who created the world in which all this news happens is still at work and will ultimately set everything right.

15

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ One **solution** to that anxiety is to simply turn off the news.
- ▶ But that becomes increasingly difficult in a world where we are **bombarded** with news every time we go into public spaces ... in person or online.
- ▶ Neither ignorance nor selectivity would seem to be the answer in a world anxious for the kind of **news** that people can actually act upon.



14

REAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

- ▶ As the Scriptures says,
 - ▶ The **grass withers** and the **flowers fall**, but the **word (or promises)** of our God stands forever. (Isaiah 40:8 NIV)
 - See, the **Sovereign LORD** comes with power, and his arm rules for him. (Isaiah 40:10a)
 - See, his **reward is with him**, and his **recompense** (restitution) accompanies him. (Isaiah 40:10b)
 - ▶ This is the **news** that God’s people need to hear, and it’s the **news** that puts all other news into **perspective**.
 - ▶ The **Sovereign Lord** is actually **sovereign**, both now and forevermore!

16

REAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

- ▶ While the **news organizations** ...
 - need us to be constantly concerned about our **material** safety and wealth,
 - God reminds his people to have **hope** and wait on Him.
- ▶ As Psalm 37 says, ...
 - ▶ Be still before the LORD and **wait patiently for him**;
 - do not **fret** when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. (Psalm 37:7 NIV)
 - Refrain from **anger** and turn from **wrath**;
 - do not **fret** – it leads only to evil. (Psalm 37:8 NIV)

17

REAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

- ▶ Why?
 - ▶ For **evil men** will be cut off, but those who **hope in the LORD** will **inherit the land**. (Psalm 37:9)
 - ▶ A little while, and the **wicked** will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. (Psalm 37:10)
 - ▶ The **wicked** ...
 - plot against the righteous and
 - gnash their teeth at them; ...
 - ▶ but the **Lord laughs at the wicked**, for he knows their day is coming. (Psalm 37:12-13)

18

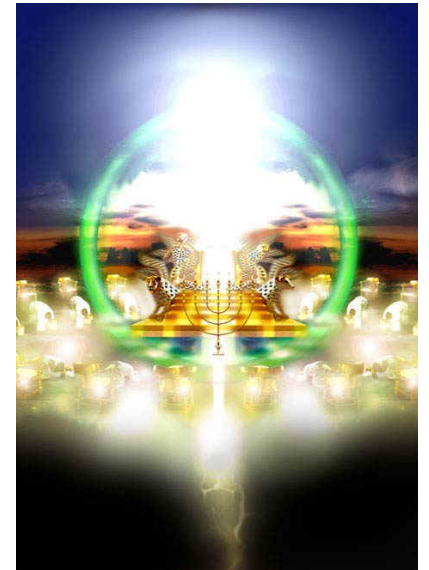
REAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

- ▶ We human beings tend to busy ourselves trying to either come up with **solutions** to every problem or offer **our opinions** to those we think should be fixing those problems.
- ▶ If we **trust only in ourselves**, we are bound to experience the fatigue of despair.
- ▶ But when we **trust in the Lord** and **cast our cares on Him**, we have **peace**, which gives us a **clear head** to see what others can't see and that is ... **God is in control**.
- ▶ According to Isaiah, ...
 - ▶ You (God) will keep in **perfect peace** him whose mind is steadfast, because he **trusts in you**. (Isaiah 26:3 NIV)

19

REAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

- ▶ The glory and character of **God** provides us with the best news we could possibly hear.
- ▶ He **sits enthroned above the circle of the earth**, and its people are like grasshoppers. (Isaiah 40:22)



20

REAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

- ▶ However, a lot of our **media** offers Christians little in the way of perspective and understanding.
- ▶ This should come as no surprise because as the Apostle Paul says, unbelievers are as follows.
- ▶ They are **darkened** in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the **ignorance** that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. (Ephesians 4:18)



21

APPLICATION

- ▶ Rather than fret, fixate, or forego the **news**, Isaiah invites us to deal with our fatigue in light of the **larger reality**.
- ▶ Instead of **“waiting”** on the news by constantly refreshing our screens or scrolling through a social media feed, Isaiah instead invites us to **“wait for the Lord”** (v. 31).
- ▶ That **“waiting”** doesn't mean we simply sit around and do nothing, allowing the news to continue to wash over us.
- ▶ To **“wait”** means to look to God to provide us with perspective, hope, and purpose through **prayer** and through being immersed in **God's Word**.

23

REAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

- ▶ No matter how bad the **news** seems to be or how bias are the reporters, **God's purposes will win out**.
- ▶ That's the reason God himself does not suffer from **“news fatigue.”**
- ▶ As Isaiah puts it, “He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. **He gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless**” (vv. 28-29).
- ▶ Not only does God know the **long view** of his purposes in history, he offers power and strength to those who feel the **fatigue of bad news** in the present.

22

APPLICATION

- ▶ How much might our **“news fatigue”** be mitigated, for example, if we committed to spending at least as much time in **prayer** as we do scrolling through the news and social media?
- ▶ Many of our **phones** and **devices** now tell us precisely how much time we spend online every day.
- ▶ Spending an equivalent amount of time (or more) listening to God and **bringing** our fatigue and worries to him would ...
 - allow us the opportunity to put those things in **perspective**
 - while **renewing** our strength to deal with the things we can **actually** do something about.
- ▶ The rest? Well, we simply put the rest in **God's hands**, knowing that his purposes win out in the end.

24

APPLICATION



- ▶ Countering the news with a **daily discipline** of time spent in the presence of God will **enable** us to pick up a different pace of life.
- ▶ Do you grab your phone to check the news first thing in the morning?
- ▶ That's a **recipe** for starting the day with anxiety.
- ▶ Rather mount up for the day "**with wings like eagles**" (v. 31).

25

GOOD NEWS

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the **government** will be on his shoulders.

And **he** will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his **government** and **peace** there will be no end. (Isaiah 9:6-7)

AMEN

27

CONCLUSION

- ▶ Try beginning the day with **Scripture** and **prayer** before you even touch that phone or the TV remote.
- ▶ Allow **God's Word** ...
 - ▶ to nourish you and strengthen you for the day ahead,
 - ▶ to prepare you to run the gauntlet of the day without growing weary or discouraged, and
 - ▶ to walk steadily forward without fainting under a load of **disappointing news**.
- ▶ The **cure** for **news fatigue**, is none other than, to begin with the **good news** first!



26