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I feel certain that we all experience at times that feeling that there is no end in sight. That we grow weary or faint-hearted and even wonder what will come first – death or dementia? Is there a way out without us abandoning the very projects that we have believed we are called to commit to. Is there a succession plan?

Now firstly what is a succession plan? Most here would have at least one plan organised for the future. Examples? (Wills, Power of Attorney, Superannuation).

Now any organisation worth its salt will be planning for the future: recognising talents, upskilling members of that organisation. Maybe even fundraising or doing all one could to save money! The church is an organisation and so also needs to be planning for the future – no mistake about that.

But Robbie Burns in his poem “To a Mouse” would be quick to tell us that “the best laid plans of mice and men” often go astray (Sorry to disappoint you, but I have no intention of attempting the exact Scottish wording-an approximation only.

So one’s attempt to enact a succession plan may not achieve a desirable outcome.

We do know Jesus had a succession plan that we will hear more about during the Church calendar’s period when we focus on Pentecost. We also believe God has a plan for the end times but does God have a succession plan for the members of this congregation and can we access that plan?

Does Isaiah Chapter 40 contain the key to that plan?

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

Does this mean no exit plan for any of us? That we must continue but if we call upon the Lord we will be renewed in strength?

Let’s look at a practitioner of one who is weary but calls upon the Lord.

We pick up the story of the beginning of Jesus’ ministry from last week.

Jesus has just astounded the people in the synagogue of Capernaum not only with his knowledge. Peter Skelton explained how Jesus uses story as a teaching technique instead of expounding the law. Jesus then cures a man demonically possessed.

Today we continue the story of Jesus’ day at this point. I assume that Simon and James invite Jesus to their family home. Here they are greeted with the news that Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed and feverish. Jesus goes into the bedroom, takes her hand and helps her up. (Personally, if it was me and I knew I had a few men to feed and look after, I think I might have preferred to stay in bed) but Simon’s mum got up and waited on them.

Now I don’t know how long Jesus had a respite in the afternoon but by sunset the city crowds had gathered and Jesus healed many of various diseases and also drove out demons.

I figure Jesus was a very weary man by the time he laid down his head to sleep. Yet early morning whilst it’s still dark, he sneaks out of the house. The ESV says he went to a “desolate” place. The NEV says it was “solitary”. Whatever, it was a place where there were no distractions. And there he prayed. This links with Isaiah Chapter 40 – Jesus waited upon the LORD.

When he is found later by a search party, presumably the disciples want him to return to Caperneum because Jesus had to explain to them that he needs to go elsewhere. Jesus indeed appears very purposeful. His mind is clear. He came out of the house in order to preach in the other towns but had his quiet time before he set off for other towns – a time in which he called upon the Lord.

We cannot know what will be the outcome of our prayers and what we will be directed to do or be. But when we wait upon the Lord our minds will grow clear and we will have the strength to do God’s will. Notice it wasn’t an emotional decision that Jesus made. He was a compassionate man. He could have established a hospital in Capernaum and cured lots of folks. But his conviction from his “calling upon the Lord” was to reach a lot more people. And like our first song sung today, we might:

“Call upon the Lord,

Call upon the Lord,

Call upon the Lord” before we are sure of an answer.

In Isaiah Chapter 40 we are also reminded that we are not dealing with the mind of either mice or men. 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.

Unsearchable yes but revealed in parts so that we may be strong and no longer weary.

Another text which reminds me of calling upon the Lord is I Chronicles: 7:14.

“If my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin, and heal their land. Whilst this was in the context of saving the exiled Jews, the description of calling upon the Lord is very clear.

If we are to know God’s succession plan, it is quite clear that we must humble ourselves and pray, seek God’s face and repent. We might not even have to wait for death or dementia. God even might have some new purpose in mind for an individual. But God’s plans are not the plans of mice and men but of one who does not get weary or faint. If we seek his purpose He will guide and when following his purpose we can be assured He will provide the wherewithal to proceed where he leads. He will also enable His work to proceed in due course. He has been known to nag! If you doubt this, read the very short book of Jonah!

We must not doubt the Creator of the ends of the earth.