

OT751 Isaiah
Dr. Russell Mack

Essay 7: What is one new thing you learned or idea to which you were exposed?

In this week's study, an idea that I was exposed to is the concept of "trust as waiting" (Oswalt, 448). The main theme of Isaiah is to trust in God, but how would a person that "trusts in God" behave? In Hezekiah's interaction with the field commander, his trust was displayed by telling the people to remain silent (Isa 36:21) and going to the temple of the Lord (37:1). Instead of engaging in dialogue and acting in response to the field commander's threat, he "waited" before the Lord. Similarly, when he received the letter from the king of Assyria and when he got the news that he will soon die, he immediately turned to the Lord in prayer (37:14-20, 38:1-3). His action (or "inaction") demonstrates complete dependence on God (in contrary to what he did in the incident of the Babylonian envoys in chapter 39), echoing Oswalt's definition of "waiting on God": it is not simply to mark time, but to "live in confident expectation of His action on our behalf". (Oswalt, 448)

Oswalt points out that the concept of "trust as waiting" appeared 6 times in Isaiah (Oswalt, 448). Out of the six times, 8:17 and 64:4 used the word "חכה" (to wait). All the rest, including 40:31 used the word "קוה", which bears an additional sense of "looking eagerly" (BDB 875B). When challenges arise, Isaiah teaches us to look eagerly to God as an act of trust, and He will renew our strength. (Isa 40:31) The word "renew" in Hebrew (גלח) suggests an exchange of strength (Constable, 271), and I learned from this week's study of Isaiah that trusting in God implies giving up one's own strength and *waiting* with the confidence that God Himself is our strength.