

Isaiah 40–41

Lesson 16

Transition to a New Section

- Chapters 1–39: The Assyrian Period (see 39:6–8)
- Chapters 40–66: The Babylonian Period
- Isaiah now looks ahead to the time when God's people would be in Babylonian captivity (606–536 B.C.).
- Through Isaiah, God offers them **comfort**, and assures them of their return (even names the King responsible).
- But God also points His people to the time of the Messiah, and to the blessings enjoyed by spiritual Israel.

Transition to a New Section

- Isaiah 40:2 outlines the remainder of this book.
 - **“Her warfare is ended”** (40–48). You will experience misery and pain in captivity, but I will bring it to an end.
 - **“Her iniquity is pardoned”** (49–57). Forgiveness is the keynote of this section, highlighted by the “Suffering Servant” passage in ch. 53.
 - **“She has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins”** (58–66). Their punishment was just, but they will now rejoice in salvation.

Seven Key Themes

- The God of all comfort
- Take it to the bank
- A voice in the wilderness
- A strong hand and a warm heart
- Turning everything upside down
- No one His equal
- East relief

The God of all Comfort

- “Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” says your God (40:1).
- “You who bring good tidings,” say it loud and strong, without an ounce of fear: “Behold your God” (40:9).
- I know you’re weary and faint, but “those who wait on 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” (40:27–31).
- “Fear not” (41:8–16).

A Voice in the Wilderness

- 40:3–5
- Fulfilled in the work of whom?
 - Luke 3:2–6; Matt. 3:1–3; Mark 1:2–4; John 1:22–23.
- “The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together” (40:5).
 - “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory...” (John 1:14).

Take It To The Bank

- When the LORD speaks, you can take it to the bank, including what He says about things yet to happen.
- Notice how 40:5 ends: “for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”
 - Now, notice what He says about the word of the LORD in 40:6–8.
 - Where are verses 6–8 quoted in the N.T.?

A Strong Hand and a Warm Heart

- Which passage pictures God with the perfect blend of strength and tenderness?
 - 40:10–11
 - 42:1–3

Turning Everything Upside Down

- Back to a passage we read earlier: 41:14–16.
 - Was this fulfilled militarily?
 - “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God” (2 Cor. 10:4–5).
 - “These who have turned the world upside down have come here too” (Acts 17:6).
- 40:15–17, 23–24; 41:11–12.

No One His Equal

- “To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him? (40:18). “To whom then will you liken Me, or to whom shall I be equal?” (40:25).
- Really, who can compare? 40:12–14.
- Look at the follow up to the above questions: 40:19–22, 26
- And the challenge issued to idols and those who worship them: 41:21–24, 26–28.

East Relief

- 41:2–4; 41:25
- More information will follow, including the name of the man God will use: 44:28; 45:1, 13; 46:11; 48:14–16.
- King Cyrus of Persia was the man who issued the decree allowing the Jews to return to their land. He issued this decree in 538 B.C., about 150 years after Isaiah died.