

December 20, 2020

*The Bridge Bible Fellowship*

Pastor Paul S. Brown

Isaiah 40

“God with You: Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow”

“Isaiah” = “Salvation is of Yahweh.”

Condemnation – Chapters 1-39

Consolation / Comfort – Chapters 40-66

- I. Comfort & Strength for God’s People (40:1-31)
  - A. Instruction: The Comfort of God! (1-11)
    - 1. Peace (1-2)
    - 2. Pardon (2)
    - 3. Preparation (3-5)
    - 4. Permanence (6-8)
    - 5. Presence (9-11)
  - B. Inspiration: The Power of God! (12-26)
    - 1. God is Great (12-20)
      - a. Greater than People (12-14)
      - b. Greater than Nations (15-17)
      - c. Greater than Idols (18-20)
    - 2. God is Sovereign Ruler (21-26)
      - a. Over all People (21-22)
      - b. Over all Rulers (23-25)
      - c. Over the Universe (26)
  - C. Application: The Grace of God! (27-31)
    - 1. Problem: Man’s Sinful Perspective (27)
    - 2. Solution: God’s Gracious Promise (28-31)

So What?

## Discussion & Application:

1. Read 2 Cor. 1:1-11. What does “comfort” mean? What are some synonyms (hint: “encouragement” is one)? What kind of comfort is Paul talking about? Why did he need it? How bad were his circumstances? Where did the comfort come from? Do you see any principles in this text that are similar to Isaiah 40?
2. What are some specific ways that God comforts us? What role does His Word play in bringing us comfort? What specific passages of Scripture bring comfort to you in difficult times? What role does the Holy Spirit play in bringing us comfort? What role do other believers play in bringing us comfort?
3. Share some of the most practical ways that others have comforted you. Why did that comfort you?
4. What does it mean that God is “sovereign” over all things? What passages of Scripture support that? If we truly believe it, how should it show up in our daily lives? When we are facing difficulties? When God doesn’t answer our prayers the way we want or in the timing that we want?
5. What specific attributes of God are most helpful to you when life is really hard? What are some specific ways that you are practicing the presence of God?
6. According to Is. 40:6-8, why is the Word of God so important? Would you say you spend more time watching/listening to/reading the news or in God’s Word? What are your plans for 2021 to spend more time in God’s Word?
7. Have you ever read a book on God’s attributes (like “Knowing God,” by J.I. Packer; “Knowledge of the Holy,” by A.W. Tozer; etc.)? If so, how did it help you? What can you do this year to better understand the greatness of God? Does God ever seem like He’s not that great? What happens to you when problems get bigger and God gets smaller? How could you help others better understand the greatness of God and be comforted by it?
8. Idols can be physical objects that we trust in rather than God, but we can also have idols of false ideas about the true God. What are some common mistaken ideas people have about God? (i.e., Deism – God created and then left us on our own; Bad Cop that likes to rain on our parades...) How can we protect ourselves from idolatrous thoughts about the true God?
9. What is your current emotional state about the 2020 elections? How does Isaiah 40 help us keep it in perspective? Who is in charge of rulers? (see Rom. 13 and Dan. 4-5)
10. Why did God make the universe so big? Why are there so many stars? What was the point? How does meditating on this help you face daily challenges in your life?
11. What is wrong the perspective of the people in v. 27? Write your own paraphrase of v. 27 and share it with the rest of the group. Why are we prone to think this way in difficult times?
12. What does it mean to “wait” for the LORD? What attributes of God described in Isaiah 40 help you in the process of waiting? Go through each verse and look for something about God that should motivate you to wait on Him with great expectation.
13. How do we “exchange” our weaknesses for God’s strength? How do we help others do it?
14. Practice taking your eyes off of yourself and your circumstances and fixing them on Jesus. Take some time to thank Him for His control of all things, His awareness of your needs, and His faithfulness.