

Prophecy Regarding the Sovereignty of the Coming Messiah!

Scripture: Isaiah 40:1-17

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I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Can you imagine the significance of humanity as compared to our Sovereign God! Over and over God proclaim through his Prophet Isaiah that the way is provided on the spiritual highway when obstacles get in our way. God's Word is sure, and it endures forever. His power is proclaimed as a testimony repeatedly. The Word is preached gives us the spiritual food needed for such a time as this. He tells us that Christ's dominion is through the Christ Shepherd Jesus and us, His children. He tells us with confidence and divine gentleness that the Lord, our Creator has the power and greatness to give us divine balance as he has the knowledge, omnipotence (authority) and that there is none like God.

II. BIBLICAL CONTEXT

Biblically we can see the Book of Isaiah in two sections. Part I (Chapters 1-39) as a reminder to "look toward the captives". Part 2 (Chapters 40-66) "look beyond captivity" for the sovereignty of God is still there. Looking forward! The Lord of the past, present and future! The portrait Isaiah paints and proclaims is to see the greatness of God in contrast with the lifelessness of idols which Israel served at various times. Now, we are seeing how he gathers his flock like a shepherd carrying us like a lamb in his arms close to his heart gently reminding us that he is still the Comforter. OMG, he is still on the throne leading us as the Sovereign Lord! He is Lord God, and his glory will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. Hear the voice for it has spoken and still speaks through his Prophet Isaiah! Consolation and comfort are here. Look forward to deliverance, a regathering of Israel in the last days, with future tribulation, the 2nd advent, the Millennium and the new earth.

III. THE TOPIC: Prophecy Regarding the Sovereignty of the Coming Messiah

1. V. 1. Comfort! Comfort! Twice!

The general purpose of chapters 40-66 is to comfort the people of God in view of eternal restoration under the Messiah who is Jesus! This is assured – the prophecies speak as if Israel were already near the end of the Babylonian captivity; Jerusalem already in ruins, and the people about to be restored to their own land. The Heb. Word for comfort is 'nacham', to sigh; breathe strongly; to be sorrowful in a favorable sense; to pity; console; to avenge; comfort. Only in

chapter 40-66 does the prophet predict comfort for Israel. Speak comfort! Kindly! Softly and tenderly, but also make it very clear, you have been punished for your sins, enough and more than enough and now it's over and done with! You are forgiven and delivered for victory!

“Comfort” used in Isaiah (comfort is all over the place, even today:

- Comfort, comfort, My people (40:1)
- Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry to her (40:2)
- The Lord has comforted His people (49:13; 52:19)
- The Lord will comfort Zion (51:3)
- He will comfort her waste places
- I am He that comforts you (51:12)
- By whom will I comfort you (51:12)
- Restore comforts to him (57:18)
- To comfort all that mourn (61:2)
- So will I comfort you (66:13)
- You will be comforted in Jerusalem (66:13)

Comfort is used to address all God's people of Zion with words of God's mercy. It is an announcement to the people's suffering. This consolidation ended when fulfilled with the birth of Christ. In Isaiah's prophecy, this is the first taste of salvation which merges with the full salvation that Jesus Christ would bring.

2. V. 2. The Herald about the Coming Messiah.

What is the voice to say. Things to cry: Her warfare is accomplished; Her iniquity is pardoned; She has received Jehovah double for her sins. These things are spoken of as already accomplished, but all are yet to be fulfilled. Furthermore, these are national problems, the warfare, iniquity, and reaping for sins referred to concern Judah as well as Jerusalem. The city will be restored and all the people blessed and pardoned under the Messiah. So, God is preparing the heart of the people. The statements about preparing the way of the Lord are used here figuratively, **heralding the coming of the Messiah**. It was a custom to send people ahead to clear the way of thorns, brambles, and bushes, made bridges, fording of streams and levelling the ground wherever necessary to make it normal for travel, etc. (as preachers/prophets). This was not done for Christ, but figuratively the preparation of the people to receive Him (thorough Isaiah) this will be fulfilled literally in the Millennium, when a highway will be made from Egypt to Assyria, through Palestine as predicted in 11:16; 19:23-25; 35:8-10. Crying is an analogy and is based on the anticipated coming of a comforter. We are to prepare-clear away obstacles and the highway-the hearts of people who must be

spiritually prepared for God's glory to be revealed. How can this be without a 'voice?'

3. vv. 3-5. A Voice of One Calling.

Who was this Heb. Yehovah, Jehovah. It was Jesus Christ, who John the Baptist was to prepare the way for. (Gen. 19:24; Ps. 110:1,5) which is operative as the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit – the Trinity. The glory of the Lord was revealed by Jesus Christ and all flesh did see His mighty power that glorified God. Isaiah is the voice that informs us, and the voice of God is what Isaiah answered in saying – **what shall I cry?** He is to cry – men are like grass which withers soon and is gone, but the Word of the Lord shall stand forever. The Jews are the subject of the prophets, and they are the Israel that will fulfill the writings of the prophets. John the Baptist, Isaiah, and God, Jesus Christ, and us had a 'voice' to proclaim, preach, teach, prophesize, spiritually direct and guide to prepare the way of the Lord, the spiritual highway. While the highway of v. 3 was to be prepared by the people of God, the changes required in v. 4 could be accomplished only by divine action-God's glory!

4. vv. 6-8. What Shall I Cry About?

God's Word and man's weakness. The voice said: 'cry out/shout'. The glory would be displayed in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the mouth of the Lord has spoken-this is the language of divine oath. This pictures that the breath of the Lord will blow on the people like he does on the grass, which withers and fades like wildflowers; but the word of our God stands firm and forever. These words offer full assurance of the reliability, stability, and eternal nature of the divine Word.

5. vv. 9-11: You Who Bring Good Tidings.

The Lord speaks to the remnant who have remained faithful to God. What is this, good tidings – good news to Judah that God is reigning visibly and personally in the mist of them through Jesus Christ. In the NT the Gospel is the good news. The voice of this gives strength to what is the chief purpose is: repentance so all can turn from their wrongs and be forgiven and blessed. The good tidings are that God has come to rescue His enslaved people. His strong hand/arm enabling us to not be afraid—behold God -he shall reign/rule. The preacher of good news is to give voice to it, that Good Shepherd will give us spiritual food and reward victory to those who love him. He will care and hug on us as a good father does.

- Get up on the high mountains (9)
- Lift up your voice with strength (Preacher! Teacher! Believer!)

- Be not afraid/timid
- Say to all, Behold your God!

6. vv. 12-17. To Whom will you compare God? (verse 18)

These verses magnify the greatness of God, because of his omnipotence (all-powerful), omniscience(all-knowing):

- Come with power
- Rule with a strong arm (10)
- Reward those when He comes
- Do a great work, changing the earth and all things therein
- Feed his flock like a shepherd (11)
- Gather the lambs with His arm
- Carry them in His bosom
- Gently lead those with young
- He has measured the waters (12)
- Measured the heavens with the span (the width of an outstretched arm)
- Measured the dust of the earth
- Weighed the mountains and hills (13)
- He does not need counseling (14)
- Does not need to be instructed
- Does not need to be taught in judgment
- Does not need to be taught knowledge
- He is so great and infinite that the nations are but a drop in the bucket, a small dust on the balance; the islands are but a very small thing
- All the cedars of Lebanon are not sufficient for the burning of beasts are a burnt offering to make atonement before Him for sin (16)
- All nations are as nothing before Him, even less than nothing (17)

Since God is so great and powerful, what can He be compared to? Certainly not to a lifeless image made by man-an image of gold, silver, or wood. What kind of image could one make of Him that would give the truth? Nothing!

Who (12-13) What? The answer is “God, Creator of the cosmos”, and Israel’s Lord, the Creator of all you can see or imagine. Wickedness has no power to thwart the purposes of God. Its sovereign Creator has. No comparison! Glory to God. Behold your God. He is going to pay back and reward those who have been faithful. God is mighty to be praised!