

Isaiah 40

3-17-05

“The Lord is my Shepherd!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. **St. Patrick's Day** – He was neither Irish nor Roman Catholic. He was born in Britain. Carried off by pirates at age 16, & forced to work as a slave in Ireland. After 6 years there, during which he experienced a conversion, he escaped & returned to Britain & his family. He had a night vision in which he received a call to **evangelize Ireland**. He became the greatest single force in the Christianization of Ireland.¹
- 1.2. **Prayer** – May we cry as Samuel did, *“Speak Lord your servant hears.”*
- 1.3. **This is the 2nd division of Isaiah.** (My favorite)
 - 1.3.1. You'll see there is more to God's character than **judgment**...he is full of **Mercy & Grace** & eager to lavish His **love** on His people.
 - 1.3.2. You'll hear how different it is & why some claimed there must have been 2 Isaiah's!
 - 1.3.2.1. Until you read **Jn.12:38-40** where Jesus quoted from both divisions of Isaiah, & said it was the same Isaiah.
 - 1.3.3. Isaiah will now focus on God's **deliverance of** & His **comfort & care** for His people.
 - 1.3.4. **2nd Division Outline:** The Purpose of Peace(40-48); The Prince of Peace(49-57); The Program of Peace(58-66).²

2. **HEARING VOICES! (1-11)**

- 2.1. **Hearing voices?** (see 3,6,9)
 - 2.1.1. Voice of **Comfort**; Voice of **Confidence**; & Voice of **Consolation**.
- 2.2. **A VOICE OF COMFORT!** (1-5)
- 2.3. **(1) Q:** Remember the weeks/months following **9-11**?
 - 2.3.1. If America received words of encouragement like, “you'll rebuild again”, “planes would fly again” **before** Sept.11 they would have meant nothing to us...but they sure would be words of comfort afterward!
 - 2.3.2. Isaiah is writing words of comfort **1 century before** they were needed. [before Judah would fall to Babylon]
 - 2.3.2.1. They sure would become **words of hope** during their exile in Babylon. **And words of hope still for us today!**

¹ The Church in the Middle Ages; pg.53,54

² G. Campbell Morgan.

- 2.4. **Wow! Double comfort from God!**
- 2.4.1. Such tender speaking, wooing love, speaking to the heart.
- 2.4.2. True religion must always grip the heart.
- 2.4.3. **The world is full of hurting & comfortless hearts.**
- 2.4.4. Even in the church, as *Joseph parker* said, "There is a broken heart in every pew."
- 2.4.5. To accept **God's comfort**, it necessitates some **hurt** in your life in which to comfort!
- 2.4.5.1. Yes, your own life becomes a **hospital ward** where you are taught the divine art of comfort.
- 2.4.5.2. *You will be wounded so you can bind up.*
- 2.4.5.3. **Q: Do you ever wonder why you are having to experience some great sorrow?**
- 2.4.5.4. God will apply the **anesthetic** He once used on you to them.
- 2.4.5.4.1. Then you will know why you were afflicted.
- 2.4.5.5. "God **comforts us** not to make us **comfortable**, but to make us **comforters**." *John Henry Jowett*
- 2.4.6. **Poem:** They tell me I must bruise the rose's leaf,
 Ere I can keep & use Its fragrance brief.
 They tell me I must break The skylark's heart,
 Ere her cage song will make The silence start.
 They tell me **love must bleed**, And **friendship weep**,
 Ere in my deepest need I touch that deep.
Must it be always so With precious things?
Must they be bruised & go With beaten wings?
 Ah, yes! By crushing days, by caging nights, by scar
 Of Thorn & stony ways, These blessings are!
- 2.5. (2) **Q: What were the 3 words of comfort?** [ended, pardoned, received]
- 2.6. **Double** (| ØκØ κεπηελ)– two sided, fold over, 2 sided. {ie. One side mirroring the other} Fair judgment not double judgment.
- 2.7. **Be Comforted** - The Lord knows how to measure your chastening, & that He forgives, & gives you new beginnings.
- 2.8. (3,4) Using hyperbole, the prophet called the people to smooth a highway in the desert.
- 2.8.1. These words demand a **spiritual renewal** in preparation for Messiah's advent.
- 2.8.2. Hearts must be prepared in repentance, & then Messiah can come.
- 2.8.2.1. Mt.3:2 "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!**"

- 2.9. This was claimed by John the Baptist in his unique ministry preparing the coming of Christ. [But this task is also for us all]
- 2.9.1. It is the picture of us making a Highway for God, along which He will move toward His ultimate accomplishment.
- 2.9.2. (4) **Our highway system** seeks to do the same thing.
- 2.9.2.1. Get on the I-15 South. Just south of Tem part of the valley is filled in. And then through the great arced bridge where the hill is cutaway for the road to go through.
- 2.9.3. There are no mountains too high for God, nor for the people of faith.
- 2.9.3.1. I guess we could sing with the Supremes, "Ain't no **mountain** high enough. Ain't no **valley** low enough. Ain't no **river** wide enough to keep me from loving you!"
- 2.9.4. Q: Which **mountain** is in front of you?
- 2.9.5. Q: Are there any **obstacles** that need to be removed in your life?
- 2.9.6. Q: Have you rolled out the **Red Carpet** for Christ in your life?
- 2.10. (5) The Lord's **glory** would be seen in the **deliverance** of Israel from exile.
- 2.10.1. Just as they were delivered from Egypt; & were to be in the NT at Calvary through the Resurrection, & at the 2nd Coming of Christ.
- 2.10.1.1. There it will be seen in the fullest measure!
- 2.11. **A VOICE OF CONFIDENCE!** (6-8)
- 2.12. In contrast to the world's **transience** is the **permanence** of the Word of God.
- 2.12.1. **Appl** - If it feels like you are in a **spiritual exile** (feel cast out, or banished), then you need to make **God's Word central** again in your life.
- 2.12.2. Q: What plans can you come up with to make His Word more central in your life?
- 2.13. **Be Confident...** His Word will stand in spite of the frailty of man.
- 2.14. **A VOICE OF CONSOLATION!** (9-11)
- 2.15. (9) **High mountain** – When you're at the base you see little. Go higher & you can see for a few miles. Higher the scene expands. But, the summit it is breath taking! [Ex: **Gettysburg platform**]
- 2.15.1. **The Christian life is the same**. When we 1st believe in Christ we see **little** of Him. The higher we climb the more we discover **His beauties**. One day we will gain the summit & be able to say, *"I know whom I have believed!"*³
- 2.15.2. Get up dear saints to the High mountain! - "Upward to heaven! Nearer to God!"

³ Spurgeon; June 25th.

- 2.16. “Behold your God” -Share the good news with others. Shout it aloud!
- 2.16.1. Often times Christians are very good at offering **loud praises** to God in church, but are **much less vocal** when facing an unbelieving & questing world.
- 2.16.1.1. **Sing** of God’s power...but also **Speak** of it!
- 2.16.2. Ps.96:2 “**Proclaim** the good news of His salvation from day to day.”
- 2.16.3. Ps.71:15 “My **mouth** will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure.”
- 2.16.4. Only **God** could have empowered his exiled people to speak of good news.
- 2.16.4.1. Like a couple days ago when **Ashley Smith** read to her captor during her seven-hour hostage ordeal. She read to him ch.30 of *The Purpose Driven Life*. Resulting in being freed and ended the Atlanta standoff?
- 2.17. (10,11) Now look at this wonderful linkage of the **Power** of God(10), & the **Love** of God(11).
- 2.17.1. He is Powerful & Mighty; yet Careful & Gentle.
- 2.17.1.1. See “arm” in both verse.
- 2.17.2. There are 2 reasons for Jesus return! (Judgment & Blessing)
- 2.17.2.1. Picture here **Mt.25:31-34**.
- 2.17.3. Here is a gentle picture of a shepherd leading his sheep w/all the qualities of loving concern for each **individual** sheep w/in the flock.
- 2.17.3.1. He’s bound not to lose one!
- 2.17.3.2. It’s the theme of Ps.23 & John 10.
- 2.17.4. This isn’t some “soft skinned, hand manicured shepherd” you’ve seen in some children’s book.
- 2.17.4.1. This shepherd is a leader who **risks his life** for the sheep’s protection & safety.
- 2.17.4.2. He’s not a **hireling** that flees in times of danger.
- 2.17.4.3. He would even **die** for them that they might **live**!
- 2.18. (10) He will right all wrongs.
- 2.19. (11) A prediction beautifully lived out by Jesus Christ.
- 2.19.1. A Good shepherd will **provide** for His sheep. He **protects** them from harm.
- 2.19.2. He uses his **rod** to chase off the enemy & his **staff** to lift them out of precarious places they get themselves into!
- 2.19.3. **Feed** – Actually the entire work of a shepherd.

- 2.19.4. **Gather & Carry** – the young lambs recently born.
 2.19.4.1. They are the weakest members of the flock.
 2.19.4.2. You know what He is talking about here, those of you who have/had babies. You respond to their cry at night. You go in & pick them up in your arms & hold them tightly to your chest. You shhh them, you bounce them, you rock them. Their fears flee, they're calm again.
 2.19.4.3. **Note:** Not over his shoulders but against His chest!
- 2.19.5. **Gently lead** – The ewes that were nursing.
 2.19.5.1. They couldn't be forced along by driving them, so He tenderly leads them.
- 2.20. **Q: Which work of the Good Shepherd do you need most tonight?**
 2.20.1. [1] **Are you feeling spiritually dry?** – Let him feed you in his Word!
 2.20.2. [2] **Do you just need to be held?** – Feel His closeness!
 2.20.2.1. **He will carry them** – sometimes He does it by pulling them from some trials. Other times he could carry them by giving them a very simple faith. [ex: They take Gods promises just as they stand. With every trouble they run straight to Jesus(Joe & Amish)]
 2.20.3. [3] **Are you so worn-out you need to be carried?** – Let Him do it!
 2.20.4. [4] **Do you need direction in your life?** – He seeks to lead you!
 2.20.5. Sheep, He already knows you are **prone to wander, lag behind, grow weary**, or get into **mischief**.
- 2.21. Verses 1-11 are the introduction to the rest of Isaiah' book.
 2.21.1. Note then, the **conclusion** here is the same as was the **intro**.
- 2.22. **Be Consoled...** Surely goodness and mercy shall follow you All the days of your life; And you will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.