

## Comfort for God's People

**40** Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.  
 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
 and cry to her  
 that her warfare is ended,  
 that her iniquity is pardoned,  
 that she has received from the LORD's hand  
 double for all her sins.

3 A voice cries:

4 "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;  
 make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
 5 Every valley shall be lifted up,  
 and every mountain and hill be made low;  
 the uneven ground shall become level,  
 and the rough places a plain.  
 6 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
 and all flesh shall see it together,  
 for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

## The Word of God Stands Forever

6 A voice says, "Cry!"  
 And I said, "What shall I cry?"  
 All flesh is grass,  
 and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.  
 7 The grass withers, the flower fades  
 when the breath of the LORD blows on it;  
 surely the people are grass.  
 8 The grass withers, the flower fades,  
 but the word of our God will stand forever.

↳ WHAT FOLLOWS IS WHAT IS REALLY IMPORTANT.

Thomas p. 109 "There is a progression of thought, but it is neither chronological nor strictly logical. There are certain themes which are presented over and over, and which show some signs of development in both scope and exactness. Alexander points out five such themes: sinful Israel, the faithful remnant of ISRAEL, Deliverance from Babylonian exile, the coming Messiah, and the new dispensation."

- ① Declared twice to emphasize to point of God's comfort.
- ② Deliverance is promised for God's people. Here it will be the shadow (Physical Kingdom) that shows us the real (Spiritual Kingdom) God's people will be delivered. Having sinned their punishment was as doubled what anyone else received. Hence, her comfort is double to restore and refresh them.
- ③ ARE APPLIED TO JOHN THE BAPTIST IN Mt 3.3, Mk 1.3, Luke 3.4-6, John 1.23 This opening sets up the deliverance theme for the 2nd half of the book. This is prophetic language which is often only clearly understood in hindsight.
- ④ The one who cries out is not identified. The message is one of importance over who speaks it. Here we see a message of hope and change. Here a tough journey is made easier. The Lord will come not from the palace but from obscurity. Here is the coming of "our God."
- ⑤ This path of God is level and straight. This is also referring to the prophecies being fulfilled so the Lord could appear as promised.
- ⑥ when all is in place then the Lord will be revealed. God is planning to publically reveal Himself to all. This God in the flesh visible to all to see.
- ⑦ Here the message is the frailty of flesh. IT PASSES AWAY AS GRASS OR A FLOWER. IT HAS NO STRENGTH IN ITSELF.
- ⑧ The passing is assured. GOD'S BREATH LAST BUT THE FLESH OF MAN IS DESTINED TO PASS AWAY.
- ⑨ Repeats the opening from verse six but ends by comparing the passing of man's flesh to the everlasting word of God. Everyone who ignores, disputes, or changes God's word is acting in vain. It last forever and outlast any life.

## The Greatness of God

- 9 Go on up to a high mountain,  
 O Zion, herald of good news;  
 lift up your voice with strength,  
 O Jerusalem, herald of good news;  
 lift it up, fear not;  
 say to the cities of Judah,  
 "Behold your God!"
- 10 Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
 and his arm rules for him;  
 behold, his reward is with him,  
 and his recompense before him.
- 11 He will tend his flock like a shepherd;  
 he will gather the lambs in his arms;  
 he will carry them in his bosom,  
 and gently lead those that are with young.
- 12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his  
 hand  
 and marked off the heavens with a span,  
 enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure  
 and weighed the mountains in scales  
 and the hills in a balance?
- 13 Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD,  
 or what man shows him his counsel?
- 14 Whom did he consult,  
 and who made him understand?  
 Who taught him the path of justice,  
 and taught him knowledge,  
 and showed him the way of understanding?

4-11 Isaiah has a vision of God THAT TRANSCENDS any time period and reflects God as he will be revealed as an eternal shepherd. See JOHN 12.15.

- 9) THE message of God's arrival is meant to be proclaimed so that all will hear and know.
- 10) God is seen coming to repay or reward depending on what He finds. His might can conquer or it can save. The rewards of God are dependant on His recompense or His works. For Christ His works were on the cross & resurrection. Only because of that can He reward those who follow Him.
- 11) Jesus is the Good Shepherd that lays down His life for His flock. See John 10.11-18. Here He is rescuing the One lost lamb by carrying him in his arms. THE SHEPHERD LEADS SO THEY WILL FOLLOW. He does not drive them, but SHOWS THE WAY. Jesus shows us THE WAY & ASK US TO FOLLOW HIM. (Mt 10.38)
- 12) Young V.3 P 43 notes these are "rhetorical questions". THE ONLY one who could do this is God. THE image shows the greatness of God over all He has created. THAT God is so great He can hold all the waters from all the seas is a striking image.
- 13) THE question is one of omniscience. Even though creation can be measured by God. There is nothing in creation to measure God, He is unmeasurable. This is the God who is seen hovering above the waters of His creation. (Cf. Isa. 34.16; Gen. 1.2; Job 33.4, etc.) AGAIN THE question answers itself. there is no one to serve as counsellor to God. Earthly Kings have counselors to advise them, God has no counselor nor does he need one.
- 14) who does God consult, no one but Himself. He needs no one to help Him understand. All is clear to Him who see all Time in the present. Modern man would do well to consider we do not advise God's decisions or determine justice. God has perfect understanding and He alone determines final justice. He is the foundation of all wisdom, understanding, knowledge. He is the moral center of the universe He created. He alone is the final measure.

15 **Behold**, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,  
and are accounted as the dust on the scales;  
behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine  
dust.

16 Lebanon would not suffice for fuel,  
nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering.

17 All the nations are as nothing before him,  
they are accounted by him as less than nothing  
and emptiness.

18 To whom then will you liken God,  
or what likeness compare with him?

19 An idol! A craftsman casts it,  
and a goldsmith overlays it with gold  
and casts for it silver chains.

20 He who is too impoverished for an offering  
chooses wood that will not rot;  
he seeks out a skillful craftsman  
to set up an idol that will not move.

21 Do you not know? Do you not hear?  
Has it not been told you from the beginning?  
Have you not understood from the foundations  
of the earth?

22 It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,  
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;  
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,  
and spreads them like a tent to dwell in;

23 who brings princes to nothing,  
and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.

(15) The call to behold or see the reader is called to see all the nations with their cities, Armies, might and they are nothing. Like a drop of water in a bucket they disappear when compared to God. THE THINGS created by man (nations) are nothing compared to God and His creation. Dust does not move the scale. Here we see again the insignificance of the physical world compared to God.

(16) There is not enough on earth to bring a sacrifice worthy of God. Sacrifices are accepted but in reality they fall short of any honor that is due God.

(17) When compared to God and all He is the nations are nothing. to emphasize the point they are less than nothing. THEY have a negative value. They are just a vast emptiness. This does not say God does not care for them. Just compared to Him they are zero. God is all powerful, present, and knowing. He is eternal. Man is in every way limited, not eternal, but a created being. Even given eternity by God, man is still nothing w/out God giving Him value.

(18) Looking at creation, there is nothing that compares to God.

(19-20) So what about idols that are made by men to represent God? They are made of Gold & Silver. Crafted to last beyond their creators lifetime. God cannot be compared to these manmade inadmire objects.

(21) Four questions prepare to show the true nature and the absolute greatness of God. THE QUESTIONS ARE A CHALLENGE TO THE READER. Like speaking to a child the Questions show that the answer is obvious.

(22) Metaphor is used to show God's greatness. Each one showing the supremacy of God's presence of all He has created.

(23) No earthly royalty compares to Him. Here again the word 'emptiness' is used. Man's world is nothing w/out God.

24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,  
scarcely has their stem taken root in the  
earth,  
when he blows on them, and they wither,  
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

25 To whom then will you compare me,  
that I should be like him? says the Holy One.

26 Lift up your eyes on high and see:  
who created these?  
He who brings out their host by number,  
calling them all by name;  
by the greatness of his might  
and because he is strong in power,  
not one is missing. (He sees them all!!!)

27 Why do you say, O Jacob,  
and speak, O Israel,  
"My way is hidden from the LORD,  
and my right is disregarded by my God"?

28 Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The LORD is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.

★ 29 He gives power to the faint,  
and to him who has no might he increases  
strength.

30 Even youths shall faint and be weary,  
and young men shall fall exhausted;

24 Earthly rules from the previous verse are shown as coming into existence and they are gone. Compared to God their reigns are over even as they begin. God's judgment upon them is swift and final. They vanish and God remains. Eventually all they create is reduced to dust.

25 Men is challenged to find anything that compares to God, what man can be compared to God?

26 Look beyond the ordinary and see the world. Remember all that you see was created by the Holy or perfect one.

CREATED Same word used in Genesis 1 for creation. It is offered as a question. You are invited to discover a mystery answered. Let the curtain be pulled back and discover the answer to this great truth (mystery). He brings out the host of heaven like a military parade. (see 2 Sam. 5:2 & Isa. 43:17) all creation appear before Him to be view. All creation calls out to Him and proclaims His might. (see 1k. 19:38) Young 3p63 points out "to man the stars appear innumerable (Gen 1:5), yet God knows not merely the number but also the name of each one." Even with our most power telescope we cannot see to the edge of it all. God sees them all, "not one is missing."

27 How can anyone say that God has forsaken them? How can anyone think God cannot see or know about them? This type of thinking often accompanies difficult times. Here the nations are addressed, as if the whole nation were void of God's presence.

28 Here it seems ironic the people question God with their long experience/history with Him. God is shown as everlasting and inexhaustible. He know all, and sees all. There is no let down in God's presence and might.

29 God is there, especially for the weak and suffering. It is ironic when we sense Him least He is closest.

30 The strongest men will succumb to exhaustion, we are limited. This comparison is to show why we need God.

31 but they who wait for 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.

God Chosen and Promised Redemption  
Fear Not, for I Am with You

41 Listen to me in silence, O coastlands;  
let the peoples renew their strength;  
let them approach, then let them speak;  
let us together draw near for judgment.

2 Who stirred up one from the east  
whom victory meets at every step?  
He gives up nations before him,  
so that he tramples kings underfoot;  
he makes them like dust with his sword,  
like driven stubble with his bow.  
3 He pursues them and passes on safely,  
by paths his feet have not trod.  
4 Who has performed and done this,  
calling the generations from the beginning?  
I, the LORD, the first,  
and with the last; I am he.

5 The coastlands have seen and are afraid;  
the ends of the earth tremble;  
they have drawn near and come.

6 Everyone helps his neighbor  
and says to his brother, "Be strong!"

(A) Even though our strength may fail, God's Does not. He is the source of renewed strength. This is about God's Timing. Luke 2:25 & 38 Simeon and Anna waited and counted on God to provide answers to His promises. Strength is also about patience. Physical strength fails even the strongest. Here the prophet promises we can exchange our weakness for God's strength. Those who trust & follow God become stronger & stronger. THE image of the Eagle is one of freedom, being above the fray. God is seen being the source of continued strength. Those who wait or rely on God are promised His presence.

① THE nations are told to prepare to hear from God. Even as God prepares for judgment, He challenges the nations to get ready for what is coming. Here God will address those who rely on idols as their God. Nature is called on to be silent while God deals with these sinful people. God is calling the nations to appear before Him to present their case. He challenges them to use all their strength and to say what is on their minds.

② From the East James p 113, "It is SAFER NOT TO SEEK TO MAKE specific what the prophet has not made so, but to interpret this in General terms." THE judgment of verse one is in verse 2 a coming Army that cannot be stopped. THE destruction will be total leaving nothing untraced.

③ THIS army will not follow the traditional paths but will use a new route.

④ It is pointed out that this only happens because God has ordained or allowed it to happen. Here this army serves as the judgment of God. THE opening line has two verbs showing the task is in God's hands from beginning to end. IN the end God declares He is everywhere in time at the same time.

⑤ THE coming enemy is more than a prophecy. His deeds and conquest of others is known. They have been warned God is doing this to them. ISRAEL is small but not their God.

⑥ THE nations join together, believing they will prevail. THEY deny the power of God and rely on human strength and determination.