

Behold Our God!

Text: Isaiah 40:6-11

Date: 6-19-22 10:30 AM

Review: Isaiah 40 opens with the great word of comfort to the people of Judah who are facing the stark reality of being taken captive to Babylon. This chapter gives assurance of God's word, of the ultimate restoration of Israel, and the return of the Lord to fulfill His promises. Confidence is given that by faith, God's people can trust Jehovah to keep His word. God's word promises that a day is coming where the nation will repent, be restored, and the glory of the Lord will return. "Of all the evidence for the inspiration of the Bible there is none more convincing than the declaration of events to come and their fulfillment as foretold. This also affords grounds for faith in every crisis; God is a promise-keeping God" (Hailey 327).

I. Human life is transient (Isa. 40:6-7).

"What shall I cry?" The answer is a comparison between man and God. Man is pictured as something that is temporary, like grass.

The Scripture gives several comparisons of grass to brevity of life (Job 8:12, Ps. 37:2; 90:5, 103:15-16).

The speaker doesn't just speak of the failure of human existence, but he includes all of the inner qualities of man. The voice continues, even if flesh can achieve strength, beauty, or any form of human glory (*godliness*) it is just like a flower in a field. The best that man can offer inside or out is only fleeting.

". . . all the achievements of humanity, in every field of endeavor, for good and for bad, through all time, in all of their glory, are fragile and transitory" (Rosenthal 11). Just as quickly as grass and flowers shrivel up and die, so will man and all of his accomplishments perish.

Isaiah paints a vivid picture of the grand divide between the impotence and shortness of flesh and the omnipotence of God. As we have already witnessed in the Assyrian pride, if Judah chose to live independently of God, and if Babylon chose to vaunt itself against Jehovah, each of them would end in the same place. People will fade away when faced with the breath of God upon them. Truly, there is no comparison between the fragile human and our powerful God.

II. God's word is permanent (Isa. 40:8).

In the middle of an Assyrian invasion, in a land that for many years had rebelled against God, His word, and His prophets, with wickedness and corruption among Judah's leaders, came a great and grand assurance: "the word of our God shall stand for ever."

God's word promotes stability, oozes permanence, lives eternal, and demonstrates certainty in its complete fulfillment.

"In the midst of a decadent society and a crumbling world, pressured on every hand by human power and diabolic wickedness, what a sustaining assurance it is to know that there is something permanent, something enduring" (Hailey 333).

Where little comfort was to be found, Jehovah's character, word, and promises will never fail. They will reign eternally based upon God's covenant word for the nation.

III. Behold, God will return (Isa. 40:9-11)!

With the news of warfare completed, iniquity pardoned and her sins sufficiently paid for, the city raises her voice in triumph. The God who had left the nation has returned.

“Behold your God!” God has endured and His promises have been kept for He has returned to Zion and fulfilled His word. No longer is there any power to be afraid of. “Fulfillment of this promise is so certain that the prophet speaks as if it were already accomplished” (Hailey 334). We have the promise of God returning in verse five, the affirmation of His coming in verse eight and the fulfillment in verse nine!

This will be a victorious day. That will be redemption day. That will be a glorious day. What a day that will be! The nation, long trapped in its own darkness of rebellion and sin will now see the glorious light of the Lord. God is coming back to His own with His very presence and Isaiah offers first-hand proof.

A. Behold God’s power (Isa. 40:10a)!

Isaiah states that God will come in a mighty way.

B. Behold God’s justice (Isa. 40:10b)!

God will reward the redeemed and the redeemed are His reward. He will execute perfect justice in rewarding the wicked and remunerate the righteous. God deserves His reward because He has won the great victory over His enemies and delivered man from wickedness and sin. God’s reward is the very people that are now in His sight and in His possession, the very little ones of the next verse.

C. Behold God’s compassion (Isa. 40:11)!

Not only is God a God of power and rule, He is tender and compassionate towards His own people. God does not delight in punishing or condemning the wicked (Ez. 33:11) for indeed to judge His own people is what Isaiah called a *strange work* (28:21).

Jesus last left His people as He wept over Jerusalem and stood over them as a sheep without a Shepherd. This remains mostly the condition of His people to this day. But there is coming a day where His love and compassion will pick them up, regather them, and place them under His watchful care and security.

“What a beautiful and appropriate picture with which to close this prophecy that began with comfort and hope. And what a wonderful way to introduce the trials and victories which lie before the people, and to foreshadow the redeeming work of God through Cyrus and ultimately through the Messiah” (Hailey 335).