

THE ONE WHO COMFORTS

WHO IS HE? TITLES OF JESUS THE MESSIAH FROM ISAIAH · ISAIAH 40:1-5; MATTHEW 3:1-3/MARK 1:1-3/LUKE 3:4-6 · DECEMBER 8, 2024 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"Comfort, comfort my people, says your God." (Isaiah 40:1)

God's Comfort Spoken (Isaiah 40:1-2a)

- The God who speaks
- The God who speaks tenderly to His people in exile

God's Comfort in Difficulty's Resolution and Restoration (Isaiah 40:2)

- The difficulty of the exile will reach conclusion
- The future hope brought into the present reality

God's Comfort in Divine Encounter (Isaiah 40:3-4)

- A way in the wilderness
- The God of Sinai meeting His people

God's Comfort and God's Glory (Isaiah 40:5)

- A revelation of God's glory
- God's glory seen by all people ("all flesh")

God's Comfort in Jesus the Messiah

- Jesus is the One who makes God's way in the world
- Jesus is the One who speaks God's word in the world
- Jesus is the One who reveals God's glory in the world

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you experienced true comfort in your life?
2. This week we continue our preaching series, "Who Is He?: Titles of Jesus the Messiah from Isaiah," by exploring Isaiah, chapter 40:1-5. Whether on your own or with others, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through this study and then read that text aloud.
3. *Background: In chapter 40, prophet speaks about a restoration that will come after the destruction of Jerusalem and exile of God's people. Read through Isaiah 39, 2 Chronicles*

32:24-33, and 2 Kings 25 in order to understand the situation during Isaiah's time with King Hezekiah and the future exile of Jerusalem and Judah he speaks about.

4. Isaiah 40 marks a turning point in the book of Isaiah, with some commentators referring to the first portion of this chapter as a sort of prelude to the entire second half of Isaiah. What stands out to you in verses 1-2?
5. Why would the message of these verses be important in the midst of a difficult situation like Israel's exile?
6. Verses 3-4 speak of something new happening in the wilderness. What is being described here?
7. What might these verses convey to those who would have to travel long and dangerous roads back to their home from exile?
8. Isaiah 40 is one of the few Old Testament passages referenced by a majority of the Gospel writers (see Matthew 3:1-3; Mark 1:1-3; Luke 3:4-6). If Isaiah spoke of God's future comfort for Israel, how might this be clarified by what the Gospel writers tell us has occurred with Jesus?
9. What is one thing God speaking to you personally through this study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and then pray about what you shared. If you are on your own, write it down, pray about it, and share this with someone this week.

DIG DEEPER:

- Memorize Isaiah 40:1-2 or 40:11
- This week's sermon focused on Isaiah 40:1-5, but there is so much within this chapter that is meaningful. Take some time to read Isaiah 40 and select a few verses to meditate on and pray about further. Perhaps you might want to draw, paint, letter, or sketch aspects of these verses. Write your own prayer back to God as part of your reflection. Consider sharing this with a friend.
- In what difficult situation in your life do you need to experience the comfort of the Lord God? Find a friend who will pray for you or submit the prayer request to the church: eastbrook.org/prayer.
- Listen to "Comfort ye, My People" from George Frideric Handel's Messiah: youtube.com/watch?v=MVil1QfEt4&list=PLBgagen1f2_-C-unltn0a6sPY4AP00790&index=2
- Listen to "Sweet Comfort" by Sandra McCracken: youtube.com/watch?v=dIAs1Qgt-PY