

“The Gift of Comfort”

New Hope Community Church

December 3rd, 2017

Isaiah 40:1-5,11

A. Isaiah’s Message of Comfort to the Nation

1. God speaks favorably to the Jews in **exile** (1)
 - The **emphasis** of the message is **comfort**
 - He addresses them as **My** people
2. **Jerusalem** is favorably remembered (2)
 - War against the city and its people is **over**
 - Sin has been **forgiven**
 - Judgment is **complete**
3. A return of the **presence** of the Lord announced! (3-5)
 - This images an ancient custom of traveling **kings**
 - This is a drastic reversal of the Lord’s **departure** (Ezk 8-11)
 - Implication: God would return to **dwell** with His people in Jerusalem
 - Mankind will be witness to the appearance of God’s **glory** (5)

B. Isaiah’s Deeper Message of Comfort

1. All 4 Gospels record that the voice in v 3 is **John the Baptizer**
2. The King for whom the way was to be prepared is **Messiah**
3. Truly the glory of the God would be seen in His **Son**
And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. (Hb 1:3)
4. The heart of this King toward His people will be as that of a **shepherd** (11)
 - He will faithfully **provide** for His people
 - He will lovingly **protect** for His people
 - He will gently **lead** His people

Reflection

The shepherd’s staff represents the gift of comfort from Jesus that assures us of provision, protection, and loving leadership.

***I am the good shepherd,
and I know My own, and my own know Me,
and I lay down My life for the sheep.***

John 10:14,15

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Discussion Questions

1. If you can imagine yourself in the desperate situation that the Jewish people were in, having lost homes, loved ones, and the presence of God from their midst, what could possibly bring you comfort?
- 2) What was it about Isaiah’s message in verses 2-5 that began to bring comfort?
- 3) Read John 1:19-23. In what way did John fulfill Isaiah’s word of prophecy as to being the voice crying in the wilderness?
- 4) How is it that Isaiah’s message could foreshadow the return of God and His people to Jerusalem after their 70 year captivity in Babylon, and also speak of the coming of Jesus the Messiah some 550 years later?
- 5) Isaiah describes the coming King as One Who would shepherd his people. In what ways does this shepherd image support Isaiah’s desire that God’s people receive comfort?
- 6) If you are willing to, please share of a time in your life when you were in great need of inner comfort, and you truly experienced the Good Shepherd touching and bringing comfort to you in the deepest of ways. What was it that comforted you?