

## ISALAH 40 | *Comfort My People*

### *Comfort My People*

1 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God (בְּנַחֲמוּ בְנַחְמוּ עַמִּי יְאֹמֵר אֱלֹהֵיכֶם). 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and cry to her that her warfare/hardship (צָרָה) is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from his hand double (כִּפְּלִי) for all her sins.

### *Three Voices of Comfort*

#### *First Voice: a Highway for Our God*

3 A voice cries,

In the wilderness (מִדְבָּר) prepare the way (דִּרְוֶה) of Yahweh (יְהוָה). Make straight in the desert (עֲרֹבָה) a highway (מְסִלָּה) for our God (אֱלֹהֵינוּ). 4 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. 5 And the glory of Yahweh shall be revealed (גִּלְיָה),<sup>1</sup> and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.

#### *Second Voice: God's Word 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 (רוּחַ) of Yahweh blows on it. Surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word (דְּבָר) of our God will stand forever (עוֹלָם).

#### *Third Voice: the Gentle Shepherd*

9 Go on up to a high mountain (הַר־גְּבוּהָ), Zion, herald of good news/the gospel (מְבַשְׂרָת). Lift up your voice with strength, Jerusalem, herald of good news/the gospel (מְבַשְׂרָת). Lift it up, fear not. Say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God! 10 Behold, Lord Yahweh (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה) comes with might (קֶזֶק), and his arm rules for him. Behold, his reward (שָׂכָר) is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will tend his flock like a shepherd.<sup>2</sup> He will gather the lambs in his arms. He will carry them in his bosom and gently lead those that are with young.

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<sup>1</sup> **Jn 1:14** 14 The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

<sup>2</sup> **Eze 34:23** 23 And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. **Zec 11:7** 7 So I became the shepherd of the flock doomed to be slaughtered by the sheep traders. And I took two staves, one I named Favor, the other I named Union. And I tended the sheep. **Jn 10:11** 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

## *The Incomparable Creator-King*

### *God Compared to Nations*

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, marked off the heavens with a span [of his hand] (זָרַת), 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/directed the Spirit (רוּחַ) of Yahweh, or what man shows him his counsel? 14 Whom did he consult, and who made him understand (בִּין)? Who taught him the path of justice (מִשְׁפָּט), taught him knowledge (דָּעַת), and showed him the way (דִּרְךָ) of understanding (תְּבוּנָה)? 15 Behold, the nations (גוֹיִם) are like a drop from a bucket and are accounted as the dust on the scales. Behold, he takes up the coastlands (אֲרָצִים) 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.

### *God Compared to Idols*

18 To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness (דְּמוּת) compare with him? 19 An idol (פְּסֵל)! 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 (פְּסֵל) that will not move.

### *God Compared to Men and Rulers*

21 Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood (בִּין) from the foundations of the earth? 22 It is he who sits above the circle (חֹגֶב)<sup>3</sup> of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers (קַמְחָב), who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them like a tent to dwell in, 23 who brings dignitaries (רוֹזְנִים) to nothing and makes the rulers/judges (שֹׁפֵט) of the earth as emptiness. 24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows on them, they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

### *The Creator-King over the Heavens*

25 To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One (קָדוֹשׁ). 26 Lift up your eyes on high and see. Who created (בָּרָא) 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.

### *Wings Like Eagles*

27 Why do you say, Jacob, and speak, Israel, My way (דִּרְךָ) is hidden from Yahweh, and my right (מִשְׁפָּט) is disregarded by my God? 28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? Yahweh is the everlasting God (אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם יְהוָה), the Creator of the ends of the earth (בּוֹרֵא קְצוֹת)

<sup>3</sup> Job 22:14 14 Thick clouds veil him, so that he does not see, and he walks on the vault of heaven. Pr 8:27 27 When he established the heavens, I was there. When he drew a circle on the face of the deep....

הָאֵרֶץ). He does not faint or grow weary.<sup>4</sup> His understanding is unsearchable. 29 He gives power (כֹּחַ) to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength (עֲזָרָה). 30 Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted. 31 But they who wait (קוּוּהוּ) for Yahweh shall renew their strength (כֹּחַ). They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint.

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<sup>4</sup> See *God's Immutability*.

## Commentary

### 1. Isaiah 40-66.

- a. “This section divides into three parts of nine chapters each (chaps. 40-48; 49-57; 58-66). The first two parts each conclude with the statement, ‘There is no peace ... for the wicked’ (48:22; 57:21). These prophecies of deliverance center around three events: (1) Deliverance from captivity in Babylon (already prophesied by Isaiah, 39:7). This is the main subject of chapters 40-48 and the chief deliverer is Cyrus, mentioned near the middle of the section (44:28-45:1). (2) The rejection and restoration of the Suffering Servant. This is discussed in 52:13-53:12, near the middle of chapters 49-57. (3) The consummation of God’s restoration of Israel and the world. At the heart of this third section (chaps. 58-66) is the coming of the Messiah (chaps. 61-63).”<sup>5</sup>
  - (1) **Is 48:22** 22 There is no shalom, says Yahweh, for the wicked.
  - (2) **Is 57:21** 21 There is no shalom, says my God, for the wicked.
- b. Isaiah is the author of Is 40-66, not just Is 1-39. See *Isaiah*

### 2. Isaiah 40.

- a. Big questions.
  - (1) Does Israel’s banishment to Babylon mark the end of the history of Israel? Is Israel’s sin beyond God’s power and readiness to redeem?
  - (2) Why should Israel believe in God’s promise of comfort? How can we be sure God’s comforting words to Israel are true? Given the Babylonians will conquer and deport Judah, why should we believe in Yahweh and his promise to comfort and shepherd Israel?
- b. Big idea.
  - (1) The reason the remnant should wait for God is because he is incomparable Creator-King who is coming to shepherd his people.
  - (2) “The [Babylonian] exile would give God an even greater opportunity to show his sovereignty and his trustworthiness. Thus ch. 40, the introductory chapter, makes two points: God is the sole ruler of the universe (vv. 12-26), and he can be trusted to deliver (vv. 1-11, 27-31).”<sup>6</sup>
- c. Images.
  - (1) Level highway in the wilderness (v. 3-4).
  - (2) Fading flower (v. 8).
  - (3) Gentle shepherd (v. 11).
  - (4) Drop from a bucket (v. 15).
  - (5) Wooden idol (v. 20).
  - (6) Men like grasshoppers (v. 22).
  - (7) Starry night (v. 26).
  - (8) Wings like eagles (v. 31).

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<sup>5</sup> John A. Martin, “[Isaiah](#),” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1091.

<sup>6</sup> John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 46.

- (9) Marathon runner (v. 31).
- d. Background.
  - (1) Isaiah's accurate prediction of Assyria's demise gives him standing to speak of far future events that will occur during the Babylonian and Persian empires and beyond.
- e. Significance.
  - (1) One reason for the survival of Israel in Babylon may well have been the existence of Is 40-66 in advance of the exile, both predicting that event and pointing beyond it to a return.<sup>7</sup>

### 3. Comfort My People (Is 40:1-2).

- a. **Is 40:1-2** 1 Comfort, comfort (pl.) my people, says your God (נְחַמוּ נְחַמוּ עַמִּי יְאֵהָרָה). 2 Speak (pl.) [encouragement] to the heart of Jerusalem and cry (pl.) to her (אֶל־הַיְהוּדָה). (1) that her warfare/hardship (אֶבְרָצָה) is ended, (2) that her iniquity is pardoned, that (2) she has received from his hand double (כִּפְּלָאִים) [blessing] for all her sins.
- b. Some see these verses as Isaiah's second call (cf. ch. 6).
- c. Israel will experience several phases in their journey with God—sin, hardship, pardon, the end of hardship, and double comfort (vv. 1-2).
  - (1) “Your God” emphasises God's covenant relationship with Israel.
  - (2) The word comfort is repeated for emphasis. The “comfort” word group occurs 13 times in chs. 40-66.<sup>8</sup>
  - (3) **Is 12:1** 1 You will say in that day: I will give thanks to you, Yahweh, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me.
  - (4) “Westermann points out that it was not the power of Assyria or Babylon that brought about the exile; it was Israel's relation to God's moral law. Thus the comfort that God offers is not some sort of repayment for Israel's unjust suffering. Rather, it is the result of unmerited forgiveness....”<sup>9</sup>
- d. Jerusalem is to be addressed to the heart (v. 2). The tone is one of kindness and gentleness.
  - (1) **Hos 2:14** 14 Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her.
- e. Israel receives double discipline (v. 2), but she will also receive double reward. Isaiah's theme is no longer judgement but restoration. God's ultimate purpose for Israel is life, not death.
  - (1) **Is 51:19** 19 These two things have happened to you—who will console you?—devastation and destruction, famine and sword—who will comfort you?
  - (2) **Is 61:7** 7 Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion. Instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot. Therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion. They shall have everlasting joy.

<sup>7</sup> John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 27-28.

<sup>8</sup> John A. Martin, “Isaiah,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1091.

<sup>9</sup> John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 50.

- f. These are the stages we experience in our relationship with God. Our sin and rebellion brings divine discipline upon us. We suffer as a result of our unfaithfulness to God. But God has a way of pardoning us. It's through his Son. Through the cross our sin is pardoned. Our hardship ends, and we receive eternal comfort with God forever.

#### 4. Three Voices of Comfort (Is 40:3-11).

a. First Voice: a Highway for Our God (Is 40:3-5).

- (1) **Is 40:3-5** 3 A voice [Isaiah's] cries, In the wilderness (מִדְבָּר) prepare the road (נִדְרָה) of Yahweh (יהוה). Make straight in the desert (עֲרֹבָה) a highway (מִסְלָה) for our God (אֱלֹהִים). 4 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. 5 And the glory of Yahweh shall be revealed (גִּלְיָה), and all flesh [in the end times] shall see it together, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.
- (2) Speech is a prominent element throughout Is 40-48.
- (a) “Through the entire segment, speech is the prominent element. Eleven words relating to speaking appear. Three times the speech of God is mentioned. Alongside God’s voice are other voices, perhaps those of angels (see below on v. 2); there is also the voice of the prophet and the voice of Jerusalem. This good news must be spoken, announced, proclaimed. God has spoken, and who can keep silent? One must not overlook the understanding of salvation implied by all of this. As God breaks into the world and interprets his actions through inspired speech to and through inspired messengers, he provides the only hope for a fading, dying humanity. Humans may pass away like grass, but the Word of God will stand forever. That word is one of comfort and restoration because of atonement and forgiveness.”<sup>10</sup>
- (3) In the wilderness, a straight and level highway is to be made for Yahweh’s arrival (vv. 3-4). The “red carpet” is to be rolled out for God. God is set to invade our world, and we need to get ready. Our only hope is God breaking into human history.
- (a) The “highway” theme has already appeared in chs. 11, 19, 33, and 35.<sup>11</sup>
- (b) This is a highway for God, not for the remnant.
- 1) **Hab 3:3** 3 God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran.
- (c) The role of John the Baptist was to prepare the way for Jesus, the Messiah.
- 1) **Mt 3:1-4** 1 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 3 For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of Yahweh. Make his paths straight.
- 2) **Jn 1:23** 23 [John] said, I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah said.
- 3) **Jn 3:30** 30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

<sup>10</sup> John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 47–48.

<sup>11</sup> John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 47.



- (4) The hills and valleys are to be made a level plain (v. 4).
- (5) Then the glory of Yahweh will be revealed to all flesh (v. 5). The manifestation of his absolute reality will be seen.
  - (a) **Is 66:23** 23 From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord.
  - (b) **Jn 1:14-18** 14 The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. . . . 18 No one has ever seen God. The only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.
  - (c) **Jn 17:22-24** 22 The glory that you [Father] have given me [Jesus] I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. 24 Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.
- b. Second Voice: God's Word Stands Forever (Is 40:6-8).
  - (1) **Is 40:6-8** 6 A voice [God's] says, Cry! And I [Isaiah] said, What shall I cry? All flesh [mankind] is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. 7 The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath/wind/Spirit (רוּחַ) of Yahweh blows on it. Surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word (דְבַר) of our God will stand forever (עוֹלָם).
  - (2) God commands Isaiah to cry out a comparison between people and God's word. People are like withering grass, but God's word stands forever (vv. 6-8).
    - (a) Man is temporary, transient, changeable, and insignificant.
      - 1) **Ps 90:5-6** 5 You sweep them away as with a flood. They are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning. 6 In the morning it flourishes and is renewed. In the evening it fades and withers.
      - 2) **Ps 103:15-16** 15 As for man, his days are like grass. He flourishes like a flower of the field, 16 for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.
    - (b) God's word is eternal, intransigent, unchangeable, and significant.
    - (c) Israel needs to know that God's word will outlast the succession of empires that dominate her. They need to remember that whatever may happen over the centuries, God's word will provide to be true.
    - (d) In our world of uncertainty and skepticism, we must remember that God's word will prove to be true. That's why we are to accept and internalise the message and doctrines of the Bible. God's word is more permanent than we are. We must never place ourselves above Scripture. We are temporary, but Scripture is permanent.
- c. Third Voice: the Gentle Shepherd (Is 40:9-11).
  - (1) **Is 40:9-11** 9 Go on up to a high mountain (הַר-גְּבוּהַ), Zion, herald of good news/the gospel (מְבַשְׂרָת). Lift up your voice with strength, Jerusalem, herald of good news/the gospel (מְבַשְׂרָת). Lift it up, fear not. Say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God! 10 Behold, Lord Yahweh (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה) comes with might (הֵזֶק), and his arm rules for him. Behold, his reward (שָׂכָר) 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.

- (2) The city of Jerusalem, Zion, is to be proclaim the gospel to the cities of Judah (v. 9). God is here. He can be seen (v. 9) and comes in power to reward the remnant (v. 10).
  - (a) “Salvation is not for the Jerusalemites so that they can bask in God’s mercy. Rather, it is for the sake of the world (2:1-5; 66:18-19). This task begins as Zion, seeing the Lord’s approach, shouts the good news to all the villages around (52:7-10).”<sup>12</sup>
  - (b) **Ac 1:8** 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.
- (3) God will tend the remnant as loving, gentle shepherd (v. 11).
  - (a) **Ps 23:1** 1 Yahweh is my shepherd. I shall not want.
  - (b) **Mic 5:4** 4 And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of Yahweh, in the majesty of the name of Yahweh his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.
  - (c) **Eze 34:23** 23 And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them. He shall feed them and be their shepherd.
  - (d) **Jn 10:11** 11 I [Jesus] am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
  - (e) **Jn 10:14** 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,
  - (f) **Heb 13:20** 20 Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep....
  - (g) **1 Pe 2:25** 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
  - (h) **1 Pe 5:4** 4 And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

## 5. The Incomparable Creator-King (Is 40:12-26).

### a. God Compared to Nations (Is 40:12-17).

- (1) **Is 40:12-17** 12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, marked off the heavens with a span [of his hand] (זֶרֶת), 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/directed the Spirit (רוּחַ) of Yahweh, or what man shows him his counsel? 14 Whom did he consult, and who made him understand (בִּינָה)? Who taught him the path of justice (מִשְׁפָּט), taught him knowledge (דָּעַת), and showed him the way (דָּרֶךְ) of understanding (תְּבוּנָה)? 15 Behold, the nations (גוֹיִם) are like a drop from a bucket and are accounted as the dust on the scales. Behold, he takes up the coastlands (אֲיִים) 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.

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<sup>12</sup> John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 54.



- (2) With five rhetorical questions, Isaiah emphasises God needed no help in creating the universe (vv. 12-14). God knew how to create the universe, and he had the power to create the universe. The point is God knows what he's doing, and man is in no place to second-guess him or the way he does things.
    - (a) God used similar rhetorical questions in his disputation with Job (Job 38-39).
  - (3) Compared to God, the nations are like a water droplet or dust (vv. 15-17). They are “nothing” (v. 17)
- b. God Compared to Idols (Is 40:18-20).
- (1) **Is 40:18-20** 18 To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness (דְמוּת) compares with him? 19 An idol (פְסֵל)! 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 (פְסֵל) that will not move.
  - (2) Two general comparison questions follow in v. 18. Without answering the questions, Isaiah describes the making of an idol of gold and silver (v. 19) and a wooden idol (v. 20). His questions are answered indirectly through the illustration of idol making. Idols are God-substitutes that ultimately can do nothing.
    - (a) **Ps 115:4-7** 4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. 5 They have mouths, but do not speak, eyes, but do not see. 6 They have ears, but do not hear, noses, but do not smell. 7 They have hands, but do not feel, feet, but do not walk, and they do not make a sound in their throat.
    - (b) **Hab 2:19** 19 Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake, to a silent stone, Arise! Can this teach? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in it.
- c. God Compared to Men and Kings (Is 40:21-24).
- (1) **Is 40:21-24** 21 Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood (בִּין) from the foundations of the earth? 22 It is he who sits above the circle (חֹרֶג)<sup>13</sup> of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers (קַמְחָה), who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them like a tent to dwell in, 23 who brings dignitaries (רוֹזְנִים) to nothing and makes the rulers/judges (שֹׁפֵט) of the earth as emptiness. 24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows on them, they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble.
  - (2) Isaiah poses four additional questions directed at the understanding of all mankind (v. 21). It should be obvious to all that God is incomparable.
  - (3) God transcends the universe, and people are like tiny insects (v. 22).
  - (4) God stretches out the heavens (v. 22), which sounds very much like what we know today about our expanding universe.
    - (a) **Ps 104:2** 2 ...Covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent.
  - (5) Like a hot wind carrying off stubble, God brings human rulers to nothing (vv. 23-24).

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<sup>13</sup> **Job 22:14** 14 Thick clouds veil him, so that he does not see, and he walks on the vault of heaven.' Pr 8.27

- (a) **Da 2:21** 21 He removes kings and sets up kings.
- (b) This would be a comfort to Israel, who would be living under a series of great empires (Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome).
- d. The Creator-King over the Heavens (Is 40:25-26).
  - (1) **Is 40:25-26** 25 To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One (שׁוֹרֵיִשׁ). 26 Lift up your eyes on high and see. Who created (בָּרָא) 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.
  - (2) God repeats his comparison question again (v. 25). Then he asks mankind to look up at the skies. He is responsible the regularity and reliability of the sun, moon, and stars. His strength holds each one in place (v. 26).
    - (a) **Ps 147:4** 4 He determines the number of the stars. He gives to all of them their names.
    - (3) Many ancient peoples worshipped the sun, moon, and stars as God. But the God of the Bible, Yahweh, is the Creator and Ruler of the sun, moon, and stars.

## 6. Wings Like Eagles (Is 40:27-31).

- a. **Is 40:27-31** 27 Why do you say, Jacob, and speak, Israel, My way (דַּרְשִׁי) is hidden from Yahweh, and my right (מִשְׁפָּט) is disregarded by my God? 28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? Yahweh is the everlasting God (אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם יְהוָה), the Creator of the ends of the earth (בּוֹרֵא קְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ). He does not faint or grow weary. His understanding is unsearchable (אֲיֵן יַחְקֶר). 29 He gives power (כֹּחַ) to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength (עֲצָמָה). 30 Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted. 31 But they [believers] who wait (קוּה) for Yahweh shall renew their strength (כֹּחַ). They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint.
- b. Israel is frustrated. She tells herself God has forgotten her and that her judicial rights have been disregarded by him (v. 27).
- c. But God reminds Israel who he is. He is Yahweh, the eternal God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who does not tire, and whose understanding is far beyond that of man's (v. 28). He never relaxes, and he will never forget his people.
  - (1) **Ps 147:5** 5 Great is our Lord and abundant in power. His understanding is beyond measure.
- d. Yahweh will strengthens the weak (v. 29) as they wait for his ultimate deliverance. Even young men and women get tired, but Yahweh will renew the strength of the believing remnant who wait for him in faith (v. 31).
- e. Strengthened by God, the waiting remnant will fly like eagles, run like champions, and trek like long-distance trampers (v. 31).
  - (1) **Ps 103:2-5** 2 Bless Yahweh, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with loyal love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
  - (2) **Heb 12:1** 1 Therefore, because we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us....

## 7. Application.

- a. Be comforted by God's promises (v. 1).
- b. Listen to God's voice of reassurance (vv. 3-11).
- c. Remember God's power and character (vv. 12-26).
- d. Wait for God and let your strength be renewed by him (v. 31).