

ISAIAH 40

Comfort My People!

1 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 his hand double for all her sins.

Instructions to Messiah's Forerunner

3 A voice cries,

In the wilderness (מִדְבָּר) prepare the way of Yahweh (יהוה). Make straight in the desert (עֲרֹבָה) a highway (מְסִלָּה) 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),¹ and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.

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 of Yahweh blows on it. Surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word (דְּבָר) ² of our God will stand forever.

Yahweh Will Tend His Flock

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, Lord Yahweh (אֱדֹנָי יְהוִה) 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.

¹ **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.

² Jesus is the Word (Jn 1:1-4).

He will gather the lambs in his arms. He will carry them in his bosom and gently lead those that are with young.

God's Incomparability

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, 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, taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?

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. 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 (שׁוֹרֵף). 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.

Renewed Strength

27 Why do you say, Jacob, and speak, Israel,

My way is hidden from Yahweh, and my right is disregarded by my God?

28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? Yahweh 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. 31 But they who wait (קִיּוּ) for Yahweh 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.

Notes