

**Session #32 Isaiah 40: Five Messages that Prepare the Way of the Lord**

*“The friend of the Bridegroom...rejoices greatly because of the Bridegroom’s voice.” (Jn. 3:29)*

**I. INTRODUCTION**

A. Isaiah issued a twofold mandate to the Lord’s messengers—to comfort to Jerusalem (40:1-2; 62:11) and to prepare the way of the Lord or to “build a highway for God” (40:3-5). Then the Holy Spirit showed Isaiah 5 prophetic messages that the Lord’s messengers were to emphasize (40:6-31).

B. **Mandate #1:** The Lord’s messengers are mandated to speak a message of comfort to Jerusalem (40:1-2). There are two groups addressed in Isaiah 40:1. The Lord commands the global body of Christ as those who love and listen to God’s Word—yet who are distinct from Jerusalem—to give a message of comfort to a group referred to as “My people Jerusalem”—those living in Jerusalem. Jerusalem will receive a double portion of favor in the Millennium (61:7; cf. 60:1-22; 62:1-7).

*<sup>1</sup>“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God. <sup>2</sup>“Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended [when Jesus returns], that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.” (Isa. 40:1-2)*

C. **Mandate #2:** The call to prepare the way of the Lord (isa. 40:3-5)

*<sup>3</sup>The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; <sup>5</sup>the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together...” (Isa. 40:3-5)*

D. **All flesh shall see it together:** Isaiah anchored this “messenger mandate” in an end-time context when all nations see the glory of God (40:5). Thus, the primary context here is on preparing people spiritually for Jesus’ second coming when all the nations will see His glory (40:5, 10). In John the Baptist’s ministry, *not everyone saw God’s glory*. His ministry was a partial fulfillment of 40:3-5.

*<sup>7</sup>Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him...all the tribes of the earth... (Rev. 1:7)*

E. **Highway for God:** It’s a highway that serves God’s purposes by preparing people to walk with God spiritually (before Jesus returns) and to come to Him in Jerusalem physically (after Jesus returns).

1. **A spiritual highway:** A basic kingdom principle is that God releases His power through people who walk in agreement with His values and plans. The forerunner message prepares His way—a *highway of purity* (God’s values) and a *highway of understanding* (God’s plans).

*<sup>3</sup>Can two walk together, unless they are agreed? (Amos 3:3)*

2. John called people to repent and live in agreement with God’s values and plans (Lk. 3:8-17).

*<sup>8</sup>...bear fruits worthy of repentance...<sup>10</sup>The people asked..., “What shall we do then?”*

*<sup>11</sup>He answered..., “He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none...”<sup>16</sup>One mightier than I is coming...He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Lk. 3:8-16)*

## II. FIVE MESSAGES THAT PREPARE PEOPLE FOR THE COMING OF LORD (ISA. 40:6-31)

- A. Isaiah asked for the specific message that will comfort Jerusalem and prepare a highway for God. The Lord answered, saying that “all flesh is grass but God’s promises stand forever” (40:6-8).  
**Message #1:** To prioritize cultivating an eternal perspective of the kingdom (2 Cor. 4:17-18)  
*<sup>6</sup>The voice said, “Cry out!” And he said, “What shall I cry?” “All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field...<sup>8</sup>[it] withers...but the word of our God stands forever.” (Isa. 40:6-8)*  
*<sup>17</sup>For our light affliction...is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,*  
*<sup>18</sup>while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things...seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor. 4:17-18)*
- B. **Message #2:** To proclaim Jesus coming as a strong Warrior and tender Shepherd (Isa. 40:9-11). Jerusalem in the end times will be surrounded by the armies of the Antichrist (Zech. 12:2; 14:2).  
*<sup>9</sup>...say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your God shall come with a strong hand...<sup>11</sup>He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs...carry them...and gently lead them...” (Isa. 40:9-11)*
- C. **Message #3:** To proclaim that their coming Messiah has all power and wisdom (Isa. 40:12-20). He understands everything, fulfills all of His promises, and perfectly administers justice (40:14).  
*<sup>12</sup>Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, measured heaven with a span and calculated the dust of the earth...Weighed the mountains in scales...? <sup>15</sup>The nations are as a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust on the scales...<sup>17</sup>All nations [Antichrist’s empire] before Him are as nothing...<sup>18</sup>To whom then will you liken God? (Isa. 40:12-18)*
- D. **Message #4:** To proclaim that Jesus easily prevails over all oppressive nations (Isa. 40:21-26).  
*<sup>22</sup>It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers...*  
*<sup>23</sup>He brings the princes to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth useless. <sup>24</sup>Scarcely shall they be planted...scarcely shall [they] take root...He will blow on them, and they will wither...*  
*<sup>25</sup>“To whom then will you liken Me?”...<sup>26</sup>Lift up your eyes...see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name... (Isa. 40:22-26)*
- E. **Message #5:** To proclaim how to respond to the Lord and how to be strengthened (Isa. 40:27-31). Israel’s complaint was that their life was “hidden” from God who overlooked them in their crisis.  
*<sup>27</sup>Why do you say, O Jacob... “My way is hidden from the LORD, and my just claim is passed over by my God?” <sup>28</sup>Have you not known?...The everlasting God...neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. <sup>29</sup>He gives power to the weak...<sup>30</sup>Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, <sup>31</sup>but those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles...and not be weary...” (Isa. 40:27-31)*
- F. To wait on God is to engage with His heart and plans—we cultivate intimacy with God by spending time prayer-reading His Word, serving Him, loving people, etc. Waiting on God is not about “just biding time,” but actively engaging with God’s heart and contending for His promises.