



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

“Just LOOK at Him! Good News: HE has Come to Rescue You.”

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): *Is 40:9-26; Isaiah 40:1-8; Is. 35:2-4; Deut. 4:19; Gen. 15:5*

Isaiah 40 is one of those passages that's hard to “outline” because it just *moves*—it rolls like a river. But the current running through it is simple: **when you get freaked out by what's around you, God doesn't start by explaining everything around you—He starts by re-introducing you to Himself.** “Comfort, comfort My people” (Is. 40:1) doesn't float in the air like a cliché. It flows right out of a season of discipline and exile, right out of Babylonian-Exile-realities, right out of “this is bigger than me.” And into that space, the Lord sends a message that sounds like a trumpet: *good news... good news... good news.*

And the essence of that good news is not, “Try harder,” or “Get your act together,” or even, “Here's your step-by-step plan.” It's this: **“LOOK—Behold your God.”** That's why Isaiah is told to climb up high, lift up his voice with strength, and proclaim it without fear (Is. 40:9). When your eyes are locked on the “big stuff,” fear grows fast. But when your eyes are locked on Him—when you remember the majesty of His power and the depth of His love—comfort returns. And the exile doesn't get to define you anymore, because the Rescuer does.

1. BEHOLD YOUR GOD: DON'T BE AFRAID—HE IS COMING FOR YOU

The Lord tells the messenger to get up on a high mountain and preach the good news out loud: *“Behold your God!”* (Is. 40:9). Notice what gets lifted first—*fear gets lifted off. “Lift it up! Do not fear!”* (Is. 40:9). That's not denial; that's deliverance. It echoes that earlier comfort-word: *“Say to those with anxious heart, ‘Be strong, have no fear! Behold, your God!’”* (Is. 35:4). In other words, anxious hearts don't get healed by staring harder at the threat. They get steadied by staring longer at the Lord.

And then Isaiah stacks the word *hineh*—“look!”—like a drumbeat. *“Look, Adonai Elohim comes with might, with His arm ruling for Him... Look, His reward is with Him...”* (Is. 40:10). Here comes the Powerful KING: ruling, governing, strong, unthreatened. But what's the “fruit” of His victory? What's in that mighty arm? It's not trophies. It's not ego. It's not intimidation. It's **people. His lambs. His flock.** That's the good news: **He has come to rescue you, and He is coming to carry what He rescued.**

2. LOOK AT HIS ARM: MIGHTY TO RULE, TENDER TO CARRY

The imagery depicts this stunning balance in God—He is not one-sided. You see Him coming “with might,” His arm ruling and governing (Is. 40:10), and then immediately you see what that arm is used for: *“Like a shepherd, He tends His flock. He gathers the lambs in His arms, carries them in His bosom, and gently guides nursing ewes.”* (Is. 40:11). **That is strength in might AND strength in heart.** He conquers *and* He comforts. He protects *and* He provides. He rules *and* He gathers. That's why this message brings comfort to people in exile—because God's power isn't cold power. It's shepherd power.

And let this land where the LORD intends it to land: you don't have to choose between “God is strong” and “God is tender.” He is both – perfectly strong and perfectly tender – at the very same time. The same arm that rules for Him is the arm that gathers you. The same might that defeats enemies is the might that carries lambs close to His heart. So when you feel small, the point

isn't to shame you into feeling smaller. The point is to lift your eyes and realize: **the One who is immeasurably great is also personally near.** Exile doesn't mean He's forgotten you. Discipline doesn't mean He abandoned you. Sometimes the favor of God is hidden *inside the hardship*—because the Shepherd is still working, still guiding, still bringing His people home.

3. CORRECT COMPARISONS: NATIONS ARE A DROP, IDOLS DON'T MOVE, STARS ARE STILL CREATED. Once Isaiah has you looking at God, he starts adjusting your comparisons. First: creation. *"Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, or measured out heaven with a span... weighed the mountains...?"* (Is. 40:12). Everything is exact—measured, marked off, calculated. And then comes the point: *"Who can fathom/measure the Ruach ADONAI? Or instruct Him as His counselor?"* (Is. 40:13). Same language—He measures everything with precision, but **no one can measure Him.** No one tutors Him. No one advises Him. So why are we acting like the biggest things we can see are bigger than the God we can't begin to measure?

Second: nations. *"Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket... a speck of dust on the scales... the islands weigh as fine dust."* (Is. 40:15). The stuff that makes the world panic—empires, economies, threats, political power—Isaiah says, "Look at it correctly." A drop splashes out of a bucket and you don't even stop walking. Dust wipes off the scale and it doesn't change the measurement. That's not saying people don't matter to God; it's saying **nations don't compare to God.** Third: idols. Isaiah almost mocks the whole idea. They pick the best materials—gold, silver, chains, wood that won't rot—and then they carefully craft... *a thing that will not totter* (Is. 40:19–20). Think about that: all that effort to create something stable, immobile, unmoving. It can't rescue you. It can't carry you. It can't even stand without help.

And then God says, *"Lift up your eyes on high and look—Who created these?"* (Is. 40:26). Don't worship the stars. Don't be shaken by the stars. Don't anchor your hope in the stars. *He* is the One who brings them out by number and calls them all by name, and not one is missing (Is. 40:26). The warning of Deuteronomy is real: don't lift your eyes to the heavens and get drawn away to worship the host of heaven (Deut. 4:19). But Isaiah takes it further: if He knows every star's number and name, then hear the comfort: **He knows YOUR name.** Abraham couldn't count them, but God could—*"Look up... count the stars—if you are able... So shall your seed be."* (Gen. 15:5). If He hasn't lost track of any of the stars, He hasn't lost track of you.

CONCLUSION

So here's the call of Isaiah 40: **stop giving your fear your attention, and start giving God your gaze.** When you take your eyes off Him, anxiety rushes in fast. When you fix your eyes on Him—His majesty, His precision, His tenderness—comfort returns. The exile doesn't get the final word. The nations don't get the final word. Idols don't get the final word. The Holy One does. And He says, *"To whom then will you liken Me... or who is My equal?"* (Is. 40:25). There isn't one. That's why hope is stable when everything else shakes.

And if you've been living like your way is hidden from Him—like you're overlooked, forgotten, off the radar—Isaiah is already setting up the correction: you haven't just taken your eyes off Him; you've started telling yourself a story that isn't true. The Shepherd is coming with might, and He's coming with lambs in His arms. He carries what He rescues. Today turn your eyes back to Him. Repent of misplaced trust—trust in nations, trust in money, trust in "powerful people," trust in the shiny, stable, immobile idol of your own making. And choose the living God: the One who rules with His arm and gathers you into it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What “big thing” has been stealing your gaze lately—nations, money, powerful people, fear of the future, or something else?
2. Isaiah says the message begins with, “*Do not fear... Behold your God*” (Is. 40:9). What changes in you when you actually practice “looking” at Him?
3. How does the pairing of **might** (Is. 40:10) and **tenderness** (Is. 40:11) correct a one-sided view you may carry about God?
4. Where do you see yourself tempted to rely on something “stable” that ultimately can’t move, speak, rescue, or carry—an “idol” in modern form (Is. 40:19–20)?
5. If God knows the stars by number and name (Is. 40:26), what lie does that confront about your life right now?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Avinu Malkenu, Our Father, Our King, We confess how quickly our eyes drift—how easily we get freaked out by what feels big, loud, and powerful. Forgive us for fixing our gaze on nations, on economies, on leaders, on threats, on the shiny things that promise stability but cannot save. Right now, we choose to lift up our eyes and behold You. You are the Holy One—without equal. You measure the waters in the hollow of Your hand, You mark off the heavens, and You govern with Your mighty arm. And yet You come as our Shepherd, gathering lambs in Your arms, carrying us close to Your heart, gently guiding the vulnerable.

Comfort Your people again. Quiet anxious hearts. Lift fear off of us as we lift our eyes to You. Teach us to trust the One who counts the stars, calls them by name, and loses not one—because You have not lost track of us either. We turn from false securities and we put our hope in You. Rescue us, restore us, and steady us in Your love

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.