

**The Book of Isaiah**  
*Chapter 40*

**Introduction:** To understand Isaiah 40 will require a contextual understanding as well.

1. It is the 3<sup>rd</sup> major division of Isaiah (40-55)
2. Follows two key chapters 38-39
  - a. Hezekiah's illness and the visit of the Babylonian embassy
  - b. Hezekiah allowed Babylonians in to see the temple
  - c. Promise of Babylonian exile

*'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the Lord. 7 'And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'" 8 So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the Lord which you have spoken is good!" For he said, "At least there will be peace and truth in my days." Isaiah 39:6-8 NKJV*

3. With the certainty of Babylonian attack and exile, what will motivate God's people to trust Him?
  - a. His trustworthiness over the nations has already been established.
  - b. How can the sinful people of God become God's servants at all?
4. Chapters 41-48 will address God's decision and ability to deliver His promise.
5. Chapters 49-55 deal with what needs to be done about the sin that got them into this mess.
6. Two implied questions (never stated).
  - a. Has not God been defeated by the gods of the Babylonians?
  - b. Has not our sin separated us from God forever?
  - c. There is a resounding "no" to both questions and both are addressed in chapter 40.

**NOTE:** The dominant idea is the undeserved grace of God. This will be what will ultimately motivate them to trust Him.

**I. God promises to deliver (40:1-11)**

A. A new word of hope (1, 2)

1. Prophetic has all been about judgment but now a message of hope.
2. Word of comfort (speak tenderly, encourage)
  - a. Sees a day when people will be crushed to the ground.
  - b. Will feel as if their sin has nullified the promises of God.
  - c. Judgment will end—God will deliver.

B. God is coming quickly to her rescue (3-5)

1. Highway is straight and clear
2. So He can call to His people

(ILL) John the Baptist for Jesus

(ILL) Significance today

C. Certainty of promise (6-8)

1. Judean flesh is like grass-withered in sin
2. Babylonian flesh is like grass too
3. When God decides to rescue—no one can stop Him

D. Judah—not just recipients of grace but proclaimers of grace too (9-11)

**II. God's ability to deliver (12-26)**

A. God's intention to deliver was clear in v. 1-11 but can He do it?

1. Allowed Babylonians to pummel them.
2. Why should they believe He can deliver?
3. No report of exiles being victorious before.

B. Isaiah answers by pointing to the uniqueness of Yahweh.

1. He is not able because He is greater than Babylonian gods.
2. He is able because He is the only God.
3. Words of Hezekiah

*Truly, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their lands, 19 and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were not gods, but the work of men's hands — wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. Isaiah 37:18-19 NKJV*

4. Two arguments
- C. Argument #1 (12-20)
1. Yahweh is the sole creator (12-14)
    - a. He is not the mountains, or oceans, or heavens
    - b. He is other than all of them
    - c. He is not them but holds them in His hand
    - d. V. 13, 14, aimed at polytheistic nations
  2. Nations are nothing compared to Yahweh (15-17)
    - a. Not a god fashioned after the nations
    - b. He holds them in His hand
  3. If He is sole creator can we compare an idol to Him? Certainly not! (18-20)
- D. Argument #2 (21-26)
1. Other than the world and other than the heavens (21, 22)
  2. Not impressed with earthly (23)
  3. They are temporary (24-see also 6-8)
  4. Can Yahweh be compared to anything or anyone? (25, 26)

NOTE: Remember Isaiah 6:1

### **III. Waiting for God to deliver (22-31)**

- A. The doubt of the exile (27)
1. My way is hidden
  2. My way is overlooked
- B. That view of God is too low (28, 29)
1. He doesn't miss a thing
  2. He doesn't sleep or slumber
  3. He doesn't kick the weak, but He strengthens them

C. Trust in God—He will restore (30, 31)

1. Waiting is not marking time
2. It is a confident expectation
3. Don't run ahead of Him
4. Don't try to solve it ourselves

**Conclusion:** Transcendence and Immanence

*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 out like a tent to dwell in. Isaiah 40:22 NKJV*

*Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. 29 He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. Isaiah 40:28-29 NKJV*

- A. Completely other—not part of creation
- B. Completely among us—God with us
- C. Incarnate is revelation of truth