



God's Word, Will, and Ways Bring

ISAIAH 40-41
SERMON BASED SMALL GROUPS

Sunday, April 6th, 2025

This Week's Lesson

This week's lesson is based on the sermon from Sunday March 30th, 2025, by Pastor Tim Brigham. This sermon continues our series in Isaiah.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this week's lesson is to see how God's Word, will, and ways bring comfort, renewal, and strength in the face of difficult times.

MEMORY VERSE FOR MARCH

John 14:21 - Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

Our memory verse for April will be introduced in worship on April 6.

MONDAY DEVOTION – INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

We pick up where we left off last time, with Hezekiah's statement that, "The word of the Lord is good" because he thought, "There will be peace in my days."

The last thing said to King Hezekiah was that all that was shown to Babylon will be taken by Babylon. He was thrilled it would not be in his lifetime. They were never told when it would happen, only that it would happen. How can the people of God continue to live under the news that they will lose their freedom and the land that was promised to them? It is under these circumstances that we come to our text today.

The next word God says to His people is "Comfort." How could they experience comfort given the judgement of God that was about to come; losing their worldly comforts, their homes, their livelihoods, and some their lives?

How can we find comfort in and from God in the difficult circumstances and uncertainties we face in life?

TUESDAY DEVOTION

Comfort not comfortableness (40:1-26)

Comfort - to bring words of encouragement and solace during a hard time.

God has seen all that Israel has done in all of history and God is going to work on her behalf despite what she has done.

- Warfare will be ended - God will bring about an end to the warring. They will no longer be in the physical struggle of war, they were going to be conquered, but no more fighting.
- Iniquity is pardoned - God was going to work on their behalf and in His working would provide the sacrifice to pardon forever the sinfulness of the people.
- Received double from the Lord's hand - God will be gracious and give double grace. He will provide His Son as the sacrifice and then forgive them for their iniquity.

God doesn't promise that we will be healthy, wealthy, and wise. He says, "Comfort my people," not, "Let my people live comfortably." We have a false theology that the Christian life is supposed to be comfortable, but that isn't what God said.

The truest definition of comfort is the presence of God, not the absence of trials and tests.

WEDNESDAY DEVOTION

Renewal not routine (40:27-31)

Renewal - to find endless supplies of fresh strength.

God does not grow weary in pursuing His people to repent and return to Him. For those who wait on the Lord, He will give grace and strength to experience renewal during the challenge not necessarily remove us from the challenge.

Wait on the Lord - qavah (קָוָה)," which means "to bind together, eagerly waiting, hoping for, expecting." It does not mean we expect God to remove our struggle, but rather expectantly trusting God for the strength to thrive under the pressure of the struggle. (Example of a Waiter)

Routine - we live in danger as people of God, children of God, of falling into routines, or ruts. "Many people are in a rut and a rut is nothing but a grave - with both ends kicked out." - Vance Havner.

Caleb Duncan shared this with us in the Spring Session recently: One of my favorite books is A.W. Tozer's Rut, Rot, or Revival. The book is a commentary on Deuteronomy 1:6-7. "You have dwelt here long enough on this mount. Turn, and take your journey." Israel's problem was that they had given up hope of ever getting the promised land. They had become satisfied with going around in circles and camping in nice, comfortable places. They had come under the spell of the psychology of the routine. When we come to a place where everything can be predicted and nobody expects anything unusual from God, we are in a rut. But the church is not a cemetery, and we should expect much from it. God's people are supposed to grow (and to go). Sometimes the greatest enemy is not outside of the church, but the attitude within."

THURSDAY DEVOTION

Strength not susceptibleness (41)

Strength - the energy of God - Freedom from weakness; stability of character; power to withstand temptation; capacity to accomplish. Strength is physical, mental, and spiritual.

Susceptible means to be easily influenced or impressionable.

For the people of God, who are devoted to and obedient to the Word of God and draw their strength from actively trusting and waiting on God, will find themselves standing on the Rock of Ages and not easily deceived by the ways of the world or detoured from the will of God. We need not be discouraged or afraid of the opposition, because **"You are My servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off; fear not, for I am with you; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."** (41:9-10)

We are called, as the children of God, to boldly, courageously, yet humbly stand for the Truth because we are not alone. (10,13-14)

Isaiah repeatedly says for the people not to be afraid of their enemies. For them it was political and spiritual enemies.

For us today, God is telling us not to be afraid of the devil, of the world or its systems, or of the flesh. When we know that we are chosen by God, we come to understand that we are provided for and protected by God.

Will we stand in the strength of God, or will we be weak and susceptible? Being susceptible means we don't trust God and don't believe what He has said and who He has said He is.

FRIDAY DEVOTION

God's Word, will, and ways bring comfort, renewal, and strength.

How do I know the will and ways of God? We make it mysterious; we think it's a feeling. But God has told us His will and has told us His ways. His Word tells us His will, and His Word tells us His ways. If we want to know God's will and ways, we must read, study, and obey His Word.

We talk about God's Word, but we don't read and obey it. Read 1 John 2:3-6 and James 1:22.

Invitation:

What is it that is keeping you from accomplishing the will and work of God? Are we trying to accomplish things with our own strength? Are you discouraged looking at the circumstances around you?

The Word of God brings comfort, renewal, and strength. Are you walking in this reality or are you a slave to fear?

SATURDAY DEVOTION

Read Isaiah 40-41 and review your notes for this week.

Pray for your small group leader, your fellow members, and for all small groups at Shiloh tomorrow, that we would hear from God by the power of the Holy Spirit and would be transformed as a result. Pray that God would give you courage to share how you have been transformed by the preaching, studying, and applying of His Word this week.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERMON BASED SMALL GROUPS

1. Use the sermon notes you have taken along with this handout to discuss the sermon with your family in your home as part of your daily devotions.
 - We would love to hear about conversations you have in your home around the table with your family – how is the Bible impacting your daily lives?

2. Use these resources to help you apply the sermon in your daily life, at work, school, home, at Walmart and Waffle House, etc. Remember, sermons aren't events to be attended. The Word is not for information, it is for transformation. The sermon is meant to be obeyed.
 - Talk with your family about how to successfully apply the sermon in your daily life. Look for “teachable moments” when real life events happen and discuss how we should react and respond according to Scripture.
 - When you are successful at applying Scripture in a real-life situation, share it with one another.

3. Use these resources and your daily experiences with your small group the following week; discuss what God showed you through applying the sermon; discuss how you have grown, and areas you are struggling and want the small group to pray for you in and hold you accountable.
 - Be a confidant for your fellow class members. Don't' ever let a matter of prayer become a morsel of gossip. Be trustworthy and watch how God uses your integrity and faithfulness as a group to help you grow closer to Him and to one another.