

## ISAIAH 40-41

Sunday, September 25, 2016

### Ch. 40 – THE LORD, THE INCOMPARABLE DELIVERER

#### I. The Coming Deliverance (40:1-11)

- A. Woods: “This brief section serves practically as a prologue to the entire last half of Isaiah. Following the Lord’s clarion call for comfort, help and hope to distressed Israel (verses 1-2), unnamed voices announce His coming to His beleaguered people (verses 3-5) and contrast the permanency of His powerful Word with the fading flower of human enterprise (verses 6-8) before calling upon Jerusalem to announce to Judah’s cities the saving coming of the Lord (verses 9-11)” (169).
- B. Throughout this section, there seems to be both a limited fulfillment and an ultimate fulfillment. The limited fulfillment would have to do with Isaiah’s immediate context (the future deliverance from Babylonian captivity). The ultimate fulfillment is in Christ and the events surrounding His coming.
- C. 40:10 – “Behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him”
1. cf. Isa. 62:11; Rev. 22:12
    - These verses seem to point to the Lord’s work as salvation and his reward being the people whom He saves.
  2. Woods: “These two practical synonyms seems to refer to that which the mighty Lord gets from His saving work, namely His redeemed people, pictured in verse 11 as His flock. Hence, the emphasis throughout this section is upon the coming Lord and His gracious work, not upon His people’s merit” (173).
  3. Pulpit Commentary: “In the ‘little flock’ which he restores to Palestine God finds his own reward and recompense — the compensation for all his care and trouble” (Digital, ch. 40, p 6).
  4. Young: “It is God Himself to whom a recompense is due, for He has merited it. ... A workman has earned his hire as the fruits or reward of his work, but God is deserving of His reward for His great victory against the enemy, the deliverance of man from his sin and its consequences. This is His great work. The hire, then, is found in the redeemed of the Lord, the little ones who are mentioned in the following verse (39-40).

#### II. The Incomparable Lord Contrasted with Idols (40:12-26)

- A. Barnes said that maybe the purpose of including this section at this point in the text is to answer an implied objection that the work of deliverance was too great to be accomplished.
- B. God’s Greatness Demonstrated by Creation (40:12-17)
- C. God’s Majesty Contrasted with Worthless Idolatry (40:18-26)
1. 40:26 - “brings out ... calls...” – Woods: “Using military imagery, the text pictures God as marshaling all the members of the heavenly host for their nightly appearances. Such rank and file ‘troops’ were certainly not to be regarded as deities in opposition to the God Who made them” (175).

### **III. The Caring God (40:27-31)**

- A. “They shall mount up with wings like eagles” – Jackson: “Scientific studies have revealed that the slotted feathers on the top of eagles’ wings have the unique design of reducing drag, thus allowing these majestic birds to glide great distances without tiring” (66).

## **Ch. 41 – The One, True God**

### **I. The God of History (41:1-7)**

### **II. The God of Victory (41:8-20)**

### **III. The God of Prophecy (41:21-29)**

- A. Verses 22-23 demonstrates the value of prophecy as an evidence for the authenticity of a religious system.
- B. 41:26 – “no one who shows ... declares ... hears your words” – Woods: “Despite their divinations, their necromancy, their many incantations, and their supposedly effective religious magic, pagan devotees of false gods were in truth powerless to genuinely predict or to control events” (181).

### **Concluding Observations:**

1. God can do anything!
2. God knows everything!
3. And He cares about ME!