

Comfort for God's People

Isa 40:1-5 **40** "Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" says your God. ² "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins." ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; ⁵ The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Dear flock, do you hear those words this morning. They are directed to you, "Comfort **My people** says **your God**." While knowing that "*the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein,*" (Ps 24:1) yet He refers to you as "**His people**". What a joy is mine as a shepherd in God's flock to have the privilege of speaking comfort to God's people. A comfort not based upon feelings, or what I think to be true, but a comfort founded securely upon the sure promises of God speaking to us in His Holy Scriptures.

Think of it dear ones, "For **you are a holy people to the Lord your God**; the Lord **your God has chosen you** to be a people for Himself, **a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth**. The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; **but because the Lord loves you**." Deut 7:6-8

Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket," they are ". . . counted as the small dust on the scales; (Isaiah 40:15) Yet He has chosen you, He has purchased you, He has redeemed you from all the power of the devil. So when I ask, "What is your only comfort in life and in death", you who have come to God in repentance and faith in Jesus Christ can answer, without doubt, without question; "That with body and soul, both in life and in death, you are not your own, but belong to your faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who with His precious blood has **fully satisfied for all your sins**, and **redeemed you from all the power of the devil**; and so **preserves you** that without the will of your Father in heaven not a hair can fall from your head; indeed, that all things must work together for your salvation. Wherefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also **assures you of eternal life**, and makes you heartily willing and ready from now on to live unto Him." *Comfort, yes, comfort My people!*" says your God. ² "Speak comfort to Jerusalem

Three questions from this passage we will note; (1) What is this comfort that is yours? (2) What is the means of this comfort? And (3) What is the assurance of this comfort?

A. What is this comfort that is yours? - "*Speak comfortable to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that **her warfare is ended**, that her iniquity is pardoned.*"

1. Two things to note, (1) your warfare is ended and (2) your iniquity is pardoned.
2. Again this morning I would point out that you are the Jerusalem spoken of here.
 - a. You are that heavenly Jerusalem
 - b. You are that "general assembly and church" of the first born of God.

Heb 12:22-23 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, . . . to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven,

3. Therefore, your warfare is ended.
 - a. You were conceived in sin with a natural animosity against God.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is **enmity against God**; for it is **not subject to the law of God**, nor indeed can be.

- b. By grace you have been made a new creation.

2 Cor 5:17-18 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ

- c. You have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, therefore you are no longer an enemy of God.
4. Your iniquity has been pardoned.
 - a. Your sins had separated you from God.
 - b. Now your sins are forgiven.

B. What is the means of this comfort? *The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

1. It can be found in the voice of one crying in the wilderness.

2. Understand that John the Baptist is that voice.

Matt 3:1-3 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.'"

3. And it was his cry we hear in the wilderness of our sin that brings us our comfort.

*John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "**Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**"*

- a. We have the picture of it in the Old Testament.

*Lev 1:4 Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and **it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.***

- b. Christ came and did what the Old Testament ceremonial law could not do.

Heb 9:11-12 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

- c. When Christ shed His blood upon the cross - His sacrifice was accepted on our behalf to make an atonement for us.
- d. The means then is Jesus Christ, it is in Christ and His work that our warfare with God was ended.

*Rom 5:1-2 Therefore, having been justified by faith, **we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.***

CONCLUSION: Finally - What is the assurance of this comfort?

If you have come in repentance toward God.

If you are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation.

Your warfare has ceased.

Your sins are forgiven.

Every valley has been lifted up - every mountain made low

You have full and free access into the very presence of the Most High God

What is your assurance?

*The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for **the mouth of the Lord has spoken***

God said it and that settles it.

What a privilege indeed what a joy to say to you who are trusting in Christ this morning your *warfare is ended and your iniquity is pardoned in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen*