

# Receiving Comfort and Strength

(Updated 12/2020; Dr. Baines, Jr.)

**Read:** Isaiah 40:1-5, 25-26, 29-31

**Summary Highlights:** In vss. 1-5 Isaiah is to comfort God's people. The people of God have suffered for their sins. Now it is time to be comforted. The glory of the Lord is to be revealed. Prophecy often has double meaning (e.g., release from captivity and the ministry of Jesus).

In vss. 25-26 God has no equal. He is the creator of great things. His power and strength are unmatched.

In vss. 29-31 God gives power to those who are weak. When the youth run out of energy, God's people will be given power. Those who wait on the Lord shall walk and not faint.

**Introduction:** A key idea in today's lesson is God has comfort for His people when they repent. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to repent and enjoy God's comfort.

## **Applications:**

**1. Sin causes judgment.** Notice that it was sin that led to the Jew's punishment (i.e., being overtaken by Babylon). Prior to this text, Isaiah had been focused on so much judgment. The stubborn and unrepentant sins of the Jews led to 39 chapters of this book focusing on judgment. Sadder than our text is that many of us have so much negativity in our lives because of our stubborn holding on to sin. *Let's work on releasing the sin in our lives, so we can stop having so much judgment in our lives.* When we know about studying, serving, and giving, but don't obey such we are acting like the punished Jews in the text.

**2. Repenting to be comforted.** Notice in vss. 1-2 that there was comfort after judgment. We should thank God that His punishment of sin doesn't mean that He doesn't love the sinner. If we would turn from our sins to righteousness, God will turn from punishing us to comforting us. If we take 20 years to repent, it will take 20 years to receive comfort. If we never repent, we may never be comforted. But if we repent today, we can be comforted today. *Let's work on repenting today, so we can be comforted today.* Our level of obedience has much to do with what God puts on the hearts of His spokes people (e.g., Pastors, teachers, etc.). A church that is involved in the community doesn't need much preaching in that area. But a church that fails to love receive a healthy dose of love preaching, until there is repentance towards love.

**3. The trustworthiness of God's word.** Notice in vs. 5 that the revelation of God is sure because the Lord has spoken it. Many would quickly declare that they believe in the trustworthiness of God's word. But yet in our deeds, we behave as if we don't. God's word clearly teaches that if we obey Him, He will bless us (see Lk. 11:28), and if we don't obey, we are subject to His punishments (see Heb. 12:6). And yet too many of us fail to obey simple matters like being registered reachers, being loving husbands, submissive wives,

bright lights in our community, and the list could go on. *Let's obey like we believe that God's word is trustworthy.*

**4. Obeying like God has no equal.** Notice in vss. 25-26 that Jesus is the unequalled creator. There is nothing and no one in this world like God. Our best friends don't love us like the Lord. Our worst enemies are no match for the Lord. As nice as this may sound, our behavior shows what we really believe. *Let's obey God's will like we believe that He is in a category all by Himself.* This kind of obedience should be noted for loving God with all that we have and loving others as we love ourselves. A lack of loving is evidence of a lack of believing that God is unequalled.

**5. Waiting on God.** Notice in vss. 29-31 that God gives strength that out performs even that of youth. Those who have strength outside of special divine strength will discover that it will give out on them. But those who wait or trust in God will discover that God gives a strength that goes well beyond anything that we can take any credit for. It should be noted that those who trust in the Lord are yet expected to run and walk according to God's will. Too many behave as if waiting on the Lord only includes sitting. *Let's work on trusting God enough to keep moving at His command.* Living out this application calls for us to keep on obeying God's principles for families, friends, finances, health, community, and church. It is an obedience that is based on our trusting God to take care of His own, even when there is no or very little apparent fruit from our labor.