



SOURCE FOR QUESTIONS

Isaiah 40:1 through 48:22

KEY VERSE FOR MEMORIZATION

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” (Isaiah 41:10)

BACKGROUND

Moving from chapter 39 to chapter 40 of this book, the theme changes from that of judgment to one of salvation. The prophet Isaiah saw beyond Israel’s current distress and Judah’s prospect of captivity to a future day of salvation.

God was to spare Judah from Assyria’s threat of destruction and later deliver His people from the Babylonian captivity. Along with warning the people of impending judgment, Isaiah offered them hope and comfort. He foretold the time when Babylon—a future evil world system—would be destroyed.

This section of Isaiah’s prophecy (Isaiah 40:1 — 48:22) is often called the Book of Consolation. The first words of the 40th chapter, *comfort ye* meant both “repent” and “console,” which indicated that comfort comes after true repentance. The words *my people* referred to the people of God who had a covenant relationship with Him. These chapters also introduce God’s chosen Servant, who would be Israel’s means of redemption.

Some refer to this section of Isaiah as the New Testament in miniature, since it opens with the words used by John the Baptist (Isaiah 40:3), and contains many references to the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and King.

Within these chapters, Isaiah also emphasized the greatness of God in contrast to the vanity of heathen idols. Note how often God said to His people, Israel, “Fear not” and how often He assured them of His pardon and His presence.

God’s message of comfort in this section was not merely a strengthening of the people of Israel in their outward deliverance. It was a deep and inner work of God in their hearts.

It is no surprise that for centuries God’s people have turned to these chapters to find encouragement and assurance when encountering difficult days in their lives. God says to all of His people, “Fear thou not, for I am with thee.” He encourages us to take comfort in Him.

QUESTIONS

1. What is your concept of God as you take into consideration Isaiah 40:12, 15, and 22?

2. Judah was facing the threat of destruction by Assyria, which was one of many reasons to fear. What was one reason *not* to be afraid? (Isaiah 41:10-14) How does this promise apply to us?

3. Isaiah 42:1-4 makes reference to Christ, and is quoted and confirmed in Matthew 12:18-21. Part of Christ’s mission on earth was to demonstrate God’s righteousness and to be a Light to all nations (Isaiah 42:6). What is righteousness, and who is supposed to be righteous?

4. In spite of Israel’s deliberate sin against God and their rejection of Him as their rightful King, what did He say He was to them Isaiah 43:3, 14. What did Israel fail to do? Isaiah 43:22

5. The people of Israel were witnesses to the fact that there was no God beside the God of Heaven (Isaiah 44:6). How did the prophet reveal the utter foolishness of pagan idolatry, of which Israel was a part? Isaiah 44:9-20

6. What did the prophet emphasize in verses 20-22 of chapter 45?

7. Isaiah predicted that Babylon would show no mercy to the Jews, and would be judged accordingly. She would boast of the fact that she was the queen and would continue forever. But in a moment, the judgment for her sins would catch up with her. To whom would the people of Babylon look for advice to prepare for her destruction? Isaiah 47:12-15

8. The people of Judah and Israel had become comfortable and complacent in their state of obstinacy. Chapter 48 is a plea for them to consider their destiny in view of God's past dealings on their behalf. God had put them into the furnace to refine them and prepare them for their future work (Isaiah 48:10). What are the symptoms today of complacency in a person's spiritual walk?

CONCLUSION

These chapters detail the futility of wickedness and idol worship, and also explain the peace God gives to those who follow Him. Today, like the people of Isaiah's day, we must make the choice whether or not to follow God and have His peace.

NOTES
