

# POWER HOUR

12/01/2024

## Lesson Text:

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

## Background Scripture:

Leviticus 26:40-45;

1 Chronicles 16:23-33

Devotional Reading: Matthew 3:1-8 &

Lamentations 1:1-22

“COMFORT FOR GOD’S PEOPLE”

NLT TRANSLATION

**Golden Text:** *He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless.*  
*Isaiah 40:29 NLT*

**Time:** *about 700-695 B.C.*

**Place:** Jerusalem

### Isaiah 40:1-5, 25-26, 29-31 NLT

**1** “Comfort, comfort my people,” says your God. **2** “Speak tenderly to Jerusalem. Tell her that her sad days are gone and her sins are pardoned. Yes, the Lord has punished her twice over for all her sins.” **3** Listen! It’s the voice of someone shouting, “Clear the way through the wilderness for the Lord! Make a straight highway through the wasteland for our God! **4** Fill in the valleys, and level the mountains and hills. Straighten the curves, and smooth out the rough places. **5** Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. The Lord has spoken!

**25** “To whom will you compare me? Who is my equal?” asks the Holy One.

**26** Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name. Because of his great power and incomparable strength, not a single one is missing.

**29** He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. **30** Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion.. **31** But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Early in the twenty-first century, our country and the rest of the world experienced a major turn in the economy. People lost their jobs by the millions, and those who thought they were financially set for life suddenly found themselves losing their savings as the financial system crashed. Life situations changed overnight. Our lesson this week turns our attention toward the One who alone can give us comfort in turbulent times. Isaiah's day was marked by sin and forgetting God. He had a very strong message for the people, and this message is just as relevant for us today in our particular situations.

**1. Comfort for God's own people (Isa. 40:1-5).** When people are hurting, any comfort is welcome. This was the situation in Isaiah's day. The people had forgotten God and had strayed from His ways. They had lived lives of sin and turned their backs on the Lord. Their nation had deteriorated because of this, and their lives were in ruins. Knowing all this, God sent His word through Isaiah the prophet to give them a message of hope in their troubled times. This was Isaiah's message: the days of punishment would be difficult, but hope lay ahead. Isaiah encouraged the people to create a straight path for their God. This was an image of inviting their God back into their nation and their lives.

**2. A reminder of who God is (Isa. 40:25-26).** If we are going to receive strength and comfort from God, we must first recognize who He really is. God reminds His people that He is truly incomparable to anyone or anything around.

**3. A renewal of failing energy and strength (Isa. 40:29-31).** Help the class understand at the very outset of this section that when we are at the end of our rope, our God is still there. In fact, it is when we come to the end of our resources that He does His most amazing work. The picture in these verses is of one who has depleted his strength; he is totally tired and can go no farther. Help the class talk about some of the symptoms of being exhausted. Discuss with the class what it

means to wait upon the Lord. Is this waiting active or passive?

### **POINTS TO PONDER**

1. God disciplines His people, but He greatly desires to mend their hurts (Isa. 40:1-2).
2. Seeing the glory of God requires spiritual preparation (vss. 3-5).
3. Today individual believers can behold God's glory in Jesus, but all will see it when He returns to reign.
4. God is incomparable in every way and attribute (vs. 25).
5. God's power is visually displayed in every night sky for all who wish to see (vs. 26).
6. God gives enduring strength to those who seek Him and wait upon Him (vss. 29-31).

### **CONCLUSION**

Isaiah was a prophet who lived about seven hundred years before Christ. During this critical time in Judah's history, God wanted someone to take His word to a rebellious nation. The first half of Isaiah (chaps. 1—39) foretells judgment upon Judah because of their sins. The latter half (chaps. 40—66), however, offers a message of comfort and hope. God would restore them to the land and send His Servant, the Messiah, to atone for sin (chap. 53).

### **QUESTION(S)**

Why do some suggest two authors for the book of Isaiah? What is a better explanation?

Why did Judah need to hear a message of comfort?

What responsibility did Israel have as a chosen nation?

Who does the "voice ... in the wilderness" refer to (Isa. 40:3)?

How did this person help prepare the way for the Lord?

What are some differences between the idols worshipped by so many and the God revealed in the Bible?

Why are youths given as an example of strength?

What does it mean to “wait upon the Lord” (vs. 31)?

What three illustrations were given by Isaiah concerning God's strength?

What are some examples of waiting on God today?

### **ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON**

Next week's lesson is *“God Sends His Servant to Suffer for Us”*

Lesson Text: *Isaiah 53:4-6, 10-12*

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