

Alas! The Lord Rules Over His Sheep

Isaiah 40:9-11

Sunday, December 20, 2020

Isaiah describes the Assyrian threats against Jerusalem (chaps. 36–39) and God’s miraculous defeat of the Assyrian army (37:36). During those days, a host of concerns existed about the situation in Jerusalem as well as the future state of the nation of Judah. Is God strong enough to defeat all that his people face?

The question that weighed on the people was if God was able and mindful enough to defeat all that his people faced?

In the previous paragraph of Isaiah 40, we read:

A voice says, “Cry!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

⁷ *The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;
surely the people are grass.*

⁸ *The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.*

Do not fear and do not trust in anyone other than God.

In Isaiah 40:

1. Affirm - 1-2
2. Announce - 3-5
3. Assure - 6-8
4. Alas! - 9-11

If 40:6–8 can be understood as assurance about mankind’s fragile substance than 9-11 are the contrast to that.

The preacher says that the people can SEE the “Greatness of God.” **“BEHOLD YOUR GOD!”**

The particular act of salvation that is in view here is the good news that “*your God is here*” (“*behold your God*”), *for the glory of God is going to be revealed for all people to see (40:5).*

I. The Lord God Rules in Might (10a)

Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him;

The nature of what Isaiah means when he says behold is not to contemplate, but to observe. This reference to God’s presence that is interlinked to earlier references in chapter 25. See Is 25:8-9 which refer to the coming of God.

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Gills Exposition of the OT comments: “This describes Christ in his first coming; for not God the Father, but the Son of God, is meant by the ‘Lord God’, who is truly God.”

His arm rules for him - he is not dependent on another delegate to accomplish the rule. He will do this of his own.

II. The Lord God Rewards In Righteousness (10b-11)

^{10b} . . . behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

Building on the picture of the Saviors might and arm of rule, Isaiah brings to mind a champion of war who brings home exiled people, his reward. See Psalm 68:18–35

- Salvation is God’s great *reward* in His righteousness. (Ephesians 4:7–8)
- *Recompence* is the work of a righteous judge. (Revelation 22:12)

He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Our Imperative:

⁹ *Go on up to a high mountain,
O Zion (city of God personified), herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah,*

God’s instructions that Zion is to “go up” to a high mountain to loudly and fearlessly proclaim a message of good news to the people.

The people who are instructed to shout are called the “heralds of good news.” The “good news” is literally the great acts of God’s salvation.

1 Peter 1:24–25 quotes Is. 40. Peter encourages his readers to remain firm in their faith. The Christians at that time were aliens in a pagan and godless national system of the Roman government and some were facing grave persecution.

Jesus Christ: _____

Takeaway truth: _____

As a disciple I should _____

