

Part II, Lesson 2

Isaiah

The Lord is Salvation

Our
Gentle
God

Isaiah
40:6-11

*Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex
Curriculum*

Isaiah Part II, Lesson 2

Our Gentle God

In today's lesson, we will hear about the Word of God, and the gentleness of our God. Read Isaiah 40:6-11.

Isaiah heard a voice telling him to "Cry out!" He was told to shout. There was to be no timidity in his voice. God wanted everyone to hear. The message is too important for a whisper, or even a normal voice.

The prophet speaks back, and his response is pretty gloomy. He speaks as one who has tried to preach a good word from God, and no one listened. The audience, he said, was hopeless humanity. Humans are weak and worthless. He said they are like the grass that withers. Oh, yes, the grass is nice and green for a while, but without water, or in cold weather it dies. They are like the wildflowers that grow in the fields. Pretty soon, the petals of the flowers begin to fall and then nothing is left.

Isaiah says that people wilt when "the breath of the Lord blows on them" they fade out. He was picturing here what happened when the powerful, hot east wind blew across the desert. It scorched the plants and they lost their beauty. Hit with hard times, humans just shrivel up and become worthless to God's Kingdom.

So Isaiah doesn't seem to be convinced that he should "cry out" anything. Because, in his mind, his breath would be wasted. People, as he seems to tell us here, are not worth saving.

Then there is a response to Isaiah. It comes in the middle of verse seven. The voice said, "You are right. Humans are like grass and they fade; they are like flowers and they lose their beauty." But, and this is a very important "but" here, the voice tells Isaiah that even if humans are not dependable and they fail, there is something that will never fail.

That something is the Word of God. It stands forever. That's *forever*, as in never ending. Everything around us will someday fail. Humans die, the earth will be destroyed, and the stars will fall, but humans have something that is forever; that is the Word of God.

That Word of God is to be what we get our strength from and in which we find our hope. That which will make life good for us is not something we can think up or design. That which brings courage and faith to humans is the Word of God which never fades, fails or dies.

The people needed encouragement. They needed hope. So, the messenger said "go up on a high mountain," shout at the top of your voice, make everyone hear. What are they to hear? Simple: "Here is your God."

About this simple message, let's be clear right now, this is the theme of the rest of Isaiah. God, the great Shepherd, is now with His people. He never left, He never took a vacation and the people could not escape Him. He continues to be with His people.

The Father comes to His people as both strong and gentle. He is the "Sovereign Lord." That means that He is over all and controls all. Nothing happens that He doesn't want to happen. He is the King of all kings and the Ruler over all rulers. He is stronger than anyone or anything. Nothing and no one is like Him. He is

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the Sovereign Lord, Adonai Jehovah. He comes as the one who punishes and rewards.

The message, “Here is your God,” is to be preached by all believers. He identifies those who bring good news to Zion, the hill on which the Temple was built, and all the towns of Judah, the nation of Israel. This is a message for everyone.

The message is that God will reward, punish, those who deserve it, but He will also reward His children who deserve blessings. The prophet here, it seems like with a sigh of relief, focuses on the reward of His children...this is the good news.

At this point Israel, specifically the southern kingdom of Judah, has suffered much and God is going to repay their suffering with great joy.

And in the eleventh verse, we have one of the most beautiful pictures in the Bible. God is like a gentle shepherd. He doesn't just herd the sheep to pasture or drive them to water for drinking. He treats them as tenderly as a mother treats the baby she loves as much as her own life.

“He tends His flock.” This shepherd picture is very common in the Old Testament. See Genesis 49:24; Psalm 23; Psalm 78; Jeremiah 31:10. He gathers His sheep. He carries His sheep “close to His heart.” He “gently leads” His sheep, especially those who have babies.

What an amazing thing: God sees that we get to where we need to go. He *leads* His sheep. He makes sure that we are all going together...He *gathers* us. He may have to carry some. Get the picture: the lamb who can't keep up, or the weak or sickly lamb, He picks up and carries. And, He not only carries the lamb, but He *carries* him or her “close to His heart.” And what's more, He does all this gently.

Have you ever seen someone guiding a dog on a leash and when the dog goes the wrong way, the owner pulls harshly on the leash to drag the dog back into the right path. Well that is not what God does. He leads, and He leads *gently*.

Can we find a more beautiful picture of our loving God? Could Isaiah have described God's care any better than this?

Do you feel that love and care today? He is only a prayer away from your heart.

*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

Page Three

Scripture Memory: “He tends His flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads those who have young.” Isaiah 40:11

Lesson Goal: To show the student God's love and compassion.

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Student Worksheet

Listen during the lesson for this information:

1. What is the gloomy response of the prophet?
2. What does the voice say in response to Isaiah's gloomy response?
3. What stands forever?
4. What do humans get from the Word of God?
5. What is the simple message God wanted the people to hear?
6. What three things does God, the shepherd do for His sheep?

Page Four

Scripture Memory: "He tends His flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads those who have young." Isaiah 40:11

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.