

# *Comfort my People*

Old Testament Prophetic Hope



**God is Willing & Able**

Isaiah 40:1-11

# Willing & Able

- ★ Surviving the pandemic
  - ◆ Stay in our separate “bubbles”
  - ◆ What is anyone willing & able to do?
  - ◆ Government – limited ability to enforce
  - ◆ Consider USA
    - ◆ Trump has ability/authority but is not willing
    - ◆ Biden is willing but does not have ability/authority
  - ◆ Willingness & Ability – two different things

# 1. Is He Able?

- ★ Book (Isaiah) divided into 2 parts
  1. Why Israel & Judah will be punished
  2. YHWH will nonetheless rescue them
  
- ★ Is YHWH able to do as he has promised?
  - ◆ Israel was not quite sure
    - ◇ They had worshipped other 'gods'
  - ◆ Seemed 'god' of conquering nation more powerful
    - ◇ How do we know YHWH is able?

# 1. Is He Able? . . .

- ★ God of absolute power & authority
  - ◆ All the nations are as nothing
  - ◆ Everlasting God, Creator
  - ◆ Does not faint or grow weary

## 2. Is He Willing?

- ★ Maybe their sins have made him so angry
  - ◆ Maybe they've blown it
- ★ Instruction to prophets – “comfort my people”
  - ◆ He will not abandon them
  - ◆ They have been punished in full
  - ◆ They will be delivered

## 2. Is He Willing? . . .

### ★ Historical perspective

- ◆ After ~520 BC Jews never practiced idolatry again
- ◆ Foundation: Christian refusal to worship emperor

### ★ A very tender reassurance

- ◆ He will tend his flock like a shepherd (v 11)
- ◆ He will come in power with his reward (v 10)

## 2. Is He Willing? . . .

- ★ The heart of the character of God
  - ◆ Nothing we can do will make God unwilling to receive us
  - ◆ He is able and willing to save

# 3. How do we Know?

- ★ The Word of God stands forever (v 8)
  - ◆ What God has said is true
    - ◆ He is powerful and *can* do it
    - ◆ He is loving and *will* do it
  - ◆ He is trustworthy



# Living It – Wait

- ★ We should wait in expectation
  - ◆ Not passive, distracted kind of waiting
  - ◆ Active, attentive, expectant waiting
- ★ Meditation on “Silence” on Friday
  - ◆ Silence is a partner of waiting
  - ◆ Our waiting is peaceful, watchful, vigilant
  - ◆ God promises us strength & power (v 29)

# Living It – Wait ...

- ★ A personal story from this week
  - ◆ Driving up to a traffic light
  - ◆ I don't like sitting around wasting time
  - ◆ Friday: slow down and wait for next change
  - ◆ Pondered what was going on with me
  - ◆ **I was at peace**

# Living It – Wait ...

- ★ Most days I've had three devotions
  - ◆ Peace from dwelling time I was spending with him
    - ◇ Made a fundamental change to my disposition
- ★ Whatever your “niggle” or “knot” ...  
... God will change it to peace
  - ◆ Enough time waiting & dwelling =  
blessing & peace