

This God Can and Will Save You (Isaiah 40:1-11 July 20, 2014)



On June 22, 1941 – what is widely recognised as one of the – if not the – most brutal conflicts in history began.

Hitler attacked his former ally – the Soviet Union – and committed an enormous amount of resources to this ferocious battle on the Russian Front.

Every German soldier knew this battle would be vicious – the Russians would fight to the last breath in a freezing, desolate wasteland. No one wanted to be sent to *that* field of war.

Hitler quelled the unease in the ranks by *personally* promising his armies he would support them to the end and never desert them. He promised to give them whatever resources were necessary – they should trust Him.

Hitler's army on the Russian Front trusted their very lives to him.

Who would you trust with your life?

Who would you trust with your eternal life?

One constant theme of the Bible is that we all have to make this decision.

Sin means we will all die – and then comes judgment.

On that day it will matter very much who you trusted your eternal life to. Yourself, Allah, no one – or to the One true God.

Ultimately we have to decide who we will trust our eternal fate to – but as well, every day we make decisions about where we will trust a part of our lives.

When trials come we tend to trust – ourselves, our friends, our family, the bank, the insurance company?

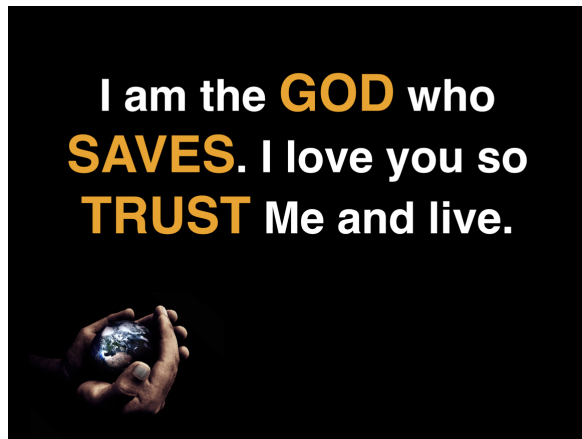
The Bible also speaks to this and says – ultimately these will all let you down.

I found it interesting to read how as his marriage and business failed Gerard Baden-Clay turned to a series of mistresses for comfort and to family and friends for financial help. He hoped Alison's life insurance policy might bail him out.

As we now know, nothing bailed him out of the mess he had made of his life.

So it matters very much who we put our trust in – both eternally and day by day.

The message of this sermon and indeed all of Isaiah is that the Lord says:



I am the God who saves. I love you so trust Me and live.

When we read this book we find that Judah learned that everything they trusted other than God ultimately failed them.

We need to learn this. Every idol will fail you. And by idol – I don't just mean little carved bits of wood and stone – I also mean false religions and money and friends and human might and comfort – and the biggest idol of all – trusting ourselves – they will ultimately fail.

But – God – who is for us – will never forsake us.

This is where comfort is found in the tough times.

This is where we find hope when life is ending.

This is a lesson we know in our heads – but one we often seem to forget when the tough times come.

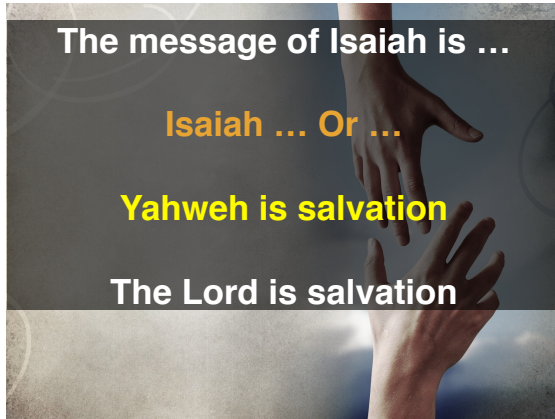
When trials loom – often God is our last port of call instead of our first.

This is a lesson Judah learned the hard way.

Today we begin the second part of the book of Isaiah – chapters 40-66. But I just want to remind us of what we have learned so far in the book of Isaiah.

I am going to spend some time reminding us of where we are in this amazing book, but I want you to know that we will eventually get to the text of Isaiah 40.

You have now heard half of this book preached. So I have a question for you. If you had to sum up the whole message of the book of Isaiah in a few words – how would you do it?



If nothing springs readily to mind – here is a very easy way to remember it – the message of Isaiah is

And this is profound ... The message of Isaiah is ...

Isaiah!! Why? Because Isaiah means:

Yahweh is salvation.

Or we might say – *the Lord is salvation.*

You could even personalise it – *The Lord is my salvation.*

Salvation is found only in the Lord. If you look to anything or anyone else – they will fail you.

Let me remind you of how this message has played out so far in Isaiah.

The first 39 chapters deal with Isaiah's message to Judah in the 8th century BC.

In these chapters – God pleaded with His people to trust Him and Him alone.

1-39 Yahweh is salvation – trust Him – there is no other hope

Man's one and only hope of salvation rests with God – not the nations, not wealth, not armies – but God alone. If you trust anything else – ultimately it will fail you.

1-5 Yahweh is salvation and Israel needs Him

Israel was chosen as a choice servant by God. But she rejected the Lord and became as wicked as the nations.

6-12 Yahweh is salvation but Israel rejects Him

The Lord chose Isaiah – and sent Him to warn Judah – but he was told – their hearts are so hard they will not turn and be healed.

We saw an example of this in King Ahaz. Syria and the northern Kingdom were pressuring him for an alliance against Assyria. Isaiah said – the Lord says trust me and live. He was given a miraculous sign to verify the message.

But Ahaz chose to throw his lot in with the might of Assyria. He rejected the Lord and opened the doors to Assyrian idolatry and the effects were catastrophic.

13-23 Yahweh is salvation but the nations reject Him

Isaiah revealed that it is not just Israel and Judah but the nations of the world who needed to trust the Lord and were in dire danger for rejecting Him.

24-35 Yahweh is salvation or judgment will come

These chapters detail the judgments that will fall on Judah, on Israel and on the nations if they reject the one path of salvation.

36-39 Yahweh is salvation one final chance

After all the warnings about trusting God and not man – the danger of turning to the nations – it seemed that perhaps Judah may finally have learned their lesson.

King Hezekiah was a good King – a great King – but he faced two trials:

- A national trial – The Assyrian invasion.
- A personal trial – He was going to die.

Initially, he trusted God and in Isaiah 38:6 God told him:

I will deliver you *and* this city.

It seemed Judah and her King had learned the lesson – *Yahweh is salvation – trust Him – there is no other hope.*

But, crushingly – that lesson was soon forgotten. This flash of trust is followed by a return to trusting man in chapter 39.

Hezekiah knows Assyria may well come back. So he thinks – why not seek an alliance with an up and coming power – Babylon? What could be the harm?

The harm was exile. Isaiah 39:5–7 is at the end of the first half of the book:

Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord. And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

You still trust something other than Me! As a result, Judah will go into captivity in Babylon.

The question then becomes – is that it? Has Judah’s sin exhausted God’s patience? Is God done with this disobedient people?

For a moment, I want you to move yourself from Isaiah’s day – 150 or so years into the future – into the time of Daniel – the time of the exile – and I want you to put yourself in the shoes of those exiles in 6th century Babylon.

You saw your King and your nobles killed, blinded or carted off into captivity. Most of your friends and family were killed. The Temple was destroyed. Jerusalem sacked.

The future could not look blacker.

Psalm 137 tells us how those exiles felt.

Ben Shannon suggested I should play you a little of Boney M’s song based on Psalm 137 to give you an idea of how they felt.

I have a problem with this song. My problem with that song is that it is just too happy. To me it simply doesn’t convey the absolute despair and hopelessness of the exiles. Listen to verses 1-4 of Psalm 137:

By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our lyres. For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!” How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?

These exiles had grown up in the land of promise, they had seen the glories of Solomon’s Temple.

Now they were in a strange land, surrounded by idols. They had no land, no future and no hope.

Their sin had caused them to lose everything. When they remembered what they had lost – they wept – bitterly.

This is the man whose affair causes him to lose his wife, his kids, his house, his job – he looks around – he is alone in a cheap hotel room and he weeps.

So with this in mind, I want you to imagine two of these exiles – Benjamin and Aaron – discussing their plight.

Aaron, I just don't understand it. How is it that the promises of God to Abraham and David could fail?

We have lost the land of promise, the Temple is gone, the line of Kings from David is being cut off – God's Word – His promise to us – has failed.

No Benny – it is not God who failed – it was us. Let's be fair. How many prophets did He send? How many warnings did He give? And we still whored after the nations and their idols and gold.

He didn't fail – we did. His patience just ran out. We got everything we deserved. That is why we have no hope and no future.

Here is what I want you to understand this morning – *neither* Benjamin, *nor* Aaron is right. God's Word has not failed *nor* has God's patience run out.

God is not done with His people. There is still hope – there is still salvation.

To convey this message, the Lord uses Isaiah to write a prophecy – that the exiles would read 150 years later.

And this message is one of comfort and hope to those in despair.

I also need you to know that it is not just a message for the exiles but for people of every age. It is a message of comfort and hope for you.

Perhaps you are here this morning and this message means little to you.

Maybe you don't believe in God, or heaven and hell. Perhaps you don't think you need saving.

I would suggest that God has provided ample evidence of His existence and power and you reject these at your peril.

To me the coming of Jesus, His miracles, His life, His death and resurrection are the clearest proofs.

But there are others – Creation itself declares the reality and glory of God.

And search your heart – you know right and wrong – you know there is more to this life than 80 years of struggle.

But one of the other proofs God has given us of the truth of His message is prophecy.

At times God reveals in explicit detail what is about to happen.

He does this to show His people the reality of what He says.

Isaiah 40-66 is one of those passages.

Isaiah wrote the words we will look at somewhere around 700 BC.

Jerusalem fell in 586 BC and the exiles began to return somewhere around 537-538 BC.

Isaiah prophesies about events 100-150 years after his death with *incredible* accuracy.

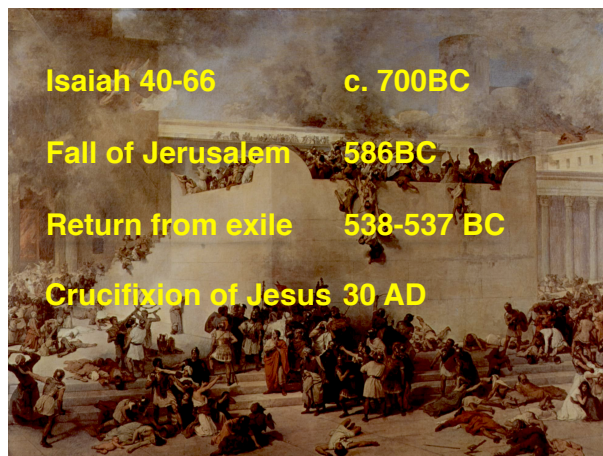
He tells of the decline of Assyria and the rise of Babylon. He prophesies the fall of Jerusalem, the exile of Judah, the rise of Persia and even mentions the exact name of the Persian King who will free the exiles – Cyrus.

These details are so exact – they are verified by history – so many critics have said – well obviously chapters 40-66 had to be written centuries later and attributed to Isaiah.

But every scrap of archaeological and historical evidence we have is that Isaiah wrote the whole book in the 8th century BC – before these events happened.

These incredibly exact details are there so that the exiles in Babylon would know that this is all a part of the plan of God and that the promises of God will not fail.

But that is not all.



When we get to chapters 52 and 53 – we find a detailed description of the crucifixion and death of Jesus in 30 AD – which is over 700 years after Isaiah wrote.

No one tries to say these chapters were written after the fact since we have copies of Isaiah from before the time of Jesus.

The incredibly exact details of Jesus' death are there so that **we** would know that the promises of God to us will not fail.

He can and will save us from our sin. He can and will bring us to eternal glory.

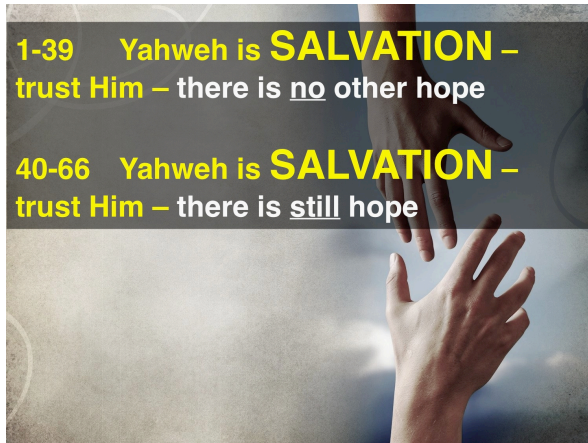
If you are here this morning and you don't believe there is a God and you don't believe you need saving – then you need to answer how Isaiah could get the events of the

exile and return so right – the events of the crucifixion so right – and yet be wrong about sin and God and heaven and hell.

We need to heed the message of Isaiah.

I am the God who saves. I love you so trust Me and live.

In the second half of the book of Isaiah – chapters 40-66 – here is what God says to them – **and** to you and I.



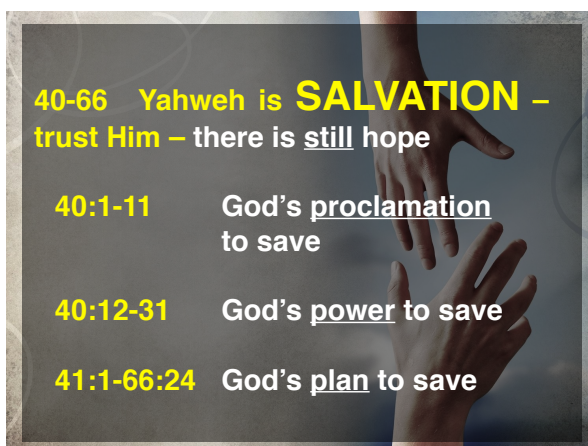
If, **1-39 says Yahweh is salvation – trust Him – there is no other hope**

Then, **40-66 says Yahweh is salvation – trust Him – there is still hope**

Even in the face of repeated sin and repeated failure – God will *still* save His people.

Here is a remarkable promise. There is not one person here who is beyond the healing hand of God. If He will save worthless, faithless Judah – He can and will save you – if you turn to Him.

Here is how this fleshes out. Isaiah tells us of:



40:1-11 God's proclamation to save

God makes it clear that His Word does not fail. He promised to save His people and He will.

40:12-31 God's power to save

God is well and truly able to save His people – whether that be from exile or from sin.

41:1-66:24 God's plan to save

Most of the time in our lives God does not draw back the curtain to show us what He is doing in history and why.

Here He does.

This whole large section is a repeating tapestry of themes.

His choosing of a people.

His sovereign plan to do whatever it takes to make them holy and save them.

His plan to use them to reach the nations.

His plan to glorify Himself and do good to His people.

His plan of sending Messiah to save His people.

His plan to redeem a people for Himself in eternity.

We find that God delivering His people from the exile in Babylon is merely a picture of His real plan – to deliver His people from sin – using His true servant – Jesus. And this plan is not just for Israel – but for all the people of all nations – who will turn to Him in faith and live.

Think about what we have seen so far in Isaiah.

God said to Judah – I chose you as a choice vineyard. I planted you, cleared the ground, gave you everything. But the faithful ones became faithless. They gave themselves to other gods, to idols and to the nations.

They chased money and women and power.

I sent prophets to warn them – they ignored them.

Wicked Kings like Ahaz trusted the nations instead of Me.

Even good kings like Hezekiah trusted the nations instead of Me.

My justice finally outran My patience. I used Babylon as My instrument to punish. The nation and the Temple were destroyed. The remnant were carted off into exile.

Humanly speaking you would think there is no hope left for Judah.

You would think God would be done. Wipe His hands of Judah or at best – try another nation.

But, the good news is that there **is** still hope for them.

And you and I can be so thankful that the nature of God is to save sinners. That in the face of our repeated failures – there does not come a time when God says – that is it – I have had it – I am done with you.

You and I can be so thankful for that because there is not a person here who has not failed God again and again.

Some entangling sin that we struggle to kill.

A marriage ending due to so many failures on our part.

Our persistent apathy.

Our selfishness and greed.

Our lack of faith.

Even as Christians, who among us has not failed the Lord day after day in some way? And yet – there is still hope for us.

No matter what you have done – God can save you.

Those family and friends – no matter what they have done – God can save them.

The hope – our only hope – our comfort – is in an all powerful, all loving, all forgiving God who saves sinners.

Chapter 40 looks forward prophetically 150 years from the end of chapter 39.

The Lord knows that between chapter 39 and 40 – many events will occur.

Assyria will wane. Babylon will rise. In 586 BC – the southern kingdom of Judah will be overrun – by Babylon – the very nation Hezekiah turned to for help.

The Temple will be destroyed. The treasures Hezekiah boasted of to Babylon will be looted. And the nation will be carted off into captivity.

And only one thing has stopped God from wiping them from the face of the earth completely – His faithfulness.

The Lord made a covenant with Abraham to save His people. He reiterated that covenant to David.

2 Samuel 7:12–16:

I will raise up your offspring after you, ... and I will establish his kingdom. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him ... but my steadfast love will not depart from him, Your throne shall be established forever.

Even though your sons – the Kings who shall come in your line – like Ahaz and even Hezekiah – even though they sin – I will **not** take the promise of salvation away. I will discipline them – such as exile in Babylon – but I **will** still save my people because I made a promise and I always keep My promises.

Chapters 40-66 of Isaiah are written firstly as a message of comfort to Judah suffering in exile a century and a half after chapter 39. But they are also a message from the faithful, saving God to us and to people of every age.

So with that in mind we can begin to look at this message.

We begin with **verses 1-11** **God's proclamation to save.**

These verses serve as an introduction to the entire second half of the book.

God declares – your sin has **not** exhausted My love.

I will still save My people.

Look with me at Isaiah 40:1–2:

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

To the Jews in exile, God has a message for them – He has not forgotten His people. This is a message of comfort for them.

Their sins mean God will punish for a time – but then the warfare ends – and God will forgive.

Now, look at verses 3-8:

A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

These words should be familiar to you. These are the very words that open the Gospel of Mark.

Isaiah says – not only is the King not done with you – but He is going to come personally to His people to bring comfort.

What only becomes clear as Scripture unfolds is that this is a Messianic promise.

The King who comes to His people is none other than Jesus.

Isaiah speaks of the way being prepared for the King – making a road through the desert – filling in valleys – levelling mountains – to make a highway acceptable for the King.

John the Baptist tells us – this is just a metaphor. The real way to prepare for the King is repentance. Turning to Him in faith.

Making our hearts ready is what prepares the way for the King.

If you want God to forgive you – repent – admit you have done what God said you should not do – and accept Him as your King.

I also want you to note that there are hints even here that this is not just a message for Judah in exile – but a message for all people of all time.

Look at verse 5:

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This goes just beyond the Jews in exile. All flesh will see God's glory.

In Isaiah 42:12 – the exiles in Babylon were told they would see the glory of the Lord when they were delivered from the exile.

But then in John 1:14 we are told that those in the day of Jesus saw the glory of God in the form of His Son.

In John 17:22-24 we are told that anyone who hears the gospel will know the glory of God.

And finally, Revelation 1:7 and Matthew 24:30 – tell us that on the last day – *every* eye will see the glory of God when Jesus comes a second time.

This is a message of hope for all people.

This message of comfort is to Judah in exile, to Israel under the slavery of Rome and to us today.

Men are like grass they sprout and die. Their word counts for little. They can guarantee nothing.

But while the grass may wither, the flower may fade, know that the Word of God will stand forever.

God promised Judah a future and despite their sin – He will keep His word. What He has said – He will do.

We can trust Him. He will do what He says. His promise of salvation will come to pass.

Verses 9-11:

Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, 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, "Behold your God!" Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 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.

Climb a mountain and proclaim the good news – God is not done with His people – He will still save them.

In verse 9 – Isaiah says to Judah – and to us – Behold your God.

One thing I want to point out is this. Throughout this book there are declarations that God can save you are declarations that this God will save you.



Both of these are absolutely crucial.

Think back to Hitler.

He personally promised his men to give them whatever resources were necessary – and they should trust Him.

However, by the start of 1943, it had long been clear that the Germans would lose this battle and Hitler had long since stopped sending reinforcements and supplies.

He had abandoned his men – but they struggled to believe that their Führer, the one they had trusted, could have reneged on his solemn promise and abandoned them.

The last German plane out of Stalingrad in January 1943 carried letters from these soldiers. They were never delivered, but they are available to read today. Here is one tragic letter:

The Führer made a firm promise to bail us out of here; they read it to us and we believed in it firmly. Even now I still believe it, because I have to believe in something. If it is not true, what else could I believe in? I would no longer need spring, summer, or anything that gives pleasure. So leave me my faith, dear Greta; all my life, at least eight years of it, I believed in the Führer and his word. It is terrible how they doubt here, and shameful to listen to what they say without being able to reply, because they have the facts on their side.¹

These men put their faith in their Führer – and he failed them and left them to rot and die.

The reality is that the outcome of our faith depends on the reliability and ability of the one we put our trust in.

Hitler promised to save his men. When push came to shove – he did not have the power to save them or indeed the desire to do whatever it took to save them.

Isaiah wants us to know in the depth of our soul – this is not true of our God. He can and will save us – even though we are disappointing sinners.

He presents His argument in the form of a courtroom debate.

He declares – this God can save you:

He demonstrates His power to save by pointing to creation and to His power in comparison to idols or nations to His power to direct the course of nations and Kings.

Then He declares – this God will save you:

He reminds them of His promises and that He keeps His promises. He declares His intention to use His servants to save.

Isaiah repeats these promises because our sin puts a barrier to us knowing these truths – to believing God can and will save us – but is it imperative that we **know** that God **can** save us and **will** save us.

Think about Judah and Israel. Chosen, privileged, given every advantage. Turned into a great kingdom.

¹ C. L. Sulzberger, *The American Heritage Picture History of World War II* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1966), pp. 298, 299.

And yet she sinned – repeatedly. She rejected the prophets and even killed them.

She repeatedly turned to the nations, the idols, to women, to money, to power.

They were simply unable to do good. Jeremiah 13:23:

Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil.

But because God is a holy God and a just God – to save His people means dealing with their sin.

However, it turns out that is the hardest thing in the universe to do. It is so difficult it is *almost* too difficult even for God?

We can't change our heart.

We can't pay for our sins with works or sacrifices.

And God's justice means He can't just forgive sin.

Dealing with sin is nearly impossible. If the Old Testament teaches us anything it is this – dealing with sin is *nearly* impossible.

But nearly impossible – and impossible – are not the same thing. For this God – nothing is impossible.

Jeremiah 32:17 says:

Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.

And in verse 27 God replies:

Behold, I am the Lord, ... Is anything too hard for me?

He **can** save sinners – even miserable failures like Judah and you and me.

Read the Bible. Jacob was an absolute scoundrel. Samson had some huge flaws. David messed up in spectacular ways. Paul was a murderous socio-path.

God saved them. He can save you.

If you ever think your situation is beyond God – if you think you are beyond saving – if you think you have exhausted the patience of God – then just read these chapters.

God who created the heavens and the earth – God who is so mighty we can barely imagine it – **this** God **can** save you.

But that is not enough. God not only has to be able to save us – He has to be *willing* to do whatever it takes to save us.

Think again of Hitler.

He foolishly chose to fight on two fronts – Europe in the west and Russia in the east.

He couldn't do it. He had to choose. He chose to abandon the Russian front.

However, although it would have cost him dearly – he could have chosen to give up Europe – to throw everything at Russia. He might just have saved the men on the Russian Front he had given his word to.

He didn't.

But God will – even though it will cost Him everything.

When we get to chapter 42 verses 1-9 – we find that the way God saves is through someone He calls – my servant.

Initially it seems the Lord is talking about Cyrus – but as the book unfolds it becomes clear that God is talking about more than just saving Judah from exile – that He is talking about saving His people from sin. And the servant who will do this is God Himself. He chooses to become a man – to save His people.

And He does that by dying for His people.

Isaiah 53 tells us that God's Servant will bear our griefs and sorrows. He will be wounded and crushed to pay for our sins. By His stripes we will be healed.

But to do this – He has to die a gruesome death. He will be despised and rejected – a man of sorrows – acquainted with grief. He will be so disfigured men will hide their faces.

Hitler would not do whatever it took to save his men.

God promised He would. And He did.

It took Him becoming a man – suffering and dying on a cross.

That is how much He loves us – He was willing to die for us.

John 10:11:

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

One of the most stunning truths of the Bible is that the Creator God of Isaiah 40 is one and the same with the suffering servant of Isaiah 53. God is willing to do that to save you.

Here is what we are going to see in the weeks ahead.



Again and again we will be shown a picture of a God who **can** save you and because He is loving and gracious and keeps His promises – He is a God who **will** do whatever it takes to save you – **if** you let Him. **If** you turn to Him in faith.

Isaiah 40-66 is one of the best-loved parts of the Bible.

Just reading it moves us.

We see a picture of the glory of God. The Creator, the Sustainer, the One who guides every step of the nations. The One who **can** save you.

Isaiah 40:21–23:

Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.

Isaiah 46:8–11:

Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.

And yet this same God loved sinners – those who failed Him again and again – those who rejected Him and despised Him – He loved them enough to leave the glories of heaven – to become a man and to die for those who had spurned Him. This God **will** save you.

Isaiah 43:25:

I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins.

Isaiah 45:22:

Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.

The Creator God who can save is the Suffering Servant who does save.

When you understand this it makes the answer to the question – Who do you trust to save your life? – much easier.

Anything other than God will fail you. Yourself, Allah, science – nothing can or will save you – but God can.

Turn to Him and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For He is God, and there is no other.

This is our hope and our comfort. This is the good news. This has to be shouted from the mountains.

If you do not know Christ – I implore you – know that you can trust Him with your life – now and eternally – and He will never let you down. He will save you. He will give you a hope and a future.

I would love to share more of these truths with you. Maybe you could ask those who brought you this morning.

I know they meant it a little differently – but this message can be summed up in the words of *Swedish House Mafia* – **if** you turn to Him in faith – then:

Don't you worry, don't you worry, child.
See heaven's got a plan for you.
Don't you worry, don't you worry now.

This God Can and Will Save You (Isaiah 40:1-11 July 20, 2014)

Main Point:

The Lord is the God who can and will save sinners. He will never leave or forsake His people. You can trust Him now and forever.

Read Isaiah 40:1-11

- What types of things do men and women trust to help them in times of trial?
- What do men and women trust to help them as they die?
- Why is it that anything other than the Lord will inevitably fail?
- So why do we continue to trust the things that fail – yet struggle to trust the Lord who will not fail?

Application: What can we do to make sure we turn to God first and not last?

- How would you summarise the message of Isaiah.
- How would you summarise the message of?:

Isaiah 1-39
Isaiah 40-66

- How do you think the exiles in captivity in Babylon felt?

Do you think they blamed the Lord, blamed themselves, neither?

- Read Psalm 137:1-4 – what was the mood of the exiles?
- Why did God not abandon this wilful, disobedient people?
- Why is Isaiah 40-66 a message of hope and comfort?

Application: What is it that brings you comfort in times of trial? What comfort is there for us in Isaiah 40-66?

- Why do some people think Isaiah 40-66 was written by someone other than Isaiah? How would you answer them?
- Why does God give prophetic messages that lay out what will happen in history?

Application: Why is fulfilled prophecy important for our faith and lives?

- Read verses 1-2. What is the message of comfort? In what way is the warfare against Judah ended?
- Read verses 3-5. How do you think the exiles thought this might be fulfilled? When was this actually fulfilled?
- How did John the Baptist expect men to prepare the way for Messiah?
- In what ways does all flesh see the glory of the Lord? How do we see it?
- Read verses 6-8. What is being compared here? Why is it important that the Word of God stands forever?

Application: What are the promises of God we have that we can rely on in times of trial and even in our death?

- Read verses 9-11. What is the good news Isaiah speaks of?
- Why should we behold our God?
- What does the picture of a shepherd and sheep tell us?
- Why is it important to know this God can save and will save?
- Why is saving man from sin almost impossible?
- What does it cost God to save us?
- What does it tell you that the Creator God is also the Suffering Servant?

Application: How do you know God will keep His promises to you?

Is there someone you thought was beyond saving? Perhaps you can share with them again the good news.