

# The Message of Christmas brings Comfort

Isaiah 40:1-31

Where do you turn for comfort when your expectations are not met? What do you rely on when life goes sideways? Comfort food? Alcohol or drugs? A favorite chair in front of the fireplace? A blanket or comforter? Professionals like a doctor or pastor?

Isaiah 40 is written to a nation in distress. The northern kingdom of Israel has been sent into exile by Assyria. The southern kingdom of Judah will be captured by Babylon in the near future. The people worry that God has forgotten them.

God tells the prophet Isaiah to comfort the people with a message of hope and deliverance. We discover that **God provides the right kind of help just when we need it the most. He sends us a shepherd who delivers his people.**

**We can find comfort in knowing that God promises to deliver his people from distress (1-11)**

Knowing God forgives our sins is very comforting (1-2)

Prepare yourself to receive God's presence (3-5)

Life is short, but God is dependable (6-8)

Jesus is the shepherd who delivers his people (9-11)

**We can find comfort in knowing that there is no power greater than God (12-20)**

God is all-powerful and all-knowing (12-14)

God is greater than the nations (15-17)

God is greater than idols (18-20)

**We can find comfort in knowing that God is in control of the heavens and the earth (21-26)**

God rules over the universe (21-23)

God is superior to all (24-26)

**We can find comfort in knowing that God watches over us and strengthens us with hope (27-31)**

God is all-knowing and powerful (27-28)

God gives strength to those who need it most (29-31)

**Principles to Practice**

God comes to us as we are, where we are, in the wilderness and desert of our lives

God forgives our sins and meets our needs

We need to remove any barriers that keep us from seeing God's glory

God provides the strength we need when we need it most

Encourage others with the message of comfort that Jesus offers