

## The Gospel According to Isaiah: The Comfort of God

### Discussion Questions for Isaiah 40:1-11

#### **Open It**

What are some of the various ways people comfort themselves about life's difficulties?

What is one of the most comforting messages you've ever received from a fellow Christian?

What changes take place in your view of everyday sights when you have seen them from high above (airplane, tall building, etc.)?

#### **Explore It**

In contrast to the previous announcements of God's judgment, how did Isaiah begin God's message? (40:1)

What good news did Isaiah have for Jerusalem concerning the sufferings that went before? (40:2)

What did Isaiah instruct the people to do, even while they were in the wilderness? (40:3)

How did Isaiah use the surrounding land to illustrate the change that Isaiah envisioned when God would intervene on behalf of His people? (40:4)

How did Isaiah contrast the mortality of human life with the Word of God? (40:6-8)

With what exclamations of joy did Isaiah announce God's arrival? (40:9-10)

In contrast to the picture of God approaching in great power, how else did Isaiah portray the relationship of God to His chosen people? (40:11)

As Isaiah works out the Majesty of God in the rest of the chapter...

What aspects of the created world did Isaiah use to illustrate God's greatness? (40:12)

What questions were the only adequate way for Isaiah to hint at the wisdom of God? (40:13-14)

How did the power of even the most feared nations of Isaiah's time compare to the power of God? (40:15-17)

What observations did Isaiah make about the idols commissioned by the rich and by the poor? (40:18-20)

With what questions did Isaiah introduce his thoughts about the transcendence of God? (40:21-24)

What wonder of nature did the Holy One use as an example of His power? (40:25-26)

How did God respond to Judah's assertion that He had forgotten them? (40:27-28)

What were God's special promises to the weak and weary? (40:29-31)

### **Get It**

How does Isaiah's message of comfort apply to us today?

In what sense can it be comforting to meditate on the overwhelming greatness of God?

What sorts of circumstances cause contemporary people to become weak and weary?

In what sense can God's powerful wrath actually be an encouragement to the downtrodden?

Which of Isaiah's portrayals of God's power over nature speaks most clearly to you? Why?

Why is it important for us to remember that God is infinitely higher than we imagine ourselves to be?

What examples have you encountered of the gentle, loving care of God for His people?

### **Apply It**

What Christian within your acquaintance could you encourage with a word about God's comfort the next time you see him or her?

Which attribute of God will be your focus of meditation and praise this coming week?