

## Flow of Isaiah Chapter 40

Before moving on to chapter 41, there is a need to revisit chapter 40. As I read and reread Isaiah chapter 40, I didn't present a "flow" of the chapter to my satisfaction. Let me suggest one.

Here is a tentative draft outline from my perspective:

- I. Kingdom Introduction (vss 1-11)
  - A. Kingdom Announcement (vss 1-2)
  - B. Kingdom Herald (vss 3-5)
  - C. Kingdom Message (vss 6-8)
  - D. Kingdom Good News (vss 9-10)
  - E. Kingdom Shepherd (vs 11)
- II. Challenge to Kingdom (vss 12-21)
  - A. Personal Challenge (vss 12-14)
  - B. National Challenge (vss 15-17)
  - C. God Challenged (vs 18)
  - D. Religious Challenge (vss 19-21)
- III. The Lord's/King's Character (vss 22-31)
  - A. God is Mighty (vss 22-24)
  - B. No One Like God (vs 25)
  - C. Character of God (vss 26-28)
  - D. God's Provision (vss 29-31)

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**Isaiah 40:1-30**

First, who are the speakers? It is not just God. Second, there are additional links to Job and from there to Satan's thinking.

Isaiah 40:1-2

**Isaiah 40:1 "Comfort, O comfort My people," says your God.**

**Isaiah 40:2 "Speak kindly to Jerusalem; And call out to her, that her warfare has ended, That her iniquity has been removed, That she has received of the Lord's hand Double for all her sins."**

This introduction to chapter 40 and indeed to chapters 40-66 is spoken by "your God." Logic suggests verse 2 is a reference to the end of the Tribulation/Jacob's Troubles and the beginning of the Millennium/the Kingdom. It is an announcement: "call out to her."

The next three verses are referenced in the New Testament in all four of the Gospel accounts as pointing to John the Baptist of the "1<sup>st</sup> Advent."

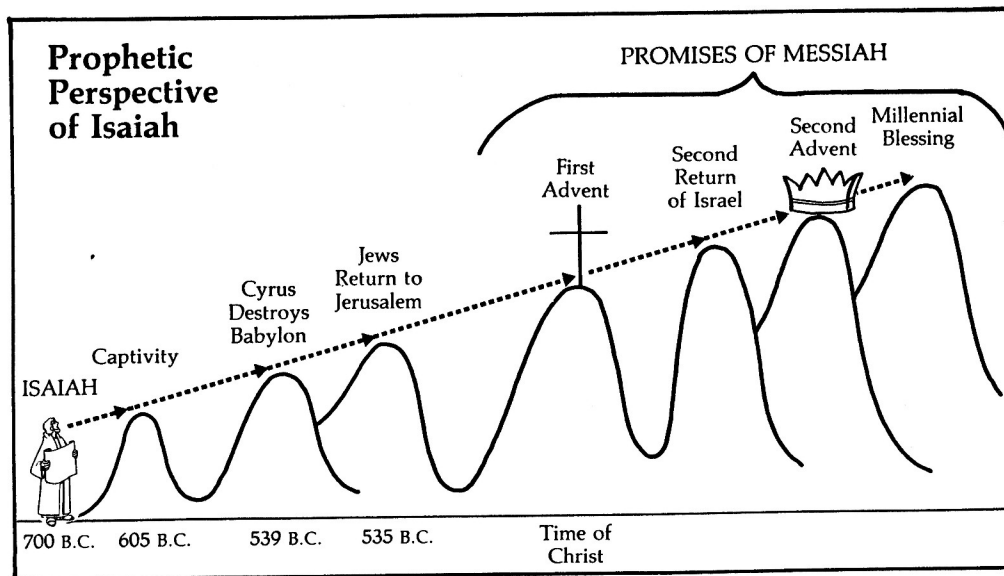
**Isaiah 40:3 A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.**

**Isaiah 40:4 "Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley;**

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**Isaiah 40:5 Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”**

The voice that is identified as John the Baptist, is in the future with respect to Isaiah. It is said at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent of Jesus Christ but looking forward from there to the “kingdom.” John the Baptist is the herald of the king and of the kingdom. In a way, the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent is the front door of the kingdom. Only those who have placed their faith in Jesus the Messiah (Christ) the king enter the kingdom.



From Duane Lindsey

Isaiah sees the “mountain” peaks. He does not see the Church Age.

There was an expectation of the coming of “the kingdom.” The actual kingdom has to wait for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent of Jesus Christ/The Messiah. John the Baptist is the Kingdom Herald.

Last time I didn't identify the voice in verse 6.

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**Isaiah 40:6** A voice says, “Call out.” Then he answered, “What shall I call out?” All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.

**Isaiah 40:7** The grass withers, the flower fades, When the breath of the Lord blows upon it; Surely the people are grass.

**Isaiah 40:8** The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.

Who is this second voice? Who comes after John the Baptist? Who is the Word? Let John the Baptist tells us that.

**Matthew 3:11** “As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

**Matthew 3:12** His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

I want to say that the Isaiah 40:6-8 refers to Jesus Christ. But there are no definitive markers as there is for the Isaiah 40:3-5 verses. But were that actually true, then we would have a chronological order embedded in this. The topic deals with the insufficiency of man as likened to plant life

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that fades because it is temporary. “Grass” is from the Hebrew word that has a broad meaning from grass to various kinds of plant matter.

**Isaiah 40:9 Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift it up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!”**

At the resurrection, Jesus had completed the requirements for the “good news.” At the point on the Mount of Olives when Jesus ascends, His work for the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent is complete. He is man, but He is also their God. Here is their God. But, at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent He will return like He left.

**Acts 1:9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.**

**Acts 1:10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.**

**Acts 1:11 They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”**

When He arrives at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent, people will say, “Here is our God.” They may also say, here is our King. This is the Good News of the Kingdom. The King has arrived.

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Imagine if you will, Jews on top of mountains in and around Jerusalem who happen to see Jesus Christ descend from heaven. They will shout for joy. “Here is our God, our Redeemer, our Savior.”

See what Zephaniah says:

**Zephaniah 3:14 Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!**

**Zephaniah 3:15 The Lord has taken away His judgments against you, He has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; You will fear disaster no more.**

Although Isaiah does not mention “kingdom,” Zephaniah does in a similarly worded announcement.

When He does come at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent, He will finally meet the expectations of the Jews. He will come with might.

**Isaiah 40:10 Behold, the Lord God will come with might, With His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him And His recompense before Him.**

He will also come to take care of the Jews as a flock of sheep. Already in the New Testament, Jesus is identified as the “Good Shepherd.”

**Isaiah 40:11 (Also Zechariah, Ezekiel 34, Jeremiah 23:1-6; 31:10; Ezekiel 37:24; Micah 5:3) Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His**

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**arm He will gather the lambs And carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes.**

This is Jesus Christ, the good shepherd.

**John 10:11 “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep...**

**John 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me,**

**John 10:15 even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.**

Jesus is not only the King but also the Kingdom Shepherd.

Then, in Isaiah 40:12, the tenor changes. As one commentator (Goldingay) says, verses 12-31 “...are characterized by an interweaving of questions and statements concerning the creative sovereignty of God. These contrast with the commissioning commands and statements of vv. 1-11.”

This commentator does not apparently understand the Angelic Conflict. Within verses 12-14 is the reference to “who.” Essentially it is asking, is there anyone (who) can compare to God? If you are familiar with the Angelic Conflict and earlier chapters of Isaiah, then you know that Lucifer want to be like the Most High.

**Isaiah 40:12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, And marked off the heavens by the span, And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, And weighed the**

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**mountains in a balance And the hills in a pair of scales?**

**Isaiah 40:13 Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, Or as His counselor has informed Him?**

**Isaiah 40:14 With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge And informed Him of the way of understanding?**

Taking these as rhetorical questions, then the answer would echo the answer from the book of Job, “no one.” But we know that someone wants to be like God.

**Isaiah 14:14 (Lucifer said) ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’**

But not only is there no person that can compare with God, man’s accomplishments in building cities and nations are only transitory accomplishments compare to God’s accomplishments.

**Isaiah 40:15 Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, And are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust.**

**Isaiah 40:16 Even Lebanon is not enough to burn, Nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering.**



**Isaiah 40:17 All the nations are as nothing before Him, They are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless.**

**Isaiah 40:18 To whom then will you liken God?  
Or what likeness will you compare with Him?**

Again, as I said last week, the word “liken” here is from the same root as Satan’s declaration that he would be “like” the Most High. Not even Satan can compare to God Almighty.

**All the nations are as nothing.** From Babel to the New World Order, man himself attempts to be like the Most High.

**Genesis 11:1 Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words.**

**Genesis 11:2 It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.**

**Genesis 11:3 They said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.” And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar.**

**Genesis 11:4 They said, “Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”**

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**Isaiah 40:1-30**

We know from Scripture, that Satan is ruler of this world, for a while.

**Matthew 4:8 Again, the devil \*took Him to a very high mountain and \*showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;**

**Matthew 4:9 and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.”**

**Matthew 4:10 Then Jesus \*said to him, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.’”**

**Matthew 4:11 Then the devil \*left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.**

**John 12:31 Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.**

From the World Economic Forum (WEF) that just concluded in Davos on Friday, Pakistan’s Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari:

““Here at WEF...there's a lot of discussion about what the new world order will be or how, even in the context of a 'new Helsinki'...how do we work towards that new normative international order that allows us to address our differences and disputes as the civilized world,” Zardari said.”

God has already told us in His Word how man’s efforts, apart from God, will eventually fail.

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**Isaiah 40:1-30**

Now a comment on man's efforts to worship something other than God. Of course, this is part of the Cosmos Diabolicus.

**Isaiah 40:19 As for the idol, a craftsman casts it, A goldsmith plates it with gold, And a silversmith fashions chains of silver.**

**Isaiah 40:20 He who is too impoverished for such an offering Selects a tree that does not rot; He seeks out for himself a skillful craftsman To prepare an idol that will not totter.**

Note, that the craftsman must carefully craft the idol so it does not totter. This is not something that is only part of past history. There are religions today, even some in Christianity that worship, kiss, revere statues/idols.

**Isaiah 40:21 Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been declared to you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?**

**Isaiah 40:22 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 out like a tent to dwell in.**

**Isaiah 40:23 He it is who reduces rulers to nothing, Who makes the judges of the earth meaningless.**

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God is in charge of history. All the great rulers die. Of course, there is one who is considered to be the current ruler of the earth.

**Isaiah 40:24 Scarcely have they been planted, Scarcely have they been sown, Scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth, But He merely blows on them, and they wither, And the storm carries them away like stubble.**

**Isaiah 40:25 “To whom then will you liken Me That I would be his equal?” says the Holy One.**

Again, the word to be like. It is from the same root as that used in Isaiah 14:14 by Satan, “I will be like the Most High.”

**Isaiah 40:26 Lift up your eyes on high And see who has created these stars, The One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power, Not one of them is missing.**

God provides.

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Isaiah 40:1-30**

GOD'S SUPERIORITY TO ALL POSSIBLE OPPOSITION <sup>3</sup>		
Argument	Questions	Conclusion
His superiority to the nations is shown by His creation of the earth.	40:12-14	40:15-17
His superiority to idols is seen in the fact that they are created by craftsmen.	40:18	40:19-20
His superiority to the rulers of the earth is seen in the fact that He is transcendent while they are temporary.	40:21	40:22-24
His superiority over other "deities" is shown by His creation of the heavenly bodies.	40:25	40:26

From Thomas Constable's commentary on Isaiah

**Isaiah 40:27 Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord, And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God"?**

**Isaiah 40:28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable.**

God is omniscient and eternal, creator of heaven and earth.

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**Isaiah 40:29 He gives strength to the weary,  
And to him who lacks might He increases  
power.**

**Isaiah 40:30 Though youths grow weary and  
tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly,**

**Isaiah 40:31 Yet those who wait for the Lord  
Will gain new strength; They will mount up  
with wings like eagles, They will run and not  
get tired, They will walk and not become  
weary.**

God provides for the believer. You benefit from God's love by walking by faith.

**Wait.** It means wait. Yet, in a spiritual sense does that really communicate? This is a word for faith...faith—rest. Those who walk by faith. Perhaps this word for wait could be better translated by two English words: patient faith.

Let's finish with a detour into Habakkuk. Look at Habakkuk chapter 1. The key here is Habakkuk's question, "How long..."

**Habakkuk 1:1 The oracle which Habakkuk the  
prophet saw.**

**Habakkuk 1:2 How long, O Lord, will I call for  
help, And You will not hear? I cry out to You,  
"Violence!" Yet You do not save.**

**Habakkuk 1:3 Why do You make me see  
iniquity, And cause me to look on**

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**wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; Strife exists and contention arises.**

**Habakkuk 1:4 Therefore the law is ignored  
And justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore justice comes out perverted.**

Does this sound like today? Human nature, the sin nature, is the same today as it was in times past. Wicked and Insane.

But do not give up hope. Look at the end of Habakkuk chapter 3

**Habakkuk 3:16 I heard and my inward parts trembled, At the sound my lips quivered. Decay enters my bones, And in my place I tremble. Because I must wait quietly for the day of distress, For the people to arise who will invade us.**

**I must wait quietly.** Another word for faith—rest. Indeed, the Hebrew word means to rest.

**Habakkuk 3:17 Though the fig tree should not blossom And there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail And the fields produce no food, Though the flock should be cut off from the fold And there be no cattle in the stalls, (sounds like current events)**

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**Habakkuk 3:18 Yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.**

**Habakkuk 3:19 The Lord God is my strength, And He has made my feet like hinds' feet, And makes me walk on my high places...**