



Sermon, Tuesday, December 24, 2024

"Comfort for God's People"

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 40:1-5 ¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. ³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every 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. ⁵Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Introduction: We all need comfort and empathy.

It's cold, but it's Merry Christmas Eve. May the grace and peace of the good Lord be with us. There are several accounts of the birth of Jesus in the Gospels. In Matthew 1:23, Jesus is expressed with the word Immanuel. Emmanuel means '**God is with us**'. The word '**Immanuel**' in Matthew gives great comfort to those who are lonely and in despair.

How did you guys spend this year? Have you had a happy and satisfying year? Perhaps some people have had a happy and satisfying year, while others may have had a very difficult year. However, what we cannot deny is that our lives are messy. So, everyone needs comfort and empathy.

In today's text, Prophet Isaiah proclaims the Lord's comfort for all people in the world. I hope that the words of today's text will be of great comfort in our difficult lives.

Body: Comfort for God's People

Today's text is set against the background of the painful history of the Israelites. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was destroyed by the Babylonian Empire in 587 BC. As a result, the leaders and people of the Southern Kingdom of Judah were taken captive by the Babylonian Empire. They remained in captivity there for 70 years. However, the Jewish people who were taken captive in Babylon despaired of the reality they faced.

At this time, God sent the prophet Isaiah to the Jewish people, saying; '**Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.**'

(Isaiah 40:1-2) This was a word of comfort that brought hope to the Jewish people who were in despair.

Even though our lives may be difficult and painful, if we have hope, we can live. However, if we have no hope, we become desperate or angry.

So what is the hope that the Bible speaks of? The hope the Bible speaks of is based on our faith in God. That is, trusting what God has promised and told us. And on this basis, we discover new desires for life.

In today's text, God commands Prophet Isaiah to deliver hope to the Israelites. In other words, the Israelites in Babylon are no longer disciplined and abandoned, but are God's children and very precious beings.

God promised to visit the captive Israelites, walk with them, and grant freedom to the captives. This was a great comfort to the suffering Israelites.



Christmas has come to us again this year, without fail. We are gathered here to praise and rejoice at the birth of baby Jesus. Just as God visited the Israelites when they were captive in Babylon, Baby Jesus came to us to give comfort and peace to all those in this world who are suffering.

We all need comfort and empathy. Because we all get discouraged and despair at times. We are people who need the Lord's grace, love, comfort, empathy, and blessings.

Conclusion: The greatest comforting event

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! The greatest comforting event in human history is the coming of Jesus Christ. With the coming of Jesus Christ to people oppressed by sin, suffering from disease, and people threatened by the world's numerous political and social oppressions, the history of life, truth, and abundance took place on this earth.

This is why God came to this earth in the humblest form, in a manger. Even though our lives are difficult and painful, we hope you experience comfort and new hope in life through Emmanuel Jesus, who is always with us.

