

## "Prepare Ye The Way of The Lord"

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### *Isaiah 40:1-8*

*A television broadcast sermon delivered*

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2023**

*By*

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If you would like to follow along in your Bible, our message will come from Isaiah 40. Isaiah 40, and I would like to read the first eight verses of Isaiah 40. Verse 1 says: Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. The voice said, "Cry." And He said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever. I want us to be comforted by this message. That's how I want to begin. That's the first word I want to say. I want us to be comforted by this message. I want the truth to be preached. I want the gospel to be preached and I want us to be comforted by this message. But more so than our being comforted, I want us to see Christ. I deeply want us to be comforted, I do. But more so than that, I want us to see Christ. I want us to glory in the Lord Jesus Christ, that's what I want us to do. I want us to see what He did for sinners like us. The title of this message is "Prepare ye the way of the Lord", "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." When you look up the word "prepare" in the Bible dictionary, it means turn toward, that's what it means, turn toward, it means look at, it means face, behold, mark, that's what it

means. The way of the Lord, turn toward, face, look at, mark, the way of the Lord, that's what I would like for us to do. I'd like for us to look at, turn toward, behold, mark the way. Do we know who the way is? The Lord said, "I'm the way." I want us to look at Christ. Look at the Lord Jesus Christ, I want us to see, truly see what He did for us. And in doing that, I pray we will be comforted by it, I pray we will. Now, in these verses our Lord is speaking concerning two groups of people. You may have recognized that as we read down through it. His people and all people. The scriptures constantly mention these two groups of people, His people and all people. Now, let me point this out: His people are included in all people, but all people are not necessarily included in His people. Does that make sense? His people come from the world. They are out of the world, from the same lump just like everybody else. His people are included in all people when it talks about all people. But all people are not necessarily included in His people. So what He has to say right here concerning all people, He's saying this to every person in this world, you and I included. And what He has to say concerning His people, He is saying it to every person in the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, I want to be in Christ. I pray that we might be found in Him. I pray that we might win Christ and be found in Him. Now, let's begin with what He has to say concerning all people, all people. Look with me at the middle of verse 6, He said, "All flesh," that's all people, He said, "All flesh is grass." Now, what a way to describe all of mankind in His natural flesh, what a way to speak of man. The Lord God said mankind, all men and women, all men and women, boys and girls, "All flesh is grass," all men and women are grass, He said that's all they are. If you really think about it, grass is something that you step on, right? Grass is something that you cut down. Grass is something that you cast into a fire. Sometimes people will gather up all their clippings and burn 'em. God said, "That's all that the flesh of man is before me, that's all that the flesh of man is good for before me," stepping on, cutting down, and casting into a fire, that's something isn't it? Let me say this, that's offensive. Do you find that offensive? That's offensive, that is offensive to the flesh. But do you know that's the truth? I'm looking at this word just like you are. We're looking at this together, well, I didn't write this, you didn't write this, God did. We're reading this together and it's offensive. But can we not both agree that because God said it, it's the truth, if God said it, it's the truth. The scripture says, "Let God be true and every man and woman a liar." If God said it, it's so. In the eyes of God, according to the word of God, He said, "The sinful flesh of man is worth nothing more than a blade of grass." That's it, just a blade of grass. He said, "All flesh is grass." When this program is over, go outside and pick you a blade of grass outta your yard. Lay that blade of grass in your hand and then assess how much value are you holding in your hand? How much value? Really,

look at that blade of grass and assess how much worth is right there. Really, how much significance are you holding in that blade of grass? Are you holding? Oh, that's significant right there. That's worthy of something, that's worth of something, no. How much value, how much worth, how much significance? None, you just blow on it, let it go, it means nothing, it means nothing. The root of man's sin and man's rebellion against God is in the fact that man thinks he is significant. This is where the root of man's rebellion against God and his sin against God comes from. It comes from the fact that man thinks he is valuable. Man thinks he has a worth before God. He thinks that he is significant, worth something, when God says that in man's flesh, he's not. Now believe me, I know, I know, you don't have to tell me, I know. The flesh of man does not like that, I know. The flesh of man is offended by that. The flesh of man hears that, I tell you what the natural response of this flesh is: Turn the TV off, don't, I don't wanna hear that, don't tell me that. There's a precious story of a man many many years ago who was watching TV, and a preacher was preaching the true gospel on that television and in the days of those old vacuum tubes, you used to turn the TV on and take a second and the picture would come on. And so the man turned the TV on and there was a preacher with his finger pointed like that. And he said now, "You and I come from different walks of life. We have a different upbringing," and he said, "We're different in many ways." But he said, "You and I have one thing in common: We're both sinners before God, We're both sinners in the eyes of God." And that man was so offended. He turned that TV off, he said, "Don't you say that to me, I don't wanna hear that, don't you tell me that." And he sat there for a minute and he thought, "Well, you know what? Maybe I am a sinner," turned the TV back on, and he listened to the goodness of God for sinners, through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and God saved Him, precious brother in Christ. I know that God's truth is offensive, I know that. I know that the flesh of man wants to reject it. I know the flesh of man wants to rebel against it and rebel against God because of it, I realize that. But the apostle Paul said, "If a man thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceive with himself." The apostle James said, "What is your life? It's a vapor." Like a puff of fire, one vapor. Job said, "My life is wind," that's it, wind. David said: Man at his best state, man at his best state, a man or a woman who you can look at and say, "That's a fine man," or "That's a fine woman right there." David said, "Man at His best state is altogether vanity, empty." Empty, that means worthless, nothing before God. Now, before each other, yeah, I know men and women who are worth something to me but none of us are worth anything in our flesh before God. If we believe we are, that means we have a pretty low view of God. He is so much higher than we are, He's so much holier than we are. Right here in Isaiah 40, our Lord said in verse 15, if you

have your Bible look with me at verse 15, He said, "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket," just a drop off in a bucket, "And are counted as the small dust of the balance." He's saying when you weigh something on scales, after you take whatever you were weighing that's worth something off and there's just some dust that fell off of it there, it's nothing, that's worthless, that's not even being weighed. He said, "The nations are as a drop of a bucket and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, He taketh up the aisles," the islands all over this globe, "As a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn," everybody's so proud of the cedars of Lebanon. "Oh, we got cedar trees in Lebanon." He said, "Lebanon is not even sufficient to burn, nor the beast thereof sufficient for a burn offering. All nations before Him are as nothing and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity." Do we hear that? Nothing is pretty low. But He said it's lower than that, it's less than nothing and vanity, emptiness, emptiness, emptiness. Man hears that, the flesh of man hears that, and this is the response, "I hate that." That's what man naturally says. "I hate that. Don't you tell me that, I do not want to hear that." Look at verse 6. It says: The voice said, "Cry." And He said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass and all the godliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever. It will stand forever. Now, why would God tell his preacher to declare this? It's because this is the means that God uses to open blind eyes. This is the means God uses to reveal to men and women this shocking truth of the glory and the highness of God, and the low and sinful state of man. And if there is gonna be any hope for us, we need to realize this, we must realize this. Man's natural response again is, "I don't want God's word to stand forever. If that's God's word, I don't want it to stand forever. I want my own word to stand forever." But here's the problem: Our word will not stand forever. We can try to reject it and rebel against this and we can try to convince ourselves that our word is gonna stand up up God's word, but it won't, it won't. Mercy is God revealing that to us right now. Judgment is God revealing that to us in that day as we stand before Him saying, "Not your word, my word, not your will, my will." We won't win, we will not win against this God. Because of the rebellion of the flesh of man, this word says, "God is going to deal with all flesh." I tell us this because I care about us and I care about our eternal state. And I pray God would reveal this to us, God is going to deal, this God, who's bigger than us and mightier than us, this God is going to deal with all flesh and He is going to deal with it in this way. Verse 4, it says, "Every valley shall be exalted." Every low thing, every hidden thing, every rebellion, every sin is gonna be exposed. "Every valley is going to be exalted," it's gonna be brought up and exposed in the light of

Christ, in the judgment of Christ, it's gonna be exposed. Nothing will be hidden down in the shadows, nothing. Verse 4 says, "And every mountain and hill shall be made low." All pride, the pride of man, all self-righteousness before God, I don't need your righteousness, I don't need the righteousness of Christ, I have my own. All pride, all self-righteousness is going to be cut down. "The valley shall be exalted, every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight." Every wrong that's crooked, that's wrong, that's evil, that's wicked, every wrong and every error, every sinner is gonna be straightened out. I'm sure you heard that growing up. You'd get in trouble for something and your parents say, "I'm about to straighten you out." I heard it and I'm thankful for it. But that's what He's saying, it's going to be straightened out. And He said: The rough places, everything that goes against His grain, is gonna be planed off like a woodworker, running a plane or across a piece of wood, running a sander on a piece of wood, making it smooth, all those rough places are gonna be gotten rid of. Now, who is He gonna do this to? Who did He say He was gonna do this to? All flesh, that includes us. All flesh, all have sinned against Him, that includes us. That's what every blade of grass deserves, that's what you deserve, that's what I deserve. And that's what we see when we prepare the way of all flesh, when we look at, when we behold, when we turn to and see all flesh, that's what we realize. But now according to the commandment of our God, let's prepare the way of the Lord, okay? Let's prepare the way of the Lord, verse 3 right here, "The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord." We just looked at the grass, now let's look at the Lord, okay? "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Let's turn to and behold and mark the way, the salvation of the Lord. He said, "I am the way." God, the Father, chose some people out of all flesh, out of all nations, kindreds, tribes, tongues, and He gave those people to the Lord Jesus Christ. He calls them "His people." And for His people, do you know what the Lord Jesus Christ did? Do you really know? Do I really know? Now, I say this so fearfully, I say this so reverently, I say this so humbly, because I do not want to disrespect our Lord, but I say this to His glory. I say this for our good and to His glory and honor and praise, do we know what He did for His people? Here it is. The Lord Jesus Christ made Himself to be grass. The Lord made Himself to be grass. He made Himself to be a true substitute for His people. Our Lord Jesus Christ made Himself to be everything that grass is, everything that grass deserves, everything that grass is worthy of receiving, and I'll show you that in Isaiah 53. If you turn with me just a few pages over to Isaiah 53, it says in verse 1, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant," a tender blade, He said, "and as a root out of dry ground," a root that springs up a blade out of dry ground.

That's what Christ made Himself to be for us. Verse 2 goes on to say, "He hath no form nor comeliness and when we shall see Him, there's no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and we hid as it were our faces from Him," We did not prepare His way, we did not turn to, we did not face, we did not look on Him, we hid our faces from Him, "and we esteemed Him not." "He was despised, and we esteemed Him not." But verse 4 says, "Surely hath he borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," that's what God the father sent Him to do. Verse 4 says, "He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." Yet, God sent Him to do that for us. Verse 4 says, "Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions." All of our sins, our deep sins, our low sins, our hidden secret sins, they were all exalted, they were all raised up, they were all exposed in Him. I told you that His people are among all flesh. His people are a part of all people. And the Lord said this is what's gonna happen to all people. And for His people that happened in Christ on the cross of Calvary, all of their sins were brought up before God, exposed in Him. Verse 5 says, "And He was bruised for our iniquities." All of our pride, all of our rebellion, our self-righteousness, it was all cut down. When He was cut down, He was being cut down for His people. It was all made low in Him. Verse 5 says, "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him." He endured the fire for us. He went into the fire for us. Everything that was crooked about us it was straightened out in Him. Everything that was rough about us that went against the grain of God, it was all planed off in Him. And verse 5 says, "With His stripes," because of the judgment of God stepping on Him and cutting Him down and casting Him into the fire, because of that, "we are healed." Does that do your heart good? Does that make your heart rejoice? Now, that's the reason why in Isaiah 40:1 says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God," to those that I have redeemed out of all flesh through the sacrifice of my Son, dealt with through the sacrifice of my Son, made Him to be the substitute for, sent Him to be cut down and to endure the fire for. To all of my people. God said in verse 2, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." That means to the heart, you speak to their heart. "and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished." That fire has already consumed, it has already consumed. He said, "You tell her that her iniquity is pardoned," it is finished. In the Lord Jesus Christ in what He accomplished for her, it's finished and she's safe. He said, "For she hath received of the Lord's hand, double for all her sins," the bride of Christ, the bride that was chosen and given to the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "You speak peace to her. You speak rest to her. You speak comfort to her." Because concerning the fire of God's judgment that will come to all grass." Outside of Christ, judgment is still coming. In Christ, judgment is over. Well, if that doesn't do

our heart's good, I don't know what will. In Christ who was made to be grass for her, for His bride, for His love, He's already suffered that judgment for her and she's safe, totally, totally safe. He said tell her that. Remind her of that, and you comfort her with that. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." I pray we are His people, I pray we are the sheep of His pasture, and I pray that that has brought comfort to our souls.