

# Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton



Today 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018 speaker Philip Wells, Full-time Elder.  
This morning – “Good news of great comfort” Isaiah 40

*[www.calvary-brighton.org.uk](http://www.calvary-brighton.org.uk)*

*[calvary-brighton.sermon.net](http://calvary-brighton.sermon.net)*

# The good news of comfort

*Maybe you have seen the footage of  
Armistice day back in 1918.*

*What amazement to learn that warfare was  
over!*

*How wonderful to know that soldiers in  
distant lands were coming home!*

*What comfort that news brought.*

*... so we will be able to understand this  
powerful poem in the Bible.*

*"Comfort, comfort my people"*



# The good news of comfort

- 1. Why do they need comfort?*
- 2. What comfort is being brought*
- 3. Who assures them of comfort?*



# *1. Why do they need comfort?*

*A1 - because these are the people of God in the covenant with Moses (Old covenant, Old Testament)*

- They were given a land without deserving it, but conditionally*
- The condition was glad thankful loyal obedience*
- The penalty for disloyalty was, defeat, scattering and exile*
- that's what God had actually done to the people addressed*
- ==> sent away from their God! Abandoned! "How did that happen?" "Has God failed?" "Is our sin too bad for his promises to overcome?"*
- ==> into distant, dark, dungeon*
- → they would value comfort!*

# *1. Why do they need comfort?*

*A2 - because this distant dark dungeon is a vivid representation of the human condition*

- Jews and non-Jews alike*
- we've been given so much*
- Yet human beings are*
  - Ungrateful, irreverent, disloyal*
- "all flesh is like grass"*

## 2. What comfort does he bring?

*"comfort x comfort" my people*

*v.2 speak to her heart (i.e. tenderly)*

- *"hard service" ended*
- *"sin paid for"*
- *"receive double [i.e. the exact match] for her sin"*

*LIKE ARMISTICE DAY*

- *WAR IS OVER*
- *THE PRISONERS CAN COME HOME*



*He means 70 years of exile had (somehow) paid the price*

## *2. What comfort does he bring?*

### *Root cause:*

- "her sin has been paid for"*
- i.e. she was sent into exile because of her sin ...*
- ??? paid for herself, by 70 years of suffering and forsaken-ness*
- If you have a guilty penalty hanging over your head it is great news to hear that the penalty is paid!*

### *Release and Return*

- Released from dark, distant, dungeon*
  - v. 11 God brings them back like a caring shepherd*
  - v.30 it's a long journey, but God gives them strength to get safe home*

## *2. What comfort does he bring?*

*Root of sin paid for → release and return, safe home*

***BUT:*** *they found that even when they were back in the land this was only a foretaste*

- Sin was only very partially paid for ... not finished!*
- They were released from the evil power of Babylon, but still under the evil power of Satan*
- Being back in Judea didn't automatically bring them nearer to God*

***\* what they were to experience was just a fore-taste of the BIG COMFORT***

## *2. What comfort does he bring?*

*Root of sin paid for → release and return, safe home*

*Till, many hundreds of years later:*

*"A voice crying in the desert ... God is coming to save you ..."*

*= John the Baptist*

*Announcing the coming of **Jesus***

*"Come to me [=Jesus] all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" [rest = to come safe home]*

***Claim:** Jesus brings, and will bring, this comfort in its fulfilled form*

***Promise:** if you engage with Jesus Christ by faith you will be brought safe home*

### *3. Who assures the comfort?*

*N.B. God does want his people to be comforted!*

*A variety of answers:*

#### *a. crying-out voices that are sent by God*

- [ to whom? ] speak tenderly and proclaim*
- "voice in the desert" v.3*
- The voice asking for a message "what shall I cry?"*
- "on a high mountain" v.9 the bringer of good news to Jerusalem (OR "Jerusalem you bringer of good news" to other towns and cities v.9,10)*

*=> these voices are all sent. Authorised by the LORD himself*

*e.a. I am your uncle from Niaeria you have won \$500k ... please send me your bank details ... is almost certainly fake!*

*=> the Holy Spirit adds his testimony to the words of the authorised speaker ... to you, and with you*

### *3. Who assures them of comfort?*

*How does he re-assure them*

*b. the **LORD** himself assures of comfort*

*– a. his faithfulness*

- v.6 all flesh is like grass ... hewed like withering flower  
BUT the word of our God stands for ever.*

*– b. his Almightyness*

- v.26 he ensures his creatures the stars are all present,  
knowing each by name.*
- v.27 How much more is he well able to look after his  
people*

*This is our God too, he is unchanging.*

*We have better promises, clearer commitments,  
more benefits*

*– Let us be assured of his comfort!*

# *The good news of comfort*

## *1. Why do they need comfort?*

- Because without it they - like us - would be distant, dark, dungeon ... prisoners of sin and Satan*

## *2. What comfort is being brought*

- that root sin is paid for ... release and return*

## *3. Who assures them of comfort?*

- Messengers sent from God himself*
- The Creator - Almighty and dependable*

*Warfare over ... who wouldn't rejoice!*

*Shepherded home by the LORD - what an enviable position to be in!*

*What good reasons for amazed gratitude!*