

44 40:9-17

with might, and his arm will rule for him. See, his reward is with him and his work ^{^6} before him. (11) He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom, and will gently lead those that are with young.

The word "Zion," which is used eleven times in this section of Isaiah as a synonym for Jerusalem, was the name of the part of the city where David had built his palace.

Some interpreters take Zion and Jerusalem as being, like the cities of Judah, the recipients of the good news rather than those who brought it, since the common translation of verse 9 does not follow the order of the Hebrew words. There are strong arguments on both sides. In either case, the verse reiterates and stresses truths that are expressed in other parts of chapter 40 or in later chapters.

The good news proclaimed in verse 9 is elaborated in verses 10-11. God will show His mighty power to intervene in situations that have appeared hopeless. Not only will He do this, but He will do it with gentleness and Love. He will feed His flock like a shepherd, and gather the lambs in His arms. This is a beautiful passage presenting God's Love and mercy.

Between verse 11 and verse 12 there is a sharp transition.

Verses 12-17 read as follows:

(12) Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, marked off the heavens by the span, calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? (13) Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor? (14) With whom did he take counsel? Who gave him discernment? Who instructed him in the path of justice, taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding? (15) See, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are counted as a speck of dust on the scales. See! he lifts up the coastlands like fine dust, (16) and Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering. (17) All the nations are as nothing before him; they are regarded by him as less than nothing and meaningless.