

Isaiah 40: 1-5

"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.

A voice of one calling:  
"In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

Make ready by

- \* Catching the vision
- \* Preparing our hearts

Questions for further study ... Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> '10

"Prepare the way"

1. Preparing a straight highway means removing obstacles and rolling out the red carpet for the coming of the Lord. Isaiah told people to prepare for see God work.

- What do you think John the Baptist wanted people to understand when he quoted these verses in Matthew 3? (see Matthew 3: 1).
- How can we help "prepare the way" for others to meet Jesus?
- What obstacles could there be in our lives that could block the progress of the gospel?

2. v5 says "For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

- What confidence does this give us? see Isaiah 55: 10,11; Hebrew 4: 12-14.
- What encouragement do these verses bring into the situations in your own life?

3. We talked about how regular Bible reading & prayer can help prepare our hearts for what God wants to say to us and do through us. Talk together about any changes you're going to make to be more committed to this.

e.g. use the Bible reading plan given out on Sunday – also on the church website. For alternative Bible reading plans see

[www.heartlight.org](http://www.heartlight.org)

4. We heard the quote from William Carey "Attempt great things for God Expect great things from God." He was encouraging people not to "hold back" but to catch the vision God had given. (He was preaching on Isaiah 54: 2) How can we encourage each other to do the same?