

17<sup>th</sup> Day of Advent  
December 17, 2024

[Read Isaiah 40: 1-11](#)

Due to the unfaithfulness of the people of Judah, who continuously chased after false gods and failed to worship the true God, God had given them over to occupation and exile. The Babylonians desecrated and destroyed the temple in Jerusalem, and God had withdrawn his presence from there. Rather than abandoning this fickle people, God returned to those who repented offering new hope. Comfort, comfort my people... God has a plan. Their iniquity is pardoned.

God's Word stands to do this in the face of human weakness. The God of might, who creates all flesh, and before whom all human plans and conquests wither like grass, will do this. The King, our God is coming. Behold your God, the mighty. But first, the way must be prepared. All stones must be removed and the way made level. God assigns this message of repentance to John the Baptist, to remove the stones of our hardened hearts and to clear the way for God's act of divine forgiveness. According to his eternal plan, the Way of God is the redemption of his people through Jesus Christ, his son. The good news is that this God who comes in might to sweep away our sins also, in Jesus Christ, gathers us to himself like a shepherd gathers his lambs. The sinless Son of God died to atone for our sins and then in grace shares the victory with us.

*Prayer: O Lord God, I thank you that you are faithful, even when I am not. Thank you for coming to me in Jesus Christ, forgiving my sin, and gathering me in your arms as one of your lambs.*

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