

Series: Isaiah

Title: So Will I Comfort You

Text: Isaiah 66: 10-14

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Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Isaiah 66: 10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: 11: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. 12: For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon *her* sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees. 13: As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. 14: And when ye see *this*, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and *his* indignation toward his enemies.

For those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, to you who are the chosen Israel of God, to you who are God's Jerusalem, his church, to you who are born of his Spirit and saved by his grace, God promises, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." This is picture we all understand.

Proposition: God promises he will comfort us with the same tender care as a mother comforts her little child.

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WHO IS OUR COMFORTER?

God says, "So will I comfort you." God is the one who promises to comfort each of his children born of his grace. That means our triune God is our comforter.

God our Father is our Comforter. He is the "God of all comfort." (2 Cor 1: 3) God our Father is the "God of consolation." (Rom 15: 5)

Likewise, God the Son is our Comforter. Christ is "the consolation of Israel." (Lu 2:25) Christ began to fulfill this prophecy when he promised the first apostles and disciples and all his people, saying,

John 14: 18: I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. 19: Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. 20: At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

God the Holy Spirit is our Comforter. Christ promised,

John 15:26: But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

Brethren, no matter what trouble we face, our triune God promises to comfort us. God says, "So will I comfort you."

WITH WHAT CARE SHALL GOD COMFORT US?

Our great God says, “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.”

I remember the first time my wife held our children and the first time their father held them. She was much better at comforting than I was. When God speaks of his pity, he says, “As a father pitieth *his* children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.” (Ps 103: 13) But when he speaks of comfort, he compares his comfort to that of a mother.

A mother comforts with joy and gladness and love. Notice, God gives this comfort through the rejoicing and gladness of his church, compared here to a mother, “Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.” (Is 66: 10)

What is the rejoicing of Jerusalem, the church, with which God comforts his children through her gospel?

First, it is the gospel of God’s sovereign effectual grace, to save all his elect people. The church rejoices in God’s irresistible power to make his church travail for his children. God said, “Shall I bring to the birth...?” (Is 66: 9) God is the one who by his grace causes us, as his church, to travail in spreading the gospel that his children might be born-again. This is the great rejoicing of all who are called by God into his church to labor together in spreading the gospel of Christ and him crucified. The power is of God to cause us to engage in this travail and not of us. Also, the church rejoices in God’s power to birth his children anew through his church preaching the gospel. God says, “and [shall I] not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD.” (Is 66: 9) The same as God’s grace causes his church to travail, God’s grace also causes his children to be born-again. The church rejoices that Christ shall not lose one for whom he died. He says, “Shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.” (Is 66: 9) God did not cause the early church to bring forth children then cease calling out his children. He continues to do so to this day. And he shall continue until the last child is born-again by his irresistible grace. This sure word of grace is the comfort God gives his church to comfort his children as a mother. So he says to his children “Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.” Many in the early church mourned for the church in its persecuted condition. We have seen times of mourning for her and we do now. But he says to all his children who mourn for the church to rejoice with joy with her. God is working everything together for the good of his church.

Another way a mother comforts her little new born child is with the milk of her breast. From his holy hill of Zion—through his church—God comforts his little ones with the milk of the gospel of Christ. He says, “That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.” (Is 66: 11) Our consolation is Christ the Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us, who purged our sins by his own blood, who robes us in his righteousness and who preserves us by his grace. Our milk is the word of the gospel of the Lord. The abundance of our glory—our brightness—is Christ our Light.

Our rejoicing is Christ our Peace. He says, “For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck.” (Is 66: 12) The Prince of peace wrought peace between his people and God by his finished work, “my peace I give to you.” In the early church, Christ promised his Jewish elect that he would call his lost sheep from the Gentiles—he promises us the same today. What the LORD declares through Isaiah, Christ declared when he said,

John 10: 14: I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. 15: As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16: And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

Therefore, God says this is the comfort and milk with which he will nourish and comfort his children through my church like as a mother comforts her little child. The gospel delivered through the church to God's children is compared to milk delivered to an infant by its mother.

1 Peter 1: 25: ...the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. 2: 1: Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2: As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Have you tasted the Lord is gracious? God is declaring that he will continue to grow us through his gospel. Therefore, as he told the fearful early church, so he tells us to lay aside everything that hinders you and desire this milk that you may grow thereby. The good news God declares through Isaiah is good news to comfort and encourage us in our day the same as it was to the early church,

Romans 15:4: For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

How else does God comfort his children like a mother? A mother comforts very tenderly and carefully. So it is that God comforts his children, through his church. He says, "ye shall be borne upon *her* sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." (Is 66: 12-13) God is so powerful to work his grace in his people that he is able to give this very heart to his ministers to minister to his children. Remember the tender care with which Paul ministered the gospel to the Thessalonians? He said,

1Thessalonians 2:7: But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: 8: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. 9: For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable to any of you, we preached the gospel unto you.

God makes his preachers and his whole church have a sincere affection for those God is drawing to Christ, to those who are troubled, to those who need comfort. He makes us know that his grace comes by his Spirit and not by our power and might. "This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." (Zech 4: 6)

God has not provided his preachers to whip and yoke but to comfort his people with the good news of Christ's successful redemption. This is God's charge to his preachers:

Isaiah 40:1: Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. (2) 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."

Our warfare is accomplished by God the Father's purpose and grace, choosing whom he will in Christ. Our iniquity is pardoned by God the Son's finished work "who was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Is 53: 5) We have received of the Lord's hand double by the Holy Spirit applying all his blessings to us personally. God says,

Isaiah 61:7: For your shame *ye shall have* double; and *for* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: [Christ our Inheritance] therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

Yet, when a mother comforts her child sometimes she is simply unable to comfort effectually. But this is where God's comfort differs. God says, "So shall I comfort thee; And ye shall be comforted." (Is 66: 13) This shows that this work is not of us! God uses his church! But the power is of God not of us! Therefore there are no maybe's in God's promises. In Christ, God's promises are yes and amen. God says, "Ye shall be comforted!" The gates of hell will not stop our Captain. The world and all its afflictions will not stop him. All our sins and unbelief will never hinder him. God is more powerful than all! Child of God, "Ye shall be comforted!"

WHERE DOES THE LORD COMFORT HIS PEOPLE?

Lastly, God declares where the Lord shall minister this comfort to his people, "Ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." (Is 66: 13) God promises that in the church of God—heavenly Jerusalem—where Christ preaches through his preacher all his people shall be comforted!

Brethren, when we most need comfort, we tend to neglect assembling with God's people under the sound of the gospel. It is just what sin does to us. But with his assembled people, under the sound of the gospel, is the very place God promises us in our text that his people shall be comforted.

Imagine you need comfort right now! Do you think you will find comfort from God in heaven or hell? To absent ourselves from his church where God promises to bless us, to instead seek comfort in the world is like seeking comfort in hell.

God says in our text that he shall comfort his people; he shall do so through his gospel; and the place is in Jerusalem—his church. It is in his church—his temple—amongst his living stones which are built up by him—which is his spiritual house in which Christ dwells. (Eph 2: 19-22; 1 Pet 2: 5-6)

It is in his church where his comfort is ministered to us as we read his word together with our brethren. It is where we sing his praises together with our brethren; where we hear our brethren pray for us and one another and ask God to glorify himself in our salvation; where we hear Christ's gospel proclaimed in spirit and in truth; where we observe his ordinances together as a family; where we encourage one another as brothers and sisters who love one another; where Christ has promised to make his presence known in our midst. God promises to bless his people in the midst of his church:

Isaiah 66: 11: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory....12:...then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon *her* sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees. 13: As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. 14: And when ye see *this*, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and *his* indignation toward his enemies.

Believer, it is only at Christ's feet that we find consolation and sin loses its weight and death loses its sting and sorrow is turned to joy. So Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Mt 11: 28-30) "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem."

Amen!