



## “LIKE THE COMFORT OF A MOTHER”

**Theme:** God’s heart is touched by the challenges and traumas of His people.

In our text today, the prophet Isaiah provides a concluding view of God’s faithfulness to Israel – that ultimately, despite their treacherous abandonment of the Covenant and the idolatrous indulgences in their unbelief, God is going to do a work to magnify Himself using His faithfulness to the Covenant. It both draws and distinction from the heinous unfaithfulness of Israel while magnifying the heŕsed love for the chosen people of Israel.

He begins by calling attention to the folly of a local god compared to Yahweh – the eternal, self-existent, whose immensity and omnipresence transcend location. God truly desires from men not the majesty and bling of external adornments, structures, and temples but a heart that is “humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word” (v. 2).

Those who claim to worship the Lord but have hearts that are proud, arrogant, and dismissive of His Word are indistinguishable from idolaters (vv. 3-4). However, those who tremble at the Word of the Lord are going to see their brethren (Jews who are given to idolatry) judged – condemned, and Yahweh will avenge Himself against them – something Israel currently knows as they have been left desolate because of their treacheries and rejections of the Messiah at the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent.

Isaiah prophesies regarding the time when the Lord restores Israel by drawing an analogy to the tenderness of a mother caring for a newborn. The “rebirth” of Israel will be like a child going through labor, issuing forth into a healthy baby to be cherished, nourished, and loved by God Himself. The suffering of Israel through the tribulation will be like labor – even being described as such by Christ Jesus – cp. Matthew 24:3-8. God’s comment through Isaiah is that He won’t cause them to go through labor and not give birth to the Kingdom.

In the kingdom, there will be joy in Jerusalem that will serve as a mother nursing her child – the restored Israel who will “suck and be delighted with her bountiful bosom” – v. 11. Her milk will be like a river of blessing, and the affection between the Lord and Israel will be compared to a mother with her child.

Why does God use the metaphor of a mother when describing the intimacy between Himself and His chosen people? A mother provides the most visceral and deepest-felt connections between human beings. It is the most tender, cherishing, loving, and intimate of all relationships. This, perhaps, is the greatest tribute given in all the world – that God would

compare His own covenant love for Israel to a mother's love.

## I. COMFORT WHEN SUFFERING

### A. Suffering Physically – **2 Kings 4:18-20**

1. When they are sick.
  - a) *There is nobody that a child would prefer to go to when they are ill.*
  - b) *It is common for the mother to be the one for whom is called during the night or in times of distress.*
  - c) *Something unique about Mom's touch, chicken soup, or her slight kiss makes the fever bearable.*
  - d) *Similarly, the believer knows no other comfort when ill than that receive in going to our Heavenly Father with our distress – cp. **2 Corinthians 1:3-4.***
2. When they are Scraped
  - a) *Not only do we see the comfort received from God when some sickness gains a hold of our bodies, but also when there are emergencies when we are injured.*
  - b) *A child runs to his mother when he cuts a finger or scrapes the knee – once again to find that a mother's touch brings comfort.*
  - c) *Likewise, when we find ourselves in traumatic times, we can find comfort in the Lord – prayer is often our immediate recourse.*

### B. Suffering Emotionally –

1. Suffering from feeling lonely
  - a) *Often children think that no one understands them – that they are alone.*
  - b) *They often turn to their mothers for comfort when such is the case.*
  - c) *The same is true for the believer when he is hurting and lonely – God is always present to turn to for comfort – cp. **Psalm 25:16-17; Hebrews 13:5.***
2. Suffering from feeling like a failure
  - a) *Failure is something that every child experiences – from the accidental “wetting of the pants” to the lapses in discretion in relationships, a child will fail.*
  - b) *It is usually to the mother that one turns – knowing she will not reject her children merely because they have failed.*
  - c) *When believer experiences failure – in whatever way – they know they can always turn to the Lord and find solace. **Psalm 73:26.***
3. Suffering from feeling rejected

- a) *Children often lay in their beds at night and bemoan that “nobody likes me!”*
- b) *From playground rejection to the deliberate cruelties of catty little girls who deliberately try to hurt other little girls, mothers’ shoulders are used to comfort children who feel as though no one else cares.*
- c) *Interestingly, when a mom replies: “But honey, I love you and always will,” the child will often reply or at least think – “You don’t count; you’re my mom! You have to love me!”*
- d) *But does that unconditional love count deep down inside a child?*
- e) *A believer knows the answer to this as we can find comfort in that God’s love never fails though all else would forsake and refuse us their love – cp. **Isaiah 49:14-16**.*

## II. COMFORT WHEN SCARED

### A. Scared of the Known

1. “Hiding behind mama’s skirt” – is a common expression to describe childlike behavior.
2. Often at the door, when children leave the services with their parents, coy little ones will slink back behind their moms for comfort.
3. Often this is the reaction – especially when danger is known – Mom will come into the room of a child who has had a bad dream and say, “It’s OK, mama’s here.”
4. As believers, we also gain great confidence in the awareness of God’s presence with us – cp. **Joshua 1:9**.
5. This is incredibly precious when we face things we know we’ll have to face, such as death – cp. **Psalms 23:4**.

### B. Scared of the Unknown

1. In addition, there are the unknowns of life that we often face – things we’ve never experienced or that have never been fully described to us.
2. When my daughter went to kindergarten, she was apprehensive and wanted the comfort of a parent’s presence.
3. Such is the case with a child of God – the awareness of God’s ever-abiding presence brings tremendous comfort as we face things we don’t know about – cp, **Psalms 121**.

## III. COMFORT WHEN SINFUL

### A. The Disposition to Forgive

1. Arguably, “foolishness is bound in the heart of a child” – that we are all

born with a sinful nature – cp. *Proverbs 22:15; Psalm 51:5*.

2. Despite the sinfulness that exists in a person, a mother continues to love and cherish her child – there’s always a special place there.
3. Hitler’s mother, Stalin’s mother, and other monstrous individuals were loved by their mothers.
4. Yet a willingness remains to forgive children their wrongs – mainly when a repentant spirit exists.
5. With this in mind, it seems easiest to gain the forgiveness of most mothers than anyone else – cp. *Judges 17:1-3*.
6. In like manner, God stands ready to forgive all who will come to Him – cp. *Isaiah 30:18; Matthew 23:37*.

#### **B. The Deliverance from Sin**

1. Thus, we find that even errant children can find forgiveness with their others – even when no one else would forgive.
2. We are also, as errant people who had rebelled against God, able to come back and find forgiveness at the hands of God – literally!
3. We are told that if we confess our sins, He will forgive us all our sins – **1 John 1:9**.
4. Understand God's delight in forgiving His children and being made clean through the faith in the work of Jesu Christ, whose blood cleanses us from all unrighteousness – cp. **1 John 1:7**.

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