



2021 1Q Isaiah: Lesson 8 Comfort My People

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

Consider the Title for this week *Comfort My People*

What does this mean? How does God comfort?

- If you were dying from cancer, would compassionate friends be a comfort?
 - Would pain medicine, nausea medicine, competent medical care be a comfort?
 - But what would bring you the most comfort?—healing!
- If you were a prisoner of war would a kind guard be a comfort?
 - Would good food, clean accommodations and clothing, packages and letters from home be a comfort?
 - But what would bring you the most comfort? –would it be freedom and going home?

In this world of sin how does God comfort?

- Does God comfort with:
 - loving family and friends
 - food, clothing, shelter, financial resources
 - healthcare or healing
- But does God's plan to comfort, go far beyond this and if carried to completion result in eternal healing, and freedom from sin?

But what does it mean to be freed from sin? Is it a molecule, is it a bacteria, is it made out of matter? Sin is rooted in lies, in falsehood which breaks God's design protocols for life resulting in a state of being that is out of harmony with God's design and results in suffering, misery, pain; in other words, being in sin is not comfortable.

- Lies believed break the circle of love and trust
- broken love and trust result in fear and selfishness—this internal state of fear and selfishness is a painful state, there is no peace here, no comfort, no joy, and this state leads to
- all the acts of sin as people seek to comfort themselves with various human coping strategies that make the condition worse
- damages mind, body, character, relationships—this is a terminal condition



And there is no comfort or peace in this condition—but God comforts us. If we have diagnosed the problem correctly that sin is a condition of being out of harmony with God, filled with fear and selfishness, then we should be able to see God’s plan to comfort—to remove sinfulness and heal us?

How does God remove sin? How does God remove fear and selfishness from our hearts and minds and restore His law in our hearts thereby comforting us?

Jesus is key, without Jesus this could not happen—but what does Jesus provide that comforts us?

Jesus is the Word made flesh and as such Jesus is the truth made flesh—we see in Jesus the truth about God and what does truth do to lies? Truth destroys lies and sets us free.

So the first thing Jesus provides us is the truth. But if we accept the truth that Jesus reveals and reject the lies of Satan and are won back to trust in God—is that sufficient to remedy the sin problem? Or did Jesus need to provide us something more than truth in order to cure the sin problem and free us from fear and selfishness? So what more is needed to fulfill God’s plan to comfort in addition to bring us the truth and win us to trust? What else do we need? A new heart and right spirit, a new nature, sinless human character—can any of us work hard and develop this?

I love this description in the book *The Desire of Ages*:

The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; [Why? For the same reason the law of respiration requires we breath. It is how life is built by God to operate, only in harmony with the law of love do we find comfort.] and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. **But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them.** [Jesus, as a human being, was tempted in every way like us, felt the pull of the survival drives, felt fear, but instead chose to love perfectly thus destroying the infection of sin in humanity and became our Savior. Heb 5:8,9. He gives us the gift of a holy life and perfect character.] His life stands for the life of men. [He becomes the second Adam. The new head of humanity. Our King—the living vine to whom we connect and receive life] Thus they have **remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.** [We have remission of sins through forbearance, or grace, not through legal payment. Think of it as a child with sickness who gets the remedy to their condition, the past symptoms are of no account once they are well. Our past acts of sin are irrelevant once we are cured, healed, set right, no longer out of harmony with God, once His law is written upon our hearts and minds.] **More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty.** [Who builds up the sinner’s character? God build it up taking the life of Christ and reproducing it in those who embrace the truth and surrender their lives to Him in trust and cooperate with Him.] Thus the very **righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ.** God can “be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:26. DA 762.2



But if this is so, if it is sin that destroys our peace, creates a sickness in heart, mind, character, relationships that brings pain and suffering, if Jesus is God's means to heal us, to set us free, then why is the Holy Spirit called the Comforter?

Also from *The Desire of Ages*:

The Comforter is called “the Spirit of truth.” His work is to define and maintain the truth. **He first dwells in the heart as the Spirit of truth, and thus He becomes the Comforter. There is comfort and peace in the truth, but no real peace or comfort can be found in falsehood.** It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the mind. **By directing men to false standards, he misshapes the character.** [Oh do we see this happening in society today? Do you see false standards being proclaimed and accepted and do you see people becoming more Christlike or more debased, abusive, unloving, violent, fearful, selfish and controlling?] Through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the heart. Thus He exposes error, and expels it from the soul. **It is by the Spirit of truth, working through the word of God, that Christ subdues His chosen people to Himself.** ... DA 671.1

The Spirit was to be given as **a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail.** [Wait, what? Do you believe this or not? What does this mean? Without the Spirit the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. This is only true in design law, in how reality works. Jesus revealed truth that when accepted wins to trust and procured the remedy that heals our hearts—but that remedy needs application in our hearts, which is what the Spirit does. But if we accept Satan's lie about God's law that it is imposed, and then teach the lie that sin is a legal problem rather than a condition of being, and then teach the lie that Jesus died to pay our legal debt, and then teach the lie that salvation is getting a legal declaration of that payment made in the courts of heaven or in our legal record book—then all that could be made without the regenerating agency of the Spirit. The penal legal view is the wine of Babylon that intoxicates the world, it misrepresents God and keeps people's minds and judgments impaired while they feel good about their salvation, yet they remain terminal.] The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. **Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power.** [Do you see why Satan wants to minimize the work of the Holy Spirit, to diminish or eliminate the Holy Spirit from our beliefs? Since Satan failed in stopping Jesus from coming to Earth as our Savior, and failed in his assaults on Jesus during His human life on Earth, Satan now works to stop us from receiving the Holy Spirit as the agency which applies the remedy in our hearts. He gets people to believe there is no Holy Spirit so they don't even ask for this Third Person of the Godhead to transform them.] **It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature.** Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church. DA 671.2



So how does God bring us comfort? By healing our hearts and minds and freeing us from living under the domination of fear, selfishness, guilt and shame.

What does the healing progression look like? It starts where the sinful progression began.

- The damage started with Lies believed breaking the circle of love and trust—so the healing starts with
- Truth believed destroying lies and winning us back to trust
 - Jesus is the source of all truth—in Old Testament times Jesus is the member of the Godhead acting in human history thus giving evidence or truth
 - Jesus is our Savior, our incarnate God who was tempted in every way like we are yet, as a human overcame the temptation of Satan, overcame the carnal drives of fear and selfishness and developed a perfect sinless human character
 - The Holy Spirit is the agency that connects the dots of truth in our minds, brings together the historic activity of Jesus to win us to trust, to bring us to repentance
- In trust we open the heart and the Holy Spirit comes in and takes the victory of Christ and reproduces it in us so it is no longer our sinful fear-ridden selves but Christlike loving selves that live
 - Thus the Holy Spirit applies the truth to remove lies and win to trust and the Holy Spirit writes the law of God, the character of God as lived out by Jesus in our hearts as we trust Him
- We choose to follow Jesus in practicing His methods and receive the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit that enlightens, transforms and enables us to love even our enemies, and we do acts of love, kindness, benevolence, self-sacrifice and in so doing
- We grow in godliness and are lights in this world witnessing His kingdom to others and receive eternal life

Is this process of being set free from sin, being delivered from fear and selfishness fun? Or can the process be agonizing, painful, distressing before it is comforting? Why?

Because once there is brokenness of any kind, there are no pain free options.

Understand, we are born in sin and conceived in iniquity—we are not born guilty, under legal penalty, we are born terminal, with a condition we didn't choose. But, this condition, if unremedied will result in all kinds of symptoms (sins) which cause more sickness, pain, suffering and ultimately death.

God's healing plan works to free us from fear and selfishness and restore us to eternal life, righteousness, but this requires we "die to self" it is a painful experience to face our own sickness of heart, to let the truth diagnose us, to stop trying to justify ourselves, to admit we cannot save ourselves and can only accept the remedy provided by Jesus. And applying the remedy, choosing the truth, breaking the old habits can also be initially painful. There may be physical withdrawal, there may be cravings, there may be relationships that need to be severed, there may be jobs that need to be



terminated, there may be enterprises we need to withdraw from, there may be TV programs we need to stop watching.

But, as we follow God's healing plan the initial pain fades away and we grow in godliness and are freed from fear, guilt, shame, the selfish drives lose their power and we experience real peace, real comfort.

Satan tricks the world with the suffering caused by sin, the pain, and the fear of more pain. The brokenness in the heart and in relationships that sin causes incites greater fear, greater distrust of others, which inflames the fear of getting hurt again, which leads to acts of selfishness and pleasure seeking, something to take away the pain in the heart and mind. This fear driven, me first, pain avoiding selfish drive to comfort ourselves is what causes all the evils in the world:

- all addictions are caused by people seeking to comfort themselves
- all human governments with their imposed laws and people seeking social justice through imposed laws and punishments are people who have been hurt, who are afraid, and who are seeking to make themselves feel safe, to comfort themselves through Satan's kingdoms of imposed laws and imposed punishments
- all vengeance seeking is people who are hurt and afraid seeking to comfort themselves
- all totalitarianism, communism, socialism is fear driven people seeking to comfort themselves
- all abusing spouses abuse because they are afraid, insecure and seek to make themselves feel stronger in control by using power over those weaker
- all verbal attacks—the mean cutting and hurtful comments—come from those afraid who are seeking to protect themselves by taking down someone perceived as a threat
- all eating disorders are people who are filled with fear and insecurity and who are seeking to comfort themselves with food (bingers) or control (restrictors)
- all cheating, lying, stealing, embezzling, toxic waste dumping is done by people afraid, insecure and seeking more wealth, more stuff to comfort themselves and feel safe
- all violence against others is done by those afraid, insecure and seeking to comfort themselves, make themselves safe in some way

Understand the times in which we live. The four winds are being loosed and the enemy goes around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. A lion's roar doesn't injure, it incites fear. The enemy is filling the world with fear message after fear message, and the world is being driven into his arms as they seek to comfort themselves by applying his methods of rules, coercion, control, violence, intimidation, restriction of liberties.

At this time in human history God calls for a people to give the final message of mercy to the world—the message of the truth about His character of love. It is love that casts out fear, it is truth that destroys lies and frees minds and brings true comfort. But love only exists in an atmosphere of freedom.



We must reject the imposed law systems of the world, we must reject the penal/legal theologies and come back to the truth that our God is the Creator of heaven and earth whose character is love and whose laws are the design protocols for life. Our Creator God has come to earth to free us from fear, free us from selfishness and comfort us by healing us with the truth and with a new nature.

SUNDAY

Read Isaiah 40:1-2:

“Comfort, comfort my people,”
says your God.
40:2 “Speak kindly to Jerusalem, and tell her
that her time of warfare is over,
that her punishment is completed.
For the LORD has made her pay double for all her sins.” (Is 40:1–2NET).

Comfort, yes, comfort My people!”
Says your God.
2 “Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her,
That her warfare is ended,
That her iniquity is pardoned;
For she has received from the LORD’s hand
Double for all her sins.” (Is 40:1–2NKJV).

Do you read both of these the same? Do they mean the same thing to you?

The lesson takes the view of punishment and that God is punishing Israel. The lesson asks, “There time of punishment has finally ended. What punishment was that?” They answer, “There are many answers to this question, There was the punishment administered by Assyria, the rod of God’s anger...”

What do you think?

What questions do you have? This is another example of how one’s biases before reading the Scripture—including the Hebrew—impacts one’s understanding and how one translates. If we believe God’s law functions like human law and justice requires inflicted punishment, then we are more likely to translate as the NET and read it as the lesson authors. But if we understand God’s law as design law then we translate it differently, the NKJV is closer.

The next verse of chapter 40 reads:

A voice of one calling:
“In the desert prepare



the way for the LORD;
make straight in the wilderness
a highway for our God. (Is 40:3 NIV84)

What is this referring to? John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus—hmmm...if this is referring to the first advent of Jesus, would the verses before it, verses 1 and 2 also refer to that time?

Why do we take the first two verses to speak of literal Jerusalem and the wars going on around them, but the next verse about John the Baptist and the rest of the chapter about Jesus our Savior?

What is the ultimate comfort, when God speaks about comforting His people is the comfort He has in mind merely deliverance from foreign occupation or is God's plan to delivery from sin, of which deliverance from foreign occupation is an object lesson?

Is the message of the Old Testament primarily about God delivering Israel the nations around them, from human enemies? Or is the message of the Old Testament a record of real historical events that not only record history but reveal a larger reality and plan? What do the historical records reveal besides the lives of the people and nations recorded?

- The truth about God's character—God reveals Himself in history as an actor and His methods are revealed
- The truth about sin and what it does to people and God's creation
- The truth about Satan, who the destroyer actually is
- God's plan to save and heal

Thus the Old Testament is primarily the record of God working to fulfill His promise to bring our Messiah as a descendant of the woman to save humanity from sin and Satan battling to stop that plan.

With that in mind, what do we understand Isaiah 40:1,2 to be about?

That we will have comfort because our warfare against principalities and powers of darkness is going to end, our iniquity—the terminal condition with which we are born and which causes so much suffering and pain is going to be cured, a remedy is being provided.

Consider this description from the book *Prophets and Kings* beginning on page 722—it is the last chapter in the book:

In the darkest days of her long conflict with evil, the church of God has been given revelations of the eternal purpose of Jehovah. His people have been permitted to **look beyond the trials** of the present to the triumphs of the future, when, the **warfare having been accomplished**, the redeemed will enter into possession of the promised land. These visions of future glory, scenes pictured by the hand of God, should be dear to His church today, when the **controversy of the ages is rapidly closing** and the promised blessings are soon to be realized in all their fullness. PK 722.1 **[Do you recognize the signs in which we live? Do you see the**



final events rapidly fulfilling? Are you keeping in mind the vision of the future restoration that God has given us to encourage us?]

Many were the messages of comfort given the church by the prophets of old. “Comfort ye, comfort ye My people” (Isaiah 40:1), was Isaiah's commission from God; and with the commission were given wonderful visions that have been the believers' hope and joy through all the centuries that have followed...PK 722.2 [What is the ultimate comfort God gives us? It is freedom from sin in a world made new!]

Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her **final conflict**... she is to go forth into all the world, **conquering and to conquer**. PK 725.2 [What is our armor? How do we conquer? Over what are we to conquer? Are we to conquer evil through human governments? Do we gain the victory with more laws, more sanctions, more inflicted punishments?]

The darkest hour of the church's struggle with the powers of evil is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance. But none who trust in God need fear; for “when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,” God will be to His church “a refuge from the storm.” Isaiah 25:4. PK 725.3 [When is the darkest hour? It is upon us, we are entering into the final events. But do we need to fear? Not if we reject the systems of the world, not if we refuse to follow where fear leads and instead trust God and follow where love leads!]

In that day only the righteous are promised deliverance. [Why? Deliverance from what? Notice the text from Isaiah that this author quotes right after her statement that only the righteous are promised deliverance.] “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure...” Isaiah 33:14-16. PK 725.4 [What is being described? What is the fire? Why do the righteous live in it? Why do the wicked get consumed by it? What does truth do to a lie? What does infinite love do to selfishness? This is design law—the reality of each person's heart and minds either healed or not healed that makes the difference.]

And as the prophet beholds the Lord of glory descending from heaven with all the holy angels, to gather **the remnant church from among the nations of earth**, he hears the waiting ones unite in the exultant cry: “Lo, this is our God; We have waited for Him, And He will save us: This is the Lord; We have waited for Him, We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.” Isaiah 25:9... PK 727.3 [Oh, are you looking forward to that day?]



In the visions of the prophet, those who have triumphed over sin and the grave are now seen happy in the presence of their Maker, talking freely with Him as man talked with God in the beginning... PK 729.1

“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.**” Isaiah 65:18, 19; 33:24; 35:6, 7; 55:13; 35:8; 40:2. PK 729.5 [Notice how this author applies the text, to what events, to what people? To the saved of all time, it is not about a few people at one point in time, it is about the righteous of God being delivered from sin. And are they receiving double punishment or double comfort for all their sin? Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away our sin, we not only receive freedom from guilt and shame here on earth, real comfort in our hearts and minds, we receive eternal life—we receive double comfort NOT double punishment!]

As the prophet beholds the redeemed dwelling in the City of God, free from sin and from all marks of the curse, in rapture he exclaims, “Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her...” PK 729.6

There every power will be developed, every capability increased. The grandest enterprises will be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations will be reached, the highest ambitions realized. **And still there will appear new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend,** fresh objects of study to call forth the powers of body and mind and soul...PK 731.1 [For all eternity future we advance, develop, grow, expand, walk forward in the truth—what an incredible future God has for those who love Him!]

To us who are standing on the very verge of their fulfillment, [Understand, that is you and me right now today, we are on the verge of their fulfillment!] of what deep moment, what living interest, are these delineations of the things to come—events for which, since our first parents turned their steps from Eden, God's children have watched and waited, longed and prayed! PK 731.3

Fellow pilgrim, we are still amid the shadows and turmoil of earthly activities; but soon our Saviour is to appear to bring deliverance and rest. Let us by faith behold the blessed hereafter as pictured by the hand of God. He who died for the sins of the world is opening wide the gates of Paradise to all who believe on Him. **Soon the battle will have been fought, the victory won. Soon we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered.** And in His presence the trials and sufferings of this life will seem as nothingness. The former things “shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” “Israel shall be saved ... with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.” Isaiah 65:17; Hebrews 10:35-37; Isaiah 45:17. PK 731.4



Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. [Look up, fix your eyes on Christ—don't look down, don't focus on the news, the trials, the world's systems, the world's injustices, the world's methods. Look up!] Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed.... PK 732.1

The nations of the saved will know no other law than the law of heaven. [The saved will not know—be intimate with, have written in their hearts—any law other than God's design law of love, truth, freedom. The saved will not be marked in their hands or foreheads with imposed law, with rule enforcement, with seeking justice through legislation, through infliction of punishment, through power over others. No! in heaven the saved will know only God's law for it will be written upon their hearts and minds!] All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving...PK 732.2

“The Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord...” Isaiah 66:23; PK 733.2

How does God comfort His people? With truth and love and restoration to righteousness—to His perfect design for life, writing His law in our hearts and minds!

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, “An unnamed herald...” what is this about? What is God's glory? His character, and where in human history is God's character revealed most clearly? In Jesus—that is why the Bible says that the second temple, which was physically smaller than Solomon's, was more glorious than the Solomon's because Jesus walked there in human form.

Does this give any insight to us today living at the time of the 3 Angel's message—where we are called to give glory to God? How are we to do this? Why is it important?

What is referred to by Isaiah 40:3-4?

A voice of one calling:
“In the desert prepare
the way for the LORD;
make straight in the wilderness
a highway for our God.
4 Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain. (Isaiah 4:3-4 NIV84)



What is this about? Is it about physical roads or is it a metaphor for the highway of ideas that lead into the heart and mind?

"A voice calling in a dark and desolate land: 'Prepare your minds, untwist your hearts, and make ready for the Lord to come with his healing Remedy.'" Mt 3:3 The Remedy

And who is the one who makes the way for the Lord? For the first advent it was John the Baptist, whom Jesus said was the Elijah to come.

And we are told by Malachi that:

See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers... (Mal 4:5-6 NIV84)

Who is this Elijah? This is referencing the final message to go to the world to prepare the hearts and minds of people on Earth to meet Jesus. This is the message of the 3 Angels—when given through design law lenses. This is the message of God's character of love, which frees our hearts from fear and selfishness and restores God's law in our hearts and minds. Because it is only God's design law of love restored in the hearts that brings true reconciliation, that brings people back together in love and trust, that truly comforts. The message of imposed law, of legal religion, of rules and rule enforcement is the message that divides and fractures, it is the message of fear, of control, of force, of snitches and the beastly system of Revelation.

God calls upon His true people who love Him to take forth this end time message to prepare the world for His return!

TUESDAY

Read Isaiah 40:9

Go up on a high mountain, O herald Zion!
Shout out loudly, O herald Jerusalem!
Shout, don't be afraid!
Say to the towns of Judah,
"Here is your God!" (NET)

The lesson makes an interesting point that the herald in Hebrew is feminine or female in verse 40:9, but in other places in Isaiah the herald is male.

The lesson goes on to point out that God's heralds are both male and female:

- The heralds in Isaiah



- Simeon and Anna in the Temple at Jesus' birth
- Mary Magdalene was the first to announce Jesus' resurrection followed by the men

What do we understand this to mean? Is there any significance? Do we find that God subordinates women below men or that God treats them equally?

In God's design is a complete human being male or female or is a complete human being the union of male and female?

What is the significance of this? How does love function? Can love function in a singularity? Can a single person alone on an island love—or does love require an other? Is love a living principle of action?

Was humankind built by God to be the showcase, the highpoint, the repository of His living law of love? Thus, the two shall be one—just like the Godhead is not a single individuality but a plurality of oneness of love.

And in God's design was either party, male or female, (husband or wife) to rule over the other? No, Eve was taken from Adam's rib—his side, not his head to rule over, not his foot to be ruled over, from his side, to be his companion, his completion, his second self.

All subordination of women, in any fashion, to diminish them beneath the power, authority, rule of men is part of Satan's kingdom. It is a perversion of God's design.

Any subordination of men, in any fashion, to diminish them beneath the power, authority, rule of women is part of Satan's kingdom. It is a perversion of God's design.

Equality, full, free and complete, the perfect partnership of other-centered love and trust is God's design and what is experienced as God completes His healing plan in our hearts.

So, in God's plan of evangelism, of taking the gospel to the world, men and women are to share equally in the joy, privilege and responsibility of sharing the truth with the world.

WEDNESDAY

The lesson points out that in Isaiah 40 Isaiah develops the themes of God's mercy and God's power—what do you understand this to be?

God is the all-powerful Creator—how can this truth be used to incite fear rather than comfort?

What if we have an all-powerful god whose laws are imposed rules, who uses his power to inflict punishment, who is the source of pain and suffering and death? Would having a god who is like Satan in character in possession of all power bring us comfort?



So, merely having all power is not sufficient to bring us comfort or to win our trust. Trustworthiness is NOT established by power. This is critical and God, who is the God of truth always provides evidence to reveal this. Often God will give a declaration of the truth, but He never stops with declaration because His laws are design laws, the protocols upon which reality works, and thus reality will reveal the truth over time.

So God does declare in Zech 4:6 “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the LORD Almighty. (NIV84)

But God doesn’t merely declare this, He provides historical evidence to reveal that might and power do not restore love and trust—

- The flood—followed by the tower of Babel—might and power followed by rebellion
- The 10 plagues of Egypt—followed by a golden calf orgy—might and power followed by rebellion
- Korah, Dathan, Abiram being swallowed by the earth—followed by more murmuring and rebelling from the people—might and power followed by rebellion
- Fire at mount Carmel—followed by more rebellion and idol worship—might and power followed by rebellion

No, might and power does not restore love and trust—it can only restrain rebellion.

What does restore love and trust—the Spirit of truth and love—truth destroys lies and wins to trust and love casts out fear. But this requires we each think and examine the evidence for ourselves in an atmosphere of freedom; it is the work of the “still small voice” not the work of thunder.

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “Idolatry destroys a...” Why did God say that we are to have no other gods before Him? Because of the law of worship—by beholding we are changed. We actually become like what we admire and worship and as the highest created beings on planet earth there is nothing we can worship other than God that advances us. Anything other than the infinite God that we worship degrades us.

God wants our highest development and only by worshipping Him, the infinite Creator God of love, can we experience perpetual growth, development, advancement and eternal life.

What about worshipping false ideas about God? Is this a problem today?

Consider this historic quote, do you agree?



Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal. Are we worshiping the true God as He is revealed in His Word, in Christ, in nature, or are we adoring some philosophical idol enshrined in His place? God is a God of truth. Justice and mercy are the attributes of His throne. He is a God of love, of pity and tender compassion. Thus He is represented in His Son, our Saviour. He is a God of patience and long-suffering. If such is the being whom we adore and to whose character we are seeking to assimilate, we are worshiping the true God. {FLB 59.8}

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SHARING campaign. The first of every month we will be making available FREE resources for you to share in your community, with family, friends, pastors, church members. These resources will be free and shipped free to US addresses only and while supplies last. So follow us on Facebook and watch the first of each month as a new resource is made available.

- February 2021 *Domestic Violence in the Church Study Guide*