

The Lord will comfort Zion (Quality: Average)

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- [0 : 00] May the Lord graciously enable us to speak to a scripture in chapter 51, the prophecy of Isaiah, reading from the third verse.
- Isaiah's prophecy, chapter 51, and we read the first part of the third verse.
- For the Lord shall comfort Zion. He will comfort all her waste places.
- The exercised and observant family of God will notice something that is very significant in the prophecy of Isaiah.
- Many things are significant, but the worthy point that we have in view is this.
- [1 : 11] Yet from chapter 40 onwards, there is a most remarkable change in the whole movement of this prophecy.
- For you will know how chapter 40 opens. Comfort she, comfort she my people, saith your God.
- Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem. Tell 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. That is to say, the prophet by divine revelation and inspiration was looking beyond the captivities and the desolations of Zion to the incarnation of the Son of God and to his advent, to the accomplishment of the work of our redemption, the pouring out of the Holy Ghost and the future times of blessing in the Church of God.
- He was looking right beyond that. All the desolations and the sorrows and the troubles of the Church of God to the coming of that Blessed One, the ushering in of the Gospel day and era and to the future blessings that would attend Zion, the Church of God.
- [3 : 35] I suppose you may think now, well, we have lived to see almost 2,000 years since the birth of Christ.
- Certainly, many faded seasons, Zion has known. you have known the pouring out of the Holy Ghost and many rich blessings here in this central church in London.
- The history of Gow Street Chapel reveals some of this and the preacher has participated in this as a hearer and also a speaker for which we bless God.
- But you may say, are these the happy times of the Gospel? wherever the Gospel flows in all its holy efficacy and divine power and heavenly light and holy love, there is joy and peace and blessing and comfort and consolation and the transformation that is declared here, the wilderness is made like Eden and the desert like the garden of the Lord.
- That transformation is accomplished by the pair of the Spirit in your souls. let his love flow into your heart, his forgiving love.
- [5 : 37] Your garden blows with rich perfume of humility and love. And on those favored occasions you may say, let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits and he does.

But I can understand the outlook paucity of numbers you come to her solemn feasts sanctuaries closing desolations and distresses that my friends have we not this word when the Lord shall build up Zion he will appear in his glory he will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer there is a set time to favor Zion for his servants take pleasure in her stones and favor the dust thereof.

I cannot help feeling an impression in my spirit that the very tenor of these words beautiful words they are for the Lord shall comfort Zion he will comfort all her waste places one has the impression that the Lord will one day even yet revive his Zion and if I may make just a personal observation my mind has often gone to this over the years I was born in Stepney East End of London taken as a child to

Mr. Ashdown's chapel understand understand that prior to Mr. Ashdown going to Zor that they seriously considered and it was named by the deacons that if there was no improvement they would seriously consider closing the chapel they could not continue but Eli Ashdown was impressed by the spirit and led and made willing to go to Zor and some of you that are older will know the issue after a while the place was filled and overflowing the cosmopolitan congregation how richly did the Lord bless the labors of his dear servant did the

Lord comfort Zion did he comfort all her waste places and he is able to do the same now really I could not preach from this scripture if I felt in despair if there was no hope these words are like a sun beam in the darkness penetrating it dissipating it for the Lord shall comfort Zion he shall comfort all her waste places most significant language in a general sense that is in the churches of God then it comes to little communities families and then to our own souls for the

[10 : 26] Lord shall come to Zion God and I'm glad this word is here he will come to all her waste places and you may find a parallel to that in your own poor soul and in relation to some things that deeply concern and try you that he will comfort all her waste places therefore as the Lord may be pleased to answer your loving prayers you will see something of the scope of the sacred message divine that is with us on this holy day what a message harkened to

Isaiah to those dear people of God who had passed through so much and were still in distress and he is saying for the Lord shall comfort Zion he will comfort look at these waste places he will comfort all her waste places did the Lord accomplish it was he faithful to his word he always is probably some of you will listen today and then wish to know if I am a true prophet because it is not a matter just of the promulgation of it it is a matter of the fulfilling of it in your poor soul and in the church in Zion for the

Lord shall comfort Zion he will comfort all her waste places a brief word concerning Zion those of you in the Sunday school in the Bible class will know the precise meaning of Zion Zion then an eminence of the city of Jerusalem very beautiful eminence never seen it obviously I have not some of you may have done beautiful the situation the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion on the sides of the north the city of the great king now this was originally as you may read in chronicles a castle or a stronghold and was taken by

David from the Jebusites and became the city of David or the city of God and although the temple was built on the adjacent Mount Moriah this term Zion came to mean the city of God his house the place of his choice where the ark should rest his dwelling place and synonymous with Jerusalem and used metaphorically to express the church of God his dear people and the type of heaven you will remember in Hebrews 12 you're not coming to the mount that might be touched and so on but you are coming to

Mount Zion the city of the heavenly of the living God the heavenly Jerusalem and so on and when I thought about this it occurred to me that surely gracious hearers would wish to know some evidence that they were associated with Zion that they belonged to Zion that they were Zionites for the promises to Zion and so let us make a few observations you will know as in Psalm 132 the beauty of the ascent of the ark to its resting place and the

[15 : 46] Lord said this through the psalmist the Lord hath chosen Zion he hath desired it for his habitation this is my rest forever here will I dwell for I have desired it I will abundantly bless her provision I will satisfy her poor with bread two things let us name you will know that the ark of the covenant was the seat of the Lord's presence with Israel the ark contained the tables of the law above it the blood sprinkled mercy seat how lovely a mercy seat blood sprinkled and then from between the cherubim shining forth the shekinah glory of the

Lord not a consuming glory but a saving glory the glory of his love and grace and mercy and clemency and compassion a mercy seat my friends here will I dwell now you have evidence of that in Gower Street Memorial Chapel the abiding presence of the Lord think of it over all the decades and flowing through the ministry of the Spirit this is my rest forever here will I dwell for I have desired it that blessing flowed into the heart of the preacher in this sanctuary many years ago now to be precise almost 46 years ago that is if we are spared until

June 46 years ago did I know the presence of the Lord in this sanctuary the shining thought of his glory in salvation on that memorable evening heaven pardon peace was preached into our soul is there any doubt about being a Zionite the preacher could have gone from the gallery seat the pew there into heaven heaven had commenced this is my rest forever here will I dwell for I have desired it you'll know because you get the blessings you'll glean in the field amongst the sheaves sometimes you get a handful of purpose and presently your apron filled or veil you know that you belong to

Zion how wonderful then that this was his appointed rest and is his appointed rest there's no place on the face of the earth like Mount Zion or the church of the living God or the sanctuary the place where the Lord stays where he dwells where he manifests forth his glory where he communes with sinners at the mercy seat where he discovers his lovely countenance and speaks peace into their souls and grants to their spirits the divine repast of faith all this abiding I'm sure that many times you have said the

Lord is in this place you would not be able to continue and say and I knew it not because you have experienced it so many times but there was an initial and I knew it not but now you can say the Lord is in this place my soul is watered fed nourished cheered comforted blessed revived uplifted transported translated oh to be a Zionite as I look on this Mount Zion this eminence of the city of Jerusalem Jerusalem I can see the reason why this is a type of the church of God for the things of

[21 : 41] God the things of the spirit are elevated high above the earth immediately you are in the spirit you are caught up into the heavenless and leave all the mundane trifling things of this world behind the glory of the Lord shining into your soul and you are transported on the immortal wings of the heavenly death you are gone in spirit and we know it what effect has the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ upon you one effect is this transporting I remember when the Lord blessed me with deliverance I felt that I looked down in space and saw this planet a long way away I had gone in spirit from it so how favoured you are to realise that you're a Zionite that you know this shekinah glory not consuming but saving namely the reconciled countenance of God in the face of

Jesus Christ he looks upon you and smiles upon you the gospel looks kindly on you there's no comfort at Mount Sinai there's no consolation there's no mercy there is no revelation of a saviour that all this mount sire the gospel here is the saviour here is the way to God the way to bliss here is peace and forgiveness and joy and comfort and salvation so it is wonderful to be a Zionite are you able to say I would like to address our younger friends would you be able to say this Lord I have loved the habitation of thy house and the place where thy honour dwell there is no place like it on the face of the earth why because there

I meet God the Lord meets with me he teaches me he helps me he blesses me he disciplines me he reproves me he wounds me he heals me he guides me he comforts me and you get a blessing for your soul and you go from the sanctuary feeling such an intense concentration of joy and peace and happiness in your spirit to feel that it is well with you now are the younger friends able to feel that because the Lord said gave that commission to his apostle

Peter as he reinstated him he said feed my lambs feed my sheep feed my sheep and so the lambs are not forgotten I go back of course to those days when I was in London I remember coming here and often on a Tuesday evening getting a crumb of divine mercy is there anything to eat for it nothing you'll know the wonder of Zion the shining of the sun of righteousness the power the unction the life the peace that flows into your soul oh this Zion this city of our God below and all nations flow to it as we know from the word of

God he sent his disciples who were obviously afterwards apostles saying go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature and his living gospel must complete its orbit round the whole earth until every nation has seen the light and felt the warmth of the sun of righteousness it must be so and every poor sinner every needy soul those who long for the Lord's mercy and grace and favor and blessing they're perfectly free to prefer their petition in the name of Jesus and humbly ask him for his favor and goodness and they will not be disappointed so that this morning although I know obviously that there are those the other end of the earth who are asleep because it is night but it doesn't matter where it is whether it is the

[28 : 04] USA or India or Australia or Kuwait or any part of the earth all those who are taught to feel their need of him they look to this precious son of righteousness and he will not disappoint them and I suppose there are some of you here this morning who in your war service were thousands of miles from Britain and probably you can look back now on the Middle East or the Far East or to France or some area where you served and think of how the Lord blessed your immortal soul in distant lands or you may have been on the sea or in the air and the Lord blessed you a number of testimonies have we heard to this effect so that the

Lord so comforted Zion and comforted all her waste places thousands of miles from the shores of Great Britain and those precious characters of grace they could have gone straight to heaven now do you know it you know it in the hospital know it in your work know it in the factory or in your scientific work or the mother in the home or the dear lonely one in the home living alone do you know it for the Lord to come and comfort Zion it is his divine purpose this would never have been inspired if the Lord had no purpose to fulfill it for he says for the Lord shall comfort

Zion he will comfort all her waste places shall I reveal to you a secret I believe two things had an effect upon me in relation to this text the first was that in our own path and exercise and I hope this was a promise from the Lord in relation to those things pleading with him groaning before him may well be groaning before him and I did hope this was a sweet promise in relation to those things for the Lord shall comfort Zion he will comfort all her waste places the people of God know what these waste places are then there was something else namely my own poor soul for we do so alternate many seasons there are when the

Lord comes and blesses us and when we feel happy and very comfortable in our spirits but it is not long before we begin to feel perhaps a change there's no change in him my friend blessed be God changes in us love but a cloud seems to come and you may look on your poor soul and you feel perhaps so destitute and rather dark and you may say well really my poor heart seems to be like a waste place it needs thy reviving hand is that true did you come like that did you tell the

Lord that you needed his reviving hand for him to comfort all her waste places I love that hymn all thy wastes I will repair thou shall be rebuilt anew and in thee it shall appear what the God of love condole but all thy wastes he will repair that's a wonderful blessing isn't it and to see the fulfilling of it let us bless God this morning on this holy day that we have seen it we have seen it measurably some of those waste places and now as Eden and as the garden of the Lord they're no longer waste places for instance if you thought of relatives might even be dear children or grandchildren but if you thought of them and thought now where are they to die and you would say well a number of them are in the house of

[34 : 07] God but there's poor there's that poor lad or lass and really they have no heart or mind for the Lord and they're not in his house and it's a waste place to you in your heart what a waste place so that you can see the force of this work he will comfort all her waste places when that poor young man thought he was emancipated because he was no longer as he thought under paternal restraint and so he took his journey into a far country wasted his substance what a waste place look at him debauched wretched what a waste place some of you who fear God may have waste places this morning but how wonderful when the day comes that he will comfort all her waste places how I do pray to God that this may envelop great Britain again that instead of looking out on an arena of strife and departure from God and his royal laws and consequently it's like a waste isn't it in this sense all to see the pouring out of the spirit and the return of millions to the

Lord so that no longer should the United Kingdom be a waste place I know I know we have enshrined the wonderful blessing of his gospel and his ministry the ministry of the spirit but how much there is that he's lying waste he will comfort all her waste places it's not impossible my friend it would never have been written if it was impossible think of the glorious reformation and the awful debauched state of the land prior to that the Lord can give us a new and wonderful reformation so for the Lord shall comfort Zion you see it is universal if you like it is national it is in the churches of God it is in your family life or home life it is in your heart you want the Lord to comfort all the waste places you may say give me just an illustration

I will take the soul that is under conviction and that is full of guilt and the burden of sin and the misery of it and what will it be for the Lord to comfort that waste place for the dear Lord to reveal his dying love to you shed it abroad grant you forgiveness and fill you with holy love and joy and peace do you think that will comfort all the waste places so you go out of the chapel and feel you're an air of glory on the weight of this forgiven you've got heaven commenced in your soul is that the exemplification of this word indeed it is so that you go along Shaftesbury Avenue feeling it is well with my soul the Lord loves me he has shown mercy to me he has comforted all the waste places and that will make you like

Eden and the garden of the Lord and I must say this to you if we use another illustration when the alabaster box was broken and if the Lord favors you your heart will be like the alabaster box of precious ointment now when that was broken or unsealed and the Lord was anointed the odour of that filled the house there are two things there one is to see the greater when the precious body of Christ was broken broken in his sufferings in his vicarious passion the odour of his infinite merit filled the church of

God what an odour that is of his infinite merit to take every one of his people to glory the other is this if the Lord has done great things for you whereof you are glad if he has comforted all your waste places and your heart now is like Eden and the garden of the Lord a rich perfume of humility and love if so there's a right place for that where it shall be unsealed broken where is it the church of God Zion so that before the living family of God you should unseal that precious box and anoint the

[40 : 28] Lord and that the odour of his work the untuous work of the spirit should fill the church of God fill Zion blessed be God let us now sing hymn number 366 hymn 366 June Wiltshire 268 the Lord in Zion placed his name his ark was settled there to Zion the whole nation came to worship thrice a year but we have no such length to go nor wander far abroad where e'er thy saints assemble now there is a house for God arise o king of grace arise and enter to thy rest lo thy church waits with longing eyes thus to be owned and blessed we'll commence to sing at verse 3 hymn number 366 arise o king of grace arise and enter to all thy rest lo thy church waits with longing eyes thus to be heard and blessed enter with all thy glorious strength thy spirit and thy word all that thee of it once contain could no such grace of hope hear mighty

God accept us all hear let thy breath be spread bless the love of the house and build thy book thy book with bread hear let the son of David vain let hearts anointed shine shine just it is a truth in hope maintained with love divine divine he let him hold the lost day earth and as his crown and shape compound his soul and crown and shape compound his soul heart his heart let us dear lord by thy grace praise and bless and adore thee for thy goodness to us in the divine service this morning and we pray that we may abide in the love of

God and that it may please thee to fulfill this most blessed promise to thy church and to us personally and in the path of life to comfort all her waste so that our desert may be as our wilderness as the garden of the Lord grant us that voice of thanksgiving and melody thy eternal praise bless the beloved friends and all dear to us and all dear to us and home and abroad be with us oh Lord through the interval bless the

Sunday school and the Bible class and be with us in the evening divine service for thy sake and crown this day and this week and this month and this year and our lives with thy goodness for thy sake for thy sake the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Lord the Lord the Lord the Lord the Lord the Lord the Lord the Lord the Lord the Lord the