

"GOD'S COMFORT TO A DESOLATE PEOPLE"**Introduction**

1. God can read our hearts
2. He knows how we feel and think
3. God is profoundly sympathetic: "Be of good cheer..."

1. THE PEOPLE OF GOD OFTEN FEEL DESOLATE

- 1) v.14: Zion's sad feelings: "forsaken, forgotten":
 - (i) No sadness to a child of God like this
 - (ii) It is sadness born of love + appreciation
 - (iii) It is often created by the picture of outward things
ILLUSTRATION: "The enemy so strong" + "The church so weak".
- 2) The heart of a child of God bleeds if forsaken:
 - (i) "Where is God? Where is the Lord?"
 - (ii) Gideon felt it in his day (Judges 6:13)
 - (iii) Isaiah felt it – see Isaiah 64:9-12
 - (iv) Jeremiah especially felt it – see Jeremiah 20:14-18
 - (v) Job felt it – see Job 19:20-21
- 3) It takes different forms:
 - (i) prayers not heard
 - (ii) alone in the world
 - (iii) no comfort of soul
 - (iv) a bleak tomorrow
APPLICATION: All this is common to God's people

2. GOD SPEAKS COMFORTING WORDS TO THEM

- 1) God now answers this sad cry:
 - (i) not by angry rebukes but
 - (ii) by tender comfort
DOCTRINE: Nothing + no one can comfort the soul as God

can – by a word:

ILLUSTRATION: Christ at the tomb: "Mary!"

- 2) So now God pours balm into our wounds:
 - (i) "Can a woman forget?" (v.15)
ILLUSTRATION: a mother and her little child.
God argues the case from our human instincts and our human feelings.
APPLICATION: "They may forget" – child abandoned.
O how gracious God is!
 - (ii) "I have graven thee...": v.16
ILLUSTRATION: a mother shows child's photograph. But God's photograph is on His hands!
APPLICATION: Every child of God is before His eye.
 - (iii) "Thy walls...": v.16. The place where they live – Jerusalem – your own house.
ILLUSTRATION: security devices – no comparison!
 - (iv) "Children...make haste": v.17
They will know freedom + blessing:
 - (v) "thy destroyers...": v.17
 - 3) Every comfort is given to them
APPLICATION: We are to believe this + to hope against hope. ("Abraham staggered not")
- 3. THIS COMFORT IS THE FOOD OF ETERNAL JOY**
- 1) That the great God should comfort his people is a wonder in itself:
ILLUSTRATION: 7 wonders of the world
 - 2) So, all heaven + earth are to sing for joy that God comforts his children in sadness: v.13
 - 3) O what comfort God gives His children!
 - (i) all sin is forgiven
 - (ii) they are adopted as His sons
 - (iii) the promise of heaven soon
 - (iv) all things work for their good
 - (v) God's eye is upon us in love

CONCLUSION:

How do we know all this is true?

ANSWER: The Cross!

PSALM

146: 1 – 7

6¹: 1 – 6

147: 6 – 11