

# High and Exalted (11): I Have Redeemed You

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(Isaiah 43:1-13)

## I. Introduction

- A. When we got home Tuesday night, Angelynn told me the wheels had come off
  - 1. Actually, she said one of the wheels came off my computer chair at home
    - a. Of course, I quickly put it back on and sat down... everything was fine
    - b. Until I got up, and the wheel came off; we repeated that dance awhile
  - 2. So, I need a new chair. I like games, so I thought I'd look at gamer's chair
    - a. Like the Emperor 200 with fine Italian leather and touch-screen controls
    - b. It can hold up to three 27" monitors and has a built-in Bose sound system
      - 1) It has an air filtration (*fresh air*) and light therapy (*simulated sunlight*)
      - 2) Like I said, it's a gaming chair; gamers get little fresh air or sunlight!
    - c. Emperor 200 is the ultimate in luxury and comfort... and costs \$49,000!
    - d. How can anyone be comfortable with that? I'll duct tape the wheel on.
- B. Isaiah was into gaming chairs, but he was into comfort... as in comforting Israel
  - 1. In the first part of his book, he preaches a hard lesson of hard times ahead
    - a. He preached to holy Hezekiah & unholy Ahaz, but the sermon was same
    - b. Judah wasn't following truth, so there would be consequences (**Isa 1:7**)
      - 1) God is a God of holiness; He would hold them accountable for sin
      - 2) God is also a God of grace, so He will never give up on His people
  - 2. Isaiah is the "*Messianic Prophet*." He earns that appellation in earnest now
    - a. Beginning in **Isaiah 40**, he speaks to an Israel that will be in captivity
      - 1) Judah would never listen, and God would eventually drop the hammer
      - 2) Isaiah's message was "*Repent or else*," and Judah chose the "*or else*"
    - b. But now it's time for the *Emperor 200*; it was time for comfort (**40:1-2**)
      - 1) Isaiah was to assure Judah that God would not give up on His people
      - 2) God would keep His promises and work thru them despite themselves
      - 3) He will comfort His broken people and bless the world in the process
  - 3. The preacher's job is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable
    - a. Isaiah has afflicted the comfortable; now it's time to comfort afflicted
    - b. God has a word for his people suffering in the consequences of sin
    - c. He would redeem them and send a redeemer; our text is in **Isaiah 43**.

## II. Comfort for the Afflicted

- A. Isaiah begins with a call for God’s people to look to and depend on Him (**43:1**)
1. They do not have to be afraid, for God was with them; they were HIS people
    - a. The world that Judah lived in was a scary place filled with thug nations
      - 1) Judah spent 70 years in exile; afterward she was a small & defenseless
      - 2) Judah would be a political football kicked back-n-forth by bullies
    - b. But what she did have was God; she did not have to fear because of God
    - c. But she was tempted to look to the world, to pagan alliance for comfort
      - 1) We saw earlier Isaiah blast Hezekiah for courting Babylon as ally
      - 2) They were not to look for aid and comfort from outside (**Isa 31:1**)
    - d. Comfort and safety couldn’t be found in politics; it only comes from God
  2. Do we really believe that? Do we find identity and strength only in God?
    - a. Or do we think that we need political and financial allies in the world
    - b. Friend posted a quote from article “*Why Evangelicals Support Trump?*”  
*Voting for Trump is not trading Christian values for political power. It's voting in self-defense against the radical, evangelical-hating left and hoping for the best.*
      - 1) My point isn’t who you should vote for or support (*outside of praying*)
      - 2) But do we think the church needs any president for our self-defense?
      - 3) Do we believe Jesus, “*The gates of hell shall not prevail against it?*”
    - c. Our security won’t come from the Federal Reserve or a presidential tweet
      - 1) Our confidence and comfort aren’t in 401K, IRA, CPA or in the NRA
      - 2) We may have those things, but we can’t them; they’ll ultimately fail
  3. Some indeed trust in all of those, but believers are to... believe (**Psa 20:6-7**)
- B. Don’t get the idea that this faith thing will ensure smooth sailing (**Isa 43:2-3**)
1. God never promises to take away the fire and the flood, but God will be God
    - a. This is a reference to Israel’s past– to the water and fire of the exodus
      - 1) Israel became a nation crossing the Red Sea and meeting God desert
      - 2) Her covenant with God was forged in the fire that brined on MT. Sinai
      - 3) Being God’s people is not a promise that things will be easy or safe
    - b. The point is that in the middle of their struggle, God was always God
      - 1) God didn’t insulate them from fire and flood, but He was with them
      - 2) God is sovereign over the fire and flood and with us in the middle of it

2. Isaiah is speaking to us who may be in midst of the fire and floods of life
    - a. The fires and flood are real in the real lives of real believers today
      - 1) We see it in young wife comes to church with bruises and black eye
      - 2) We see it in the young professional with maxed-out credit cards
      - 3) We see it in the Christ married couple struggling daily to stay a couple
      - 4) See it in a frustrated parent with a rebellious teen (or frustrated teen)
      - 5) We see it in believer whose faith is shaken by unexpected lab report
    - b. Faith is sometimes hard; it makes no sense to pretend that it is easy
      - 1) It makes no sense to paint on church smile and pretend it is easy
      - 2) God never promises to take away fires and flood but to be with us
- C. God's power and presence within the fire and flood comes in 3 different ways–
1. **Power to Conquer:** Sometimes God puts out the fire and diverts the flood
    - a. Do we believe God is powerful or just used to be? An old VBS song...  
*My God is so big, so strong and so might, there nothing my God cannot do!*
    - b. Do we believe that? *“You mean that God can still do miracles today?”*
    - c. I mean there's **nothing** my God cannot do! Sometimes He fixes things.
  2. **Power to Cope:** God may give us grace to deal with our troubles and trials
    - a. What did God say to Paul prayer that He remove his “thorn in the flesh?”
    - b. Grace was sufficient. God gave Paul the power to cope with the thorn.
    - c. Troy isn't with us today; he's visiting his brother in TN... went alone
      - 1) Is being blind a fire-n-flood? Yes, God gave Troy the power to cope
      - 2) Troy would tell you becoming blind allowed him to see (**Isa 43:8**)
    - d. Sometimes the gift that God gives is power to cope with fire-n-flood
  3. **Power to Continue:** Sometimes He gives us power to endure, to go on
    - a. Jesus prayed God to take away the cup. What was God's answer?
      - 1) Did Jesus cope with cross, *“This isn't so bad if I lean a bit to left...”*
      - 2) God did give him he power to endure the cross to the end (**Heb 12:2**)
    - b. We often make a theological point that isn't very theologically correct
      - 1) We say that God turned away from Jesus because Jesus carried our sin
      - 2) We get that from Jesus' cry, *“My God, My God, why...”* (from **Psa 22**)
        - a) God doesn't turn away from sinners but to sinner– *point of the cross!*
        - b) God is God of all comfort; he never turns away (**Reading: 2 Cor 1:3-5**)

### III. Conclusion

- A. God was looking out for his people even though they went thru flood and fire
  - 1. What He wanted was for them to look up to him in faith (**Isa 43:5-6**)
    - a. Trusting God promise is not always easy when in the flood and fire
    - b. In fact, it is especially not easy when we go through flood and fire
  - 2. But it was their only way out; they had no power and no allies byt God
    - a. The promise was freedom, not just feeling better about their slavery
    - b. God would redeem them and call them back home, back to Him
  - 3. Our God is the God of all comfort because He is God who **redeems** us
- B. We can settle for some pretty artificial things to give us comfort in this life
  - 1. These are things that make us temporality feel better in stresses and strains
    - a. Maybe it's not \$49,000 hi-tech chair; maybe it's a cheeseburger & fries?
      - 1) Why do we call things like cheeseburgers and fries "*comfort food*?"
      - 2) In Canada, they put gravy on fries! I didn't find that very comforting
    - b. Maybe instead of food we go shopping to bring us some comfort
      - 1) Don't we get a temporary buzz when we get something new? Why?
      - 2) Why doesn't new that feeling & comfort last? *It's just a substitute*
    - c. Sometimes we seek out a new experience (*I rode a horse for first time*)
    - d. We may watch TV, a movie or play a video game (*not in \$49,000 chair*)
    - e. All of those are well and good in the right place (*except gravy on fries*)
  - 2. But we can't trust any of these to give us true comfort, security or meaning
    - a. Only God will always be there to walk your through each flood and fire
    - b. Only God is the God of all comfort who provides a security that will last
- C. Notice how Isaiah continues in this chapter speaking for God (**Isa 43:11-13**)
  - 1. Only God is the true and living God; apart from Him there is no savior
    - a. We may look to politics, power, prosperity or people to save us
    - b. While all of those things do have their place, they cannot save us
    - c. If we look to them to save, we must call them what they are– IDOLS
  - 2. Only God is God; only Christ is our wonderful, merciful savior...