

ISAIAH, PART 2 (COMFORT FOR HIS PEOPLE)
PROGRAM 26 (#911141)
WEEK 6 (#911329) (Guest Teacher David Arthur)
©2011 PRECEPT MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL



PRECEPTS FOR LIFE
a Production of
Precept Ministries International
P.O. Box 182218, Chattanooga, TN 37422-7218
1-888-734-7707/ www.preceptsforlife.com

The following is an actual transcript of the PRECEPTS FOR LIFE Broadcast. For the purpose of filling transcript requests quickly, they have received only light editing. If you have questions concerning the material covered in this broadcast, Kay has published a number of books explaining the Scripture in depth. These books may be ordered by contacting the telephone number or address printed above.

SERIES: Isaiah, Part 2 (Comfort For His People)
TITLE: Program 26 – Compelled By Compassion
(Guest Teacher David Arthur)

MONDAY

INTRO

Kay: One of my favorite names for God is Jehovah-Jireh. He is the provider. And you know what? I've had to be away. I've had to go to Greece and teach the Word of God on our Greece Study Tour. And God, Jehovah-Jireh has provided a marvelous teacher for you today. And that's our son, David Arthur. He has his Masters of Arts in Theological Studies. But most of all he has the gift of teaching and you're going to enjoy Isaiah as a result.

OPEN

David: When your heart is bursting with joy, when gladness is overflowing, what is the difference in singing and shouting for joy? Can you really tell the difference when your heart is full, whether you're singing for joy or whether you're shouting for joy? Better yet, the question we need to ask is: why? Why are the people in Isaiah 54 told to shout, or rather, to sing for joy? We'll see as we study together.

PART ONE

David: Our text is Isaiah 54 today, and I'm so glad you've come to study with me. My name is David Arthur and I have for you today, a treat from Isaiah chapter 54. Look how this text opens. It says in verse 1, **"Shout for joy, O barren one, you who have borne no child; break forth into joyful shouting and cry aloud, you who have not travailed...."** (Isaiah 54:1). Why? **"...For the sons of the desolate [ones] will be more numerous than the sons of the married [one]' says the LORD."** (Isaiah 54:1) "Shout for joy," "sing to joy," as some translators write it out, but what does it mean to "shout for joy." Why is he telling the barren woman, to do this? Well if you remember in our study before we've seen this in Isaiah, go with me to Isaiah chapter 49. In Isaiah 49 beginning in verse 22, we have the prophetic understanding of the people of God being brought back to the people of Israel. We have a return of the remnant. Look at verse 22, **"Thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I will lift up My [hands] to the nations and set up My standard to the peoples; and they will bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters will be carried on their shoulders.'"** (Isaiah 49:22) Can you visualize that? He says "the nations, are coming to you Israel, and they will be bringing their children. And it says, **"Kings will be your guardians, and their princesses your nurses. They will bow down to you with their faces to the earth and lick the dust of your feet; and you will know that I am the LORD; [and] those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame."** (Isaiah 49:23) Well we see this in our text in Isaiah chapter 54 that we're studying today. And there seems to be the reason for shouting for joy is the barren womb; the womb that cannot produce children, the womb that has, in a sense, been "cursed" by God is now being opened. And descendants will come from all over the world back to the Promised Land, back to His people. He says that, the increase will be so much that he says, ["I want you to go out to your tent pegs and I want you to enlargen your tent."] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 54:2) Now think with me

for a minute. This is what this looks like: if you're gonna largen your tent, that means you're gonna take your tent pegs which are the boundaries of your tent and you're gonna stretch them out and you're gonna move them as far as possible. Sometimes I've had to do this in my camping with my daughters. They want to bring a friend or two, and so we finally get a packed tent and I have to take the things and pull it, and you know what that does to a tent. It kind of makes it shorter in the room but it opens up the area. He says, "The growth that will be coming will be so enormous that I want you to take your tents and stretch them as far as you can". Now does this sound like God to you? This barren womb, all of a sudden, producing. It's a theme that you see all throughout Scripture. For example go with me to Genesis and you would find several stories with a barren womb. Sarah she had a barren womb (See Genesis 11:30) and yet her son was Isaac. The son of Abraham and Sarah was the one who would be t the lineage of which our Savior would come from; the Promised One. We also have Rebekah. (See Genesis 25:21) You remember Rebekah's son Joseph? Rebekah was a barren woman and her son, Joseph, would be the one that would eventually, in Egypt, through suffering and persecution would be the one in Egypt that would bring deliverance for the entire family. All the sons of Jacob would now eat because of what came out of the barren womb of Rebekah. I think of Hannah in 1 Samuel. (See 1 Samuel 1:5) She too was barren and she prayed to God desperately and God gave her a son named Samuel. And Samuel would be the one who would be the judge, the leader of the people of Israel. We go to the New Testament, and we hear about Elizabeth, Mary's cousin. And Elizabeth she too was barren. (See Luke 1:7) And you remember who God gave to her? That's right, John the Baptist, the one who would prepare the way for the Messiah. And then if you think about Mary, her womb was not barren, but when she conceived Jesus, she was yet a virgin. (See Luke 1:27, 34) So we have throughout Scripture this beautiful theme of God using a barren womb to bring about His deliverance. You

know what that says about God to me? It says God can do anything. It tells me that when I look at my circumstances, when I think about “How am I gonna get through this, how am I gonna work my way out of this trial, this dilemma?” that I’m reminded of the way God works is, He uses barren wombs. He uses things that don’t produce life to not just bring life, but to bring life abundantly. It’s kind of that way with us when we become believers the Scripture tells us that we go from being dead men to being men who are alive. (See John 5:24) We’re going from people who were in the darkness to now, people who are filled abundantly with the light; the eternal light. (See John 8:12) Well what was the extent of their growth? We saw already in verse 2 that they were to take their tent and they were to spread it out. They were to enlarge it and strengthen their cords and strengthen their pegs, and he says, this is the reason why, in verse 3. **“For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left. And your descendants will possess nations and will resettle the desolate cities.” (Isaiah 54:3)** Ah ha, this is music to the ears of those who will be in exile. Now we understand where we are in history at this point in time when this message was delivered is, that Israel, the northern part, had been taken away in exile by Assyria. But the lower half of of Israel, now known as Judah, watched their brothers be ripped away and yet God sent His prophets to say, “Remember, remember you too could fall into exile. Return unto Me and My ways.” And so we have the first 39 chapters of Isaiah basically bringing the judgment of God. And then in 40 it changes and he begins to announce a message of comfort. But this comfort is not to happen until after the exile period. For we think historically about when this is written, it is before the Babylonian captivity. You see, My Friends, the people reading this text initially, were ones that would eventually be taken into captivity. They were ones who would experience that barrenness that he talks about. They are the ones that would experience the wrath and the discipline of God. But even in the midst of this, He tells them, [“Shout for joy, sing for joy. I’m gonna make your barren

wombs filled. I will one day bring to you a restoration that will blow your minds. I will bring you children from all the nations.”] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 54:1-3) “I’ll have kings come to be your princes. I will bring—they will be your servants they will bring your children. They will bear them on their shoulders and your children will say,” as we read in Isaiah 49, “It’s getting crowded here. **‘This place is too cramped for me....’**” (Isaiah 49:20) God, even in His wrath, even in His discipline, promises a restoration. And that’s why our text says, “Rejoice.” Now what’s another reason for them to shout for joy? What’s another reason for their hearts to be filled and to be overwhelmed with joy? We see in verses 4 and 5, look at verse 4. He tells them, **“Fear not, for you will not be put to shame....”** (Isaiah 54:4) Now let me encourage you to take a pencil or to take a marker of some sort and begin to mark some of these key words that you see; and you’ll see patterns and you’ll see trends in a text. For example, if you were to go to verse 4 and mark words like “shame” or words that are synonyms of “shame” such as “humiliation” or “disgrace” or “reproach” look what you would see here in verse 4. Let me read it to you. **“Fear not, for you will not be put to shame....,”** there’s the first one. **“...And do not feel humiliated, for you will not be disgraced....”** There’s another one. **“...But you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more.”** (Isaiah 54:4) Now what we have here: four words mentioning that all tie together into the concept of shame. What is God saying to not fear? Verse 4, He says: **“Fear not....”** Fear what not? What am I not to fear? **“...You will not be put to shame....,”** the disgrace that you have experienced, **“...the shame of your youth...the reproach of your widowhood....,”** He said, he’ll remove. (Isaiah 54:4) My friend think about this, God is saying, not only will I fill your barren wombs, that’s healing isn’t it? That’s restorative healing, where God will take a barren womb and He’ll heal that. We have also God saying, [“Fear not, I will take away your shame.”] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 54:4) Let me ask you, Friend,

do you have some some stuff in your past that you wished never happened? Have you made some decisions or some lifestyles that you've been pursuing that, quite honestly, just when you think about it when you put it on the table and you realize and you evaluate it, that it's just a shame, a waste, a disgrace; you wish it could be wiped out? That's what he's saying. "I want you to shout for joy. Here's why: because I am going to remove from you the shame of your youth; your reproach. Both the shame that you brought on yourself and the shame that you experienced perhaps by the hands of others." (See Isaiah 54:1-4) Here he's talking to a people who we'll see in days to come are engaged in things that are quite honestly, horrible, horrific; I mean they are doing things that will make you blush when you read through them in the Scripture because of the audacity they have to sin in such vagrant ways against God. Ways that are appalling. He says, "Listen to me. I want you to shout for joy. I'm coming, My salvation is coming, My righteousness is on its way, and I want you to not fear, and here's why: I'm gonna take that shame and I'm gonna remove it." (See Isaiah 54:4) The Psalmists talk about this action. They say, "He takes our sins and in his might and in his power of only which He can do, He takes those sins and He hurls them as far as the east is from the west." Removing them, washing them out, abolishing them, putting them away so that they're not there in our face, they're not there always calling us back to them. (See Psalms 103:12) They're not there drawing us, in a sense of saying, "Listen, you need to come back to me you need to participate in this sin again. It is who you are. You need to know about this. You need to come in and enjoy what I have for you." My Friend, that is a lie. That is deception. He is telling his people, "I want you to shout for joy, because I will bring healing and I will bring forgiveness."

PART TWO

David: Welcome back to our study of Isaiah chapter 54. We just left off with a reason to shout for joy. He gave us two reasons. One, I will fill your barren wombs, and secondly I will remove the shame and disgrace that you have brought upon yourself or that has been brought upon you by outside influences. But I don't know about you, but sometimes I shout for joy too quickly. For example, I'm a big college football fan and my favorite football team is the Tennessee Volunteers. And there's been some games where they started off well, scoring one or two touchdowns in the first five minutes and I'm dancing around the room shouting for joy, you know, kind of teasing my friends who are not Volunteer fans, only to see the second quarter come with no more touchdowns and the third quarter come and then the fourth quarter come with a loss instead of a victory. Sometimes we want to shout for joy too soon. Is this what is being portrayed here in Isaiah 54? Is it time to shout or do we need to wait this thing out and see, is it really gonna happen? Another way to ask this question is: How sure is this promise that we have in Isaiah 54 in these first two things of filling the barren wombs, of possessing the nations, of removal of the shame and humiliation and disgrace and reproach. (See Isaiah 54:1-4) Well look at the answer. It's in verse 9 of Isaiah 54. here it is, **"For this is like the days of Noah to Me, when I swore that the waters of Noah would not flood the earth again; so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you nor will I rebuke you."** (Isaiah 54:9) What is the illustration that God brings out of the history of His people to say, "This is how sure it is"? He goes back to one of the earliest events of history where God, in His decision of bringing wrath upon sin, He decided to destroy the whole world with a flood. Now in that He preserved a remnant, Noah and his sons, because of their righteousness, because they were followers of God, he put them in an ark and he sustained them through a, literally, a world-wide disaster. After 40 days of of rain and flooding, He brought them back down to dry earth and He brought them out

of the boat and He said, “I will never do that again. (See Genesis 9:11) How did He promise? How did He bring assurance to that promise that “I will never destroy the world again”? He said, “I want you to look up into the sky.” And there it was. Colors; beautiful, radiant colors going in this arch—it was the first rainbow. It was a sign from God saying, [this is the sign of My covenant; My promise to you and to all the descendants from you that I will never again destroy the world this way.] (PARAPHRASE, Genesis 9:14-15) That’s where he goes back to. In verse 9, he says, “**...this is like the days of Noah....**”(Isaiah 54:9) And then he says, “**...So I have sworn that I will not be angry with you [and I will not] rebuke you.**” (Isaiah 54:9) If that were not enough, he brings up another example. Look at verse 10. “**For the mountains may be removed and the hills [and the hills] may shake....**” (Isaiah 54:10) For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake. Now wait a minute. Have you ever seen a mountain move? Have you ever seen hills shake? Well, maybe so if you live in California and you’re used to earthquakes and such, but this was one of those things that in this culture, this understanding, were fixed; they didn’t move, they didn’t shake. Mountains didn’t show up— you’d wake up and the next morning it was over ten feet. It was always there. It was a solid fixed object in the landscape. He says, even though they may move, look what He says in verse 10, “**...but My lovingkindness will not be removed from you....**” (Isaiah 54:10) “Even if the mountains move, which they don’t, but even if the mountains did move as solid as you think that is, as solid and as fixed in its place as you think that is, even that doesn’t compare to my lovingkindness.” I love in the Hebrew this word that He uses in verse 10 for “lovingkindness.” It’s the Hebrew word “hesed.” And hesed is not an affection. “Hesed” is not simply a commitment. Hesed is not a desire only. “Hesed” is kind of all those things wrapped up together in divine wrapping that describes what God thinks about you. It’s His lovingkindness. It’s the best word we can come up with. But His lovingkindness is not like a get-well card, “Hey I

hope you feel better.” It’s not a sense of well-wishing. But every time “hesed” is used, there’s something that follows it. Action is always accomplished with hesed. He says, “...**My lovingkindness [it] will [never] be removed from you...My covenant of peace will not be shaken,**” says **the LORD who has compassion on you.” (Isaiah 54:10)** Here again, we see the heart of God in His promise. We get a glimpse of what He feels about us. This is not a God who just has an agenda, a God who just has a plan for us to do one, two, three, and then we get to four. This is not a God who says, “Just simply get in line because I’m God and you’re not.” This is a God who goes to His knees and in compassion, stoops to our level. He talks to us in ways that we— our little, teeny-tiny finite minds can understand. And He shows us His “hesed”. It is everlasting. That’s what drives this covenant. That’s what drives this promise, is His heart of compassion, His covenantal faithfulness, His “hesed”: lovingkindness. His divine affections and commitments all wrapped up together, that’s what motivates and carries along this covenant. Well then how safe is it? What else comes with this promise that He brings? Well look at beginning in verse 14, He says this: “**In righteousness you will be established; you will be far from oppression, for you will not fear, and from terror for it will not come near you.**” (Isaiah 54:14) Now He’s making a promise and saying, “Listen, don’t fear, don’t be afraid. Terror is not coming your way.” Then He says in verse 15, “**If anyone fiercely assails you it will not be from Me. Whoever assails you will [fail] because of [Me].**”(Isaiah 54:15) That’s a great promise. Whoever wants to attack you, whoever wants to come into your life, whoever wants to bring you down, people of Israel, will fail in their success. Here’s why, verse 16, I love this. “**Behold, I Myself have created the smith who blows the fire of coals....**” Look what else He says. “**And brings out a weapon for its work; and I have created the destroyer to ruin. No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment...will condemn. This is**

the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their vindication is from Me, declares the LORD.” (Isaiah 54:16-17) That’s a promise that says, “I’ve got your back. I’ve completely got you covered. Your enemies, as much as they try, will never be able to conquer you. They’ll never be able to destroy you anymore once my covenant of peace comes upon you.” And the assurance, the insight that He gives us is, [“Listen, I’m the One who gives the breath to those who make the weapons to come against you.”] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 54:16) Do you not think, My Friend, that He has complete and sovereign control over every detail of your life? If He is the one who gives the heartbeat in and out of the flow of blood through the body, do you not think, My Friend, that He is capable of delivering you? That He is able to fulfill this promise? This is a sure promise; this is a covenant that He tells us will be forever. It’s a covenant that is driven by His compassion; a covenant that manifests His love and His desire for you to be His son or His daughter. This is a promise that sustained the people of Israel. It sustained them in exile and struggle. My Friend, it will sustain you as well.