

ISAIAH 40:12-17

GOD IS ON WHOSE SIDE?

“Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand
and marked off the heavens with a span,
enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure
and weighed the mountains in scales
and the hills in a balance?
Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD,
or what man shows him his counsel?
Whom did he consult,
and who made him understand?
Who taught him the path of justice,
and taught him knowledge,
and showed him the way of understanding?
Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
and are accounted as the dust on the scales;
behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust.
Lebanon would not suffice for fuel,
nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering.
All the nations are as nothing before him,
they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness.”¹

The motto, “For God and Country,” or variants thereof, is often appropriated by armed forces throughout the world. The German armed forces from the days of the Kaiser through the Third Reich issued belt buckles with “Gott Mit Uns” (God With Us) emblazoned on them.² Obviously, God was less than approving of the actions of the Nazi regime; however, nations continually promote the thought of divine approval of their actions. Even during my brief stint in the United States Marines, we were told that our job was to defeat “godless communism.” The implication was that we were the godly forces working against the forces of darkness. Similar justification for violence, rape and enslaving others is used today by Islamists intent on compelling the world to bow before their perverted idea of a god.

The idea that God approves of actions often serves to justify decisions made not only by nations, but by denominations, by churches and even decisions made by individual Christians. The thought is that God is surely with us; therefore, He approves of what we have decided to do. Thus convinced, mankind is capable of performing horrendous deeds, act with callous disregard for the rights or dignity of others while blatantly dishonouring God. Tragically, we Christians are not immune from committing evil in the Name of the True and Living God.

I am convinced that a proper view of God would dispel many of the misperceptions we employ when endeavouring to justify our chosen actions. Our tendency as fallen beings is to rationalise our actions, justifying our own choices in our own minds and then asking God to approve our chosen actions. Let’s try to think through this issue in this message.

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible: English Standard Version**. Wheaton: Good News Publishers, 2001. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

² The Imperial Russian motto, “Съ нами Богъ!” was a similar boast of armed might.

THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD — The chapter before us is an apologia of God's Person and Character. God begins by charging Isaiah to comfort His people.

“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that her warfare is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.”

[ISAIAH 40:1, 2]

Isaiah moves quite smoothly into a Messianic prophecy pointing forward to the ministry of John, who is known as “the Baptist” [ISAIAH 40:3-5]. Undoubtedly you will remember that this particular prophecy is cited in each of the Gospels.³ Clearly, John understood that he was the fulfilment of the prophecy, for as he answered the religious leaders when they questioned him, John declared, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said” [JOHN 1:23].

Isaiah also hears a voice declaring comfort arising from the endurance of God's Word.

“A voice says, ‘Cry!’
And I said, ‘What shall I cry?’
All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.”

[ISAIAH 40:6-8]

The message of divine comfort continues as the LORD, through the prophet reveals His character. He speaks of His gentleness and of His tender care for His people [ISAIAH 40:9-11]. At this point, however, the prophet shifts His attention to several specific characteristics of the Living God. Isaiah speaks of God, defining Him by those characteristics that will comfort His people—characteristics that are revealed through His enduring Word. Isaiah speaks of God's power, God's wisdom and God's grace. Let's focus on these attributes for a brief while.

The first attribute Isaiah focuses attention on is **God's power**. Whenever we speak of divine power, we could speak of God's might. Isaiah speaks of God measuring the waters in the hollow of His hand. It is a poetic statement of God's greatness. In a similar vein, Isaiah speaks of God marking off the heavens, measuring the dust of the earth, weighing the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance. We understand this is poetic licence; we are incapable of imagining a scale or balance so large. What we do understand is that God knows what He has created. His power is matched by His knowledge. This is a comfort to His people.

³ See MATTHEW 3:3; MARK 1:3; LUKE 3:4; JOHN 1:23

Jesus, comforting the disciples explained, “Even the hairs of your head are all numbered” [LUKE 12:7]. Since you and I have some difficulty in counting our hairs, although some may have an easier time than others, we should establish that He is referring to the Lord God as the One who possesses such ability.

As He prepared to ascend into the heavens, Jesus issued what we know as the Great Commission. He prefaced that charge to all Christians with a bold assertion, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” [MATTHEW 28:18]. As an aside, someone has rightly observed, “It has been said that evangelicals are *doctrinal* exclusivists, but *functional* universalists. They say they believe in hell, but their failure to evangelize is just the sort of behavior one would expect from those who believed that all will work out well for non-believers. Lacking a sense of urgency to witness, they show themselves skeptical of the Judgment.”

Because Jesus possesses power, He is able to save those who come to Him through faith. In His High Priestly prayer offered immediately before His passion, Jesus prayed, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” [JOHN 17:1-3].

In this same vein, I caution any who are outside of this holy faith that the One who now offers Himself as a Saviour must assuredly serve as your judge in that awful day when He calls all people to account. These are the words of the Master, “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment” [JOHN 5:25-29].

Each individual must hear the warning that has been given through the Apostle. “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” [PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11]. I tell you this, not to frighten you, but to warn you as one who knows the fear of the Lord.

A more immediate result of God’s power is found in the final verses of this chapter. This portion of the Word has comforted many weary souls; I pray it will comfort you even now.

“Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint,
and to him who has no might he increases strength.
Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted;

but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.”

[ISAIAH 40:28-31]

This past week, a gentleman questioned me concerning God’s response to our weakness. He knew that my knees are limiting mobility and he wondered whether I struggle demanding that God must heal me. What I told that gentleman is what I now tell you with confidence in God. “God is able to heal, I have no doubt. Should He choose to heal me, I will praise Him and rejoice in His mercy. However, I serve God because of who He is and not because of what He can give. Because He is God, He is worthy of my best service. I am confident that He will be glorified even in my limitations, if I permit Him to work in me. Moreover,” I stated, “if I rest in Him, drawing from His strength, He receives the glory, not me.”

Here’s the point, I am confident of God’s power and might. With the Apostle to the Gentiles, I am learning the meaning of his experience. Paul spoke of God’s permission that had been given to the wicked one. “To keep me from becoming conceited ... a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong” [2 CORINTHIANS 12:7-10].

Paul would later write in this same Corinthian letter, “[Christ Jesus] was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God” [2 CORINTHIANS 13:4]. That is so incredibly powerful! Now, at this time, you live by the power of the Risen Son of God! He works in power in you; and despite your sense of inadequacy and weakness, Christ Jesus is working in you to glorify His Name and to turn others to faith in Him. Through you, God is displaying His power.

I know the passage I am going to recite is so well-known as to be trite, but I want to encourage you by reminding you of an essential truth. Again, I am very much aware that the passage I want us to look at is extended; but it is nevertheless precious to the saints looking to God for grace in the time of trial. Writing the Roman Christians, Paul launched into what can only be considered one of the most exciting portions of the Word. What He wrote lifts our eyes from the present testing we often endure to gaze upon eternity, and that is precisely what we each need. We need to see Christ in power working on our behalf.

Paul wrote, “I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,

‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’

“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” [**ROMANS 8:18-39**].

This delightful, precious and powerful passage is true because our God is mighty on behalf of His own redeemed people. Because His power and might are beyond anything we could imagine, we are confident that all His promises to His people will be fulfilled. Therefore, we do not despair when facing difficulties. When the diagnosis threatens our happiness, we rest in the joy that is found in Him. When prospects for our comfort grow dim, we are secure in His love. The joy and the love that we experience grow out of Him who is mighty for us.

Isaiah also speaks of *God’s Wisdom*. In our text, Isaiah questions who could possibly have given God directions or who conceivably could have counselled God. He wonders whom God might possibly have consulted in order to gain understanding or who may have taught Him [**ISAIAH 40:13, 14**]. Of course, the answer to these rhetorical queries is, “No one.” The questions serve to point to God’s wisdom—wisdom that underlies His perfect justice and knowledge.

Wisdom and knowledge belong to the Lord our God. Jesus spoke of the fact that God knows all about us; He knows how and when the universe will be destroyed. Scoffers “deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly” [**2 PETER 3:5-7**]. Nevertheless, we are told of what is coming so that we are warned.

Remember Paul’s assertion concerning Christ’s wisdom and knowledge. “I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” [**COLOSSIANS 2:1-3**].

Writing the Corinthians in his first letter, Paul points to Christ as the centre of our message. “Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” [1 CORINTHIANS 1:22-24].

The Apostle builds on this thought to draw this conclusion concerning those who are in Christ the Lord. “Consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption” [1 CORINTHIANS 1:26-30].

The world may not recognise the wisdom we possess; however, at the consummation of all things when Christ the Lord returns to be glorified in His saints, our position in His will be seen to have been eminently wise. Even now, “Among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written,

‘What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him’—

these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God” [1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-10].

Then, Isaiah addresses what is for many believers the most precious attribute of all, *God’s Grace*. Isaiah makes a most comforting assertion in **ISAIAH 40:10, 11**.

“Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.”

Because God “comes with might,” and because “His arm rules for Him,” Isaiah is confident that “His reward is with Him and His recompense [is] before Him.” Therefore, God is gentle with His flock. God’s might is employed on behalf of His beloved children. God’s wisdom is displayed through His dear child. Is this not a mark of divine grace? We who believe are comforted by the thought that God is always at work for the benefit of His own dear children.

I cited the final verses of this chapter earlier in this message; but I believe we do well to remind ourselves of God’s direct address to Israel. The Hebrew indicates that the people were despondent, always saying the things that Isaiah records in the **TWENTY-SEVENTH VERSE**.

“Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
‘My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God?’”

[ISAIAH 40:27]

The people were facing a difficult path, and they were saying, “God has forgotten us.” They *felt* deserted. Like many among the saints in this day, their feelings were leading them to despair. The theme song with which we begin our television broadcast goes:

“It’s me against the world,” I used to say,
I never thought to ask Him the way.
With the Good Book in hand,
I can find the Promised Land;
And now I know the way to joyful freedom,
He showed me the way to joyful freedom.

That describes Israel as revealed in our text; and that is the plaint of many of the saints of the Living God even now. We allow our feelings to lead us into despondency.

We need to read the remainder of Isaiah’s words in this chapter, however. Listen again to what the Prophet of God says.

“Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint,
and to him who has no might he increases strength.
Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted;
but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.”

[ISAIAH 40:28-31]

If you’ve followed me to this point, you will note that the focus has been God, especially thinking of God’s power and wisdom exercised on behalf of His beloved child. I don’t want anyone to misunderstand what I’m going to say; but neither do I want anyone to ignore what I’m about to say. God is gracious; and His grace is specifically demonstrated toward His people. However, the tendency of mankind is to presume against the Lord our God. Even we who are called by the Name of the Son of God become complacent with our exalted status and forget that we are responsible to serve God. We become so focused on our own condition that we begin to take God for granted. This should never happen—but it does happen.

Recall the account of the crossing of the Jordan as Israel was entering the Promised Land. “When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, ‘Are you for us, or for our adversaries?’ And he said, ‘No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come.’ And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, ‘What does my lord say to his servant?’ And the commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, ‘Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.’ And Joshua did so” [JOSHUA 5:13-15].

Any of us might ask this very question of God, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?” The answer that God delivers when we ask such a question will keep us from great evil—if we heed Him: “Neither, I have come as commander of the LORD’s Army.”⁴ God is not *for* man, though God blesses whom He wills. Our responsibility is to find what pleases God and do that! We are responsible to see where God is working and there work with Him!

APPLICATION — Establish one great principle in your mind. Let it serve to guide your labours. *Find where God is working, and enter into the work with Him there.* To determine what we want to do and afterwards inviting God to bless us leads toward presumption. The problem is that we don’t really know Who it is that we are dealing with. We imagine that God is like us; and when we do that, we are moving in a decidedly dangerous direction. One of the most intimidating verses in the Word of God is found in the Psalms.

“When you did these things, I was silent,
so you thought I was exactly like you.
But now I will condemn you
and state my case against you!”⁵

[PSALM 50:21]

The verse is intimidating because we realise how easy it is to make God in our image! It is so very human, and so very dangerous, to attempt to bring the True and Living God down to our level. Let me quickly make some pertinent applications from what we have seen.

Nations must not presume against God. Nations exist at the pleasure of Him who brings all things being and who also rules over all. Throughout the Psalms are cautionary statements against depending upon what man values for national protection. Listen to a few examples.

“Through you we push down our foes;
through your name we tread down those who rise up against us.
For not in my bow do I trust,
nor can my sword save me.
But you have saved us from our foes
and have put to shame those who hate us.
In God we have boasted continually,
and we will give thanks to your name forever. Selah”

[PSALM 44:5-8]

⁴ **International Standard Version** (ISV Foundation, Yorba Linda, CA 2011)

⁵ **The NET Bible First Edition (Noteless)**, (Biblical Studies Press, 2005)

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!

“The LORD looks down from heaven;
he sees all the children of man;
from where he sits enthroned he looks out
on all the inhabitants of the earth,
he who fashions the hearts of them all
and observes all their deeds.
The king is not saved by his great army;
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.
The war horse is a false hope for salvation,
and by its great might it cannot rescue.”

[PSALM 33:12-17]

“Some trust in chariots and some in horses,
but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.
They collapse and fall,
but we rise and stand upright.”

[PSALM 20:7, 8]

It is easy to trust in our armed forces, in our diplomatic skills or in our wealth as a nation. To trust in that which man can supply is foolhardy and disastrous. Who knows, perhaps a political leader will hear this message, or perhaps one of you will relay the words of caution through some communication to one who governs our nation or directs the affairs of provincial life. Should that happen, we are confident that God can use such words of caution to benefit the nation through pointing that leader to seek wisdom and strength from God. We know that God is gracious. Perhaps that will be the means by which His Spirit turns our nation to seek Him. Perhaps God will use such words to turn our province to righteousness and godliness.

Denominations must not presume against God. Though our congregation is unaffiliated, I am always concerned for the great denominations and religious movements that exist, praying that they will honour the Master. I caution all who lead denominations and to caution all who look to such denominations to take care that they not presume against God. Do you recall the warning that was delivered to God’s ancient people through Jeremiah? “The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ‘Stand in the gate of the LORD’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all you men of Judah who enter these gates to worship the LORD. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. Do not trust in these deceptive words: “This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD”’” [JEREMIAH 7:1-4].

We must not think that we are blessed because of our affiliation or because of those with whom we unite in common cause for the sake of the Kingdom. If we enjoy divine blessing, it is because we have chosen to do the will of God. If we receive His grace and mercy, it is because He is pleased thus to honour us. We must not begin to say that because we are Baptists, or because we belong to this denomination or to that denomination, or because we are part of some other religious movement that we are blessed. We seek to honour God through obeying His Word; and thus we are confident that He will be glorified in us.

If denominations must not presume against God, then we must also know that ***Congregations must not presume against God.*** I'm speaking to this assembly now. Remember that the primary message to the Seven Churches of Asia was "Repent!" The Church in Ephesus had forgotten from whence they came; they had ceased doing the works they did at first—they had begun to presume against the Master of the church. The Church in Pergamum had begun to tolerate wickedness as though it was a minor problem—they were guilty of presuming against the Lord who redeemed them. The Church in Sardis had grown complacent and almost died—they were acting presumptuously. And of course, the Church in Laodicea had grown insipid and worthless—they presumed against the Risen Son of God. Just so, when we presume against God, imagining that we are better than other congregations, or thinking that we will be blessed simply because we exist, we are presuming against the Son of God and we must repent.

Christians must not presume against God. Those who name the Name of the Son of God must be warned against acting presumptuously. We who call ourselves by His Name must not act as the world acts, must not presume to conduct ourselves by the standard of this dying world, must not imagine that we can anticipate His blessing simply because we are. We dare not begin to say in our heart, "I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I will never see" [REVELATION 18:7b].

Moses warned Israel against acting against the leaders whom God would appoint. He warned, "The man who acts presumptuously by not obeying the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall purge the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear and fear and not act presumptuously again" [DEUTERONOMY 17:12, 13].

Nehemiah, as he prayed, remembered God's mercies and the disdain shown by those who received His goodness; he remembered that God's people acted presumptuously. This is the relevant portion of his prayer. "You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea, and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers. And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day. And you divided the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land, and you cast their pursuers into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters. By a pillar of cloud you led them in the day and by a pillar of fire in the night to light for them the way in which they should go. You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven and gave them right rules and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and you made known to them your holy Sabbath and commanded them commandments and statutes and a law by Moses your servant. You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and brought water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you had sworn to give them.

"But they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiffened their neck and did not obey your commandments" [NEHEMIAH 9:9-16].

The message, then, is a simple call to rejoice in God's goodness toward us. We draw comfort from His power displayed for us and from His wisdom revealed through us. This is evidence of His grace. However, we must never believe it is because of who we are that we enjoy this grace; we are blessed because of Who God is. The message is liberating, lending strength and courage to each believer. May God be glorified in us as we walk in confidence in Him. Amen.