

I will uphold with my righteous right hand

Isaiah 41:10

I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

The Israelites were living in a crazy world. They continued to worship idols, and they were reminded that this would lead to their being exiled to a foreign nation. While this was all well into the future, it made their daily lives very uncertain. Into this murky situation God sends Isaiah with a message of comfort.

First, Isaiah relays the message of comfort in the words, *I (God) will strengthen you and help you*. How different these words are from the words of encouragement that the nations spoke to one another in verse 6. There, one human being encouraged another human being to be strong in the face of difficulty. But these words are spoken to humans by God. He can actually do something about their situation. This reminds us of the words “we can get through this together” used during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Luther says that this is like saying, “I am your strength. Your strength amounts to nothing; it will easily evaporate. I am your strength and your authority.” He does not only say, “I will strengthen you,” but also, “I will help you,” that is, “I will attend you incessantly, so that you do not go soft.”

When Isaiah says that the Lord *will uphold* them, he means that Christ grants strength of his own righteousness. They had been depending on their own righteousness when they worshiped their idols. That was not going to get done. It only led them further from their real source of righteous strength. Notice how the comfort piles up.

The manner in which that strength and help will show itself is given in the phrase, *with my righteous right hand*. “Right hand” in Scripture signifies power, strength and salvation. It was with this “right hand” that God brought Israel out of Egypt. It is of this power, that God reminds Moses when Moses was overwhelmed by the enormity of leading 2 million people to the Promised Land.

God’s powerful hand is righteous. Righteous means “right, correct, straight, appropriate, and proper.” In righteousness, God had determined to bring about the deliverance of all humanity for sin, death, and hell. He had promised to do so and would remain faithful to all those promises.

God’s right hand fights for His people in power, while with His left hand He holds the right hand of His child Israel. (TLSB)

Any Christian can read these words and find rich comfort. Believers can turn to the Lord for comfort, knowing that the Lord stands behind these words.

Gracious Father, thank you for your incredible words of comfort and strength. Forgive us for, too, often depending on our own resources in time of need. Help us to lean on in every trouble. Amen.