A Mother's Love

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Isaiah 66:10-14

10 Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice
with her in joy, all you who mourn over her—11 that you may nurse and be
satisfied from her consoling breast; that you may drink deeply with delight
from her glorious bosom. 12 For thus says the Lord: I will extend prosperity to
her like a river, and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream; and
you shall nurse and be carried on her arm, and dandled on her knees. 13 As a
mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in
Jerusalem. 14 You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice; your bodies shall
flourish like the grass; and it shall be known that the hand of the Lord is with
his servants, and his indignation is against his enemies.

1. Mother's Day

Today is Mother's Day, and today's sermon is entitled "A Mother's Love." I wish we could share our experiences with our mothers, but since it would take a few hours to share, I'd like to share about my experience with my own mother. I came to the US in 1982 to study in Kansas City, MO. At the time, I told my parents that I would go back to Korea in about 7 years when I would finish my studies. My parents waited and 7 years passed. Whenever I talked with my dad he would ask me when I was coming back to Korea. But my mother never asked. She told me not to worry about returning to Korea. She always told me just to stay healthy and take care of my children. She did not want me to feel pressured.

I'm sure for her personally, she would have preferred to have our family back in Korea, but she never asked me to give up my dreams in the US to please her. I'm so grateful to my mother for her thoughtfulness. And I'm sure that many of us have similar stories of how our mothers have shown us this kind of love. Have you ever thought to yourself, where does this kind of love come from?

2. God's Motherly Love

Today's scripture tells us that our mothers' love comes from God. Isaiah 66:11 says, "**you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast; that you may drink deeply with delight from her glorious bosom.**" Isaiah talks about how happy the Israelites would be when they would come back to Jerusalem from Babylon. He uses the analogy of babies and their mothers to

compare the relationship of Israel and Jerusalem. For the Israelites, Jerusalem was the center of their mother country.

However, later in verse 13, God is compared to a mother who comforts her child. "**As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem**." Isaiah says that the people of Israel will experience a similar feeling of motherly comfort from God. The mourning that the captive Israelites felt while they were in Babylon is described in Psalm 137. "**By the rivers of Babylon-there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion.** 2 **On the willows there we hung up our harps.** 3 **For there our captors asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion**!" The Israelites were ridiculed by the Babylonians. If God existed, why didn't God save his chosen people from being exiled to a foreign land? The people of Israel were like an orphan who was forsaken by his mother.

3. The Happy Orphans

It hurts when we feel abandoned. This can be incredibly difficult especially for children who are abandoned after birth. In middle school, I had a friend who went to school from an orphanage. When I invited him to my house, I felt so sorry for him because I was able to live with my parents, but he was not. Today, about 135,000 children are adopted in America every year. It is wonderful that they are loved by foster parents, but while they grow up they may wonder why their biological parents abandoned them. Many of them might search for their biological mother to try to find out why their mothers had to give up their precious children. The emotion that an orphaned child feels is what the people of Israel were feeling while exiled in Babylon.

The happiness of the returning people of Israel is found in Psalm 126:1-3. **"When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.** 2 **Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.'** 3 **The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced**." The return to Jerusalem would have felt like a lost hope for the Jewish people. Yet after 70 years in exile, they heard the good news of God's salvation. So, Isaiah 66:10 says, "**Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over her.**" Isaiah tells the people of Israel that the people would be reunited with Jerusalem in the same way that a child and mother are reunited after being separated for many years.

4. Female Image of God

For many of us, when we think about God we associate with father figures in our lives. The prayer Jesus taught to his disciples in the Gospels starts with "**Our Father who art in heaven**." But we also find many characteristics that we associate with our experience with mothers in our relationship with God. We experience care, encouragement, and selfless love from our mothers. In the same way that our fathers reflect the image of God to us in our lives, our mothers also shine a light into the character of God; a God who cares for us, loves us, encourages us, and comforts us throughout our lifetime.

The female image of God is found in the creation story. Genesis 1:27 says, "**So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them**." The passage tells us that both men and women are created in the image of God. Men and women reflect the character and the essence of God in their being. Isaiah 49:15 also says, "**Can a woman forget her nursing-child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you**." The Israelites felt that God had abandoned them in Babylon; but Isaiah tells them that God would never forget them. Just as a mother never forgets her children, so does God never forget his people.

5. Conclusion

The Talmud says, "God could not be everywhere, and so he made mothers." Of course, we know that God can actually be everywhere and do everything. But God sends our moms to this world so we can experience the intimate love of God through other people. Our mothers care for us, carry us both literally and emotionally, and embrace us when we are most vulnerable and in need.

God has given us life through our mothers. And through them we learn how much God loves us. We may often take this love for granted. But the love of our mothers is truly one of the best gifts that we may be able to receive in this life from God.

6. Application

Through our moms, we also learn how much Jesus loves us. In Matthew 23:37 Jesus says, "**Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her**

wings, and you were not willing!" Jesus came to save the world, but he was rejected and killed by his own people. When we turn to Jesus, he comforts us and helps us even in our deepest time of need. The love of our mothers lasts a lifetime. In this, our mothers show us the truest love of all, the love of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. There is a gospel song, "There is none like you." I believe this song is very appropriate for us to praise our Lord for giving us our mothers and give thanks to our mothers for giving us their sacrificial love. There is none like our God. There is none like our Lord Jesus Christ. There is none like our mother. Amen.

There is none like You.
No one else can touch my heart like you do,
I can search for all eternity Lord
And find, there is none like You.

Your mercy flows like a river so wide,
And healing comes from Your hand.
Suffering children are safe in Your arms,
There is none like You.

There is none like You,
(There is none like You, Lord)
There is none like You.

I can search for all eternity Lord,
There is none like You.
I can search for all eternity Lord,
There is none,
(there is none,)
There is none Lord,
There is none like You.