

COMFORT FOOD

Josh Morris

Focus Only the Lord can give us comfort in times of trouble. He calls us to stop looking in other places for our strength and turn to Him.

Open Does your family have a favorite food that you eat only during the holidays?

Read Isaiah was a prophet to the nation of Israel during very difficult times. There was instability in the government, a poor economy, part of the nation was in exile and the people had turned from God. We learn from the Old Testament book written by Isaiah about where to find comfort in difficult times.

The people of Israel had repeatedly turned from God (Isaiah 1:2–3). They looked to things other than God for their strength (Isaiah 31:1). We have the same tendency—we look for comfort in things such as our job, shopping, sports, exercise or food. Just as Isaiah warned the people of Israel, God calls us to turn to Him. Only *He* has an unlimited supply of the comfort we need.

We turn to God because of His strength. We often think of comfort as being without hardship or something that makes us feel better. The word “comfort” comes from two Latin words that translated mean “with strength.” The all-powerful, all-knowing, unchanging, most-high God stoops down to comfort us and give us strength (Isaiah 51:12–16). He doesn’t always give us what we want, but He gives us what we need to cope with any hardship.

We turn to God through repentance. The Hebrew word used in the Bible for “comfort” is also sometimes translated as “repent.” When Israel repented, God comforted them (Isaiah 40:1–2). When we believe in Christ and surrender our lives to Him, God speaks comfort to us. He reminds us that He is with us in our times of trouble, that He has already won the war with Satan and that we belong to Him.

Talk

1. What similarities do you see between the conditions of Israel at the time Isaiah was alive and current events of today?
2. Pastor Josh mentioned several places we look for comfort: our job, shopping, sports, exercise and food. Can you relate to any of these? What are some other examples?
3. Read Isaiah 51:12–16. How is God’s comfort different from the comfort we find in other places?
4. Is there an area of your life where you need strength right now? Are you in the middle of a battle where you need His comfort? Read Isaiah 40:28–31 out loud, and then pray for each other in the group.

Live

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? Do you need to fully surrender your life to Christ? Maybe He is showing you something in your life where you rely on your own strength instead of Him. Or possibly you are struggling with bondage to finding comfort outside of God’s provision. In your private prayer time, confess any sin He reveals to you. Celebrate a brand new start!

Pray

Lord, we thank You for Your comfort that far surpasses anything else we can hope in. We praise You that You are the all-powerful, all-knowing God who comes close to us in our troubles. Holy Spirit, please give us strength to stand in the midst of our current struggles. Help us to keep our eyes focused on You. Help us to rely on You and not our own strength.