Isaiah 66:12 For this is what the Lord says: “I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of the nations like a flooding stream; you will nurse and be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees.”

He was a prophet of God who lived around 750 b.c. His task was to proclaim the judgement of God upon an apostate Jewish nation. The people had turned their backs on the Lord. The people were worshipping idols and following their own dreams and imaginations. Isaiah was called to tell these people what God had to say of their unbelief.

But Isaiah’s task was not all harsh judgment. It is true, that much of Isaiah’s preaching was the stern, condemning preaching of the law, but Isaiah was also given opportunity to preach the wonder of the gospel of God. Isaiah was able to tell these people of the promised Savior and what He would do and accomplish.

Sadly, the majority of the Jewish people who heard Isaiah’s message laughed at him. They thought him a fool. Why not? There were plenty of false prophets who told them what they wanted to hear. These were men out to have their bellies filled and their names held in honor. These were men, prophets and preachers who were more worried about men than about what God had to say. Because of these false prophets the majority of Jewish people had abandoned the true faith. They thought they were still faithful to God but God’s Word made it clear they were not. In truth there was only a small portion of the Jews who remained faithful to the Lord and His Word. A small remnant who looked forward to the coming of the Messiah and the wonder he would bring.

The section of Isaiah that we have before us is one of those wonderful sections where Isaiah had the opportunity to speak of the hope the Lord was to bring upon the Jews and the world. It is a prophecy that speaks to us of what will be because of the Messiah who has come. Let’s then look at our text and contemplate these words under the theme: **THE VICTORY OF THE LORD. 1st. There will be rejoicing. 2nd. There will be peace. 3rd. There will be comfort.**

Perhaps the first thing I should tell you when it comes down to this section is that it is in the last chapter of Isaiah’s great work. That’s important to know because it helps us grasp the intent and purpose for which God gave these words. The words are a prophecy, a foretelling of what will be and the wonder to come, but take note that our context clearly leads us to understand that these words of Isaiah have yet to be fulfilled.

What do we know? Please note that chapters 63 and 64 contain a prayer for grace and the deliverance of God’s people. As an answer to that prayer, in chapters 65 and 66 we hear God speak of the final separation of the faithful from the ungodly. Verse 17 of chapter 65 is the one that sets the tone for the conclusion of Isaiah’s book. It says, **“Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered nor will they come to mind.”** There, there is the tone, the direction that sets forth the wonder of what God proclaims before us. This is a prophecy of the Judgment to come, the final Judgment Day of the lord. So note, there will be rejoicing. There will be peace. There will be the eternal comfort of the Lord. Let’s look at our words.

Verse 10 says to us, **“Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her.”** Do you catch the wonder of these words? Do you grasp that these words are pointing to something that has taken place, something that is different than what used to be? What used to be is the difficulty and persecution of God’s people. What used to be is a world that hated and mocked, despised and belittled, rejected and scorned anything to do with the Lord and his Holy Church.

Oops, did I fail to mention something? Please note that in these verses Jerusalem is none other than the Holy Christian Church, the communion of Saints. Jerusalem represents all those everywhere who believe in the promises of the Lord for eternal life and salvation. Now clearly these words before us are telling us that something has happened, something has taken place that will cause rejoicing and gladness. Rejoicing for all those who have loved the Lord and even rejoicing for all those who have seen the church beaten, scorned and rejected by the world. Clearly these are words that point to the victory of the Lord, the eternal victory of our God!

We go on. Verses 11-13 say, **“For you will nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breasts; you will drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance. For this is what the Lord says: I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream; you will nurse and be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees. As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem.”**

First, let’s just talk about the general picture of these verses. The picture is that of a mother and child, a nursing mother and child and the close bond, the happy bond that exists between them. The child is loved and nourished, nourished with all they could want and more. The child is held close, carried and played with. Please, look at those words again and you will see this awesome and comforting picture of mother and child joined in happiness and filled with delight at life.

Then let’s just go back and pick up on a few lines where we can highlight all the more in the wonderful blessings of this event. I already mentioned the comforting picture of mother and nursing child but did you catch the phrase **“delight in her overflowing abundance.”** That is God’s way of telling us that when this wonder happens there will be no shortage of blessings and gifts from the Lord.

We’ve heard promises like this before in God’s Word, especially where heaven has become the eternal reality. We heard it in phrases like: **“Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them.Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat.For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."** (Rev 7:15-17) Is the promise becoming clearer?

Then there is the line: **“I will extend peace to her like a river.”** Again in the book of Revelation do you recall hearing about the river that flows in the center of all, flows from the very throne of God? It is called the “river of life.” That river represents the awesome peace that God gives us, the peace that surpasses all understanding, the peace that is ours in Jesus our Savior. Because of Jesus and what he has done we have peace, true peace, peace with God. Peace in knowing our sins are forgiven. Peace in knowing that heaven is our home just because of Jesus.

And just to make sure, let me remind you of what Jesus has done. He lived the perfect life we could not and then offered himself as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. More than that, though he went to the cross to suffer for our sins and he does not stay dead. Jesus rises from death and in Jesus and because of Jesus we know the wonderful promise of eternal life and salvation in Jesus. God has brought salvation. God has brought peace to us in Jesus. Peace that flows so freely from He who is the Water of Life that we could say it is a river endlessly flowing to the glory of God and the eternal wonder of our souls.

Or consider the next line and all that it means: **“I will extend…the wealth of nations like a flooding stream.”** Here is a gracious picture of the total goodness of God but more than that. Recall that in the Book of Revelation we are told: **“The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.”** All the wonders of the world will be found in this place of victory, the best of the best just for us for all eternity!

My favorite lines in this section are the ones that say: **“You will…be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees.”** I want you to know that the pronouns of this verse, the two “hers” are not in the Hebrew. In actuality the doer of these words is God. God is going to carry us in his arms and God is going to bounce us on his knees. It is a section that in a joyful way describes the harmonious and gleeful relationship we will have with God. Another reason this is my favorite set of lines is because it brings into focus who is doing everything here. God is the one in action. God is the one doing. God is calling us to rejoice and be glad because He has extended his peace, He has given the wealth of nations, He has carried and dandled. God is the doer of everything. We are the recipients of everything that God is doing. What an apt picture of the grace of God, the free and powerful goodness and love God pours upon us.

One last phrase. **“And you will be comforted over Jerusalem.”** I wouldn’t have translated that way. I would have translated, **And you will be comforted by or in Jerusalem.** Again Jerusalem is the name of the Holy Christian Church. In this case it is the Church Triumphant openly dwelling with God. Jerusalem is where we will be and live in the eternal kingdom of God! To grasp this all the more, remind yourselves of how the wonder of heaven is shown us in Revelation. That’s right, it is the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven. That city of God with streets of pure gold and foundations of precious stones.

Well, that’s about it! Okay, it except for that last verse. It is a verse of triumph. It says, **“When you see this, your heart will rejoice and you will flourish like grass; the hand of the Lord will be made known to his servants, but his fury will be shown to his foes.”** Here it is in a nutshell. When you see Jesus coming in the clouds with power and glory, honor and wonder and you realize that from this point on our eternal dwelling will be with and before God, well, doesn’t that thought alone capture the marvel of this verse? The absolute awe this day and this eternity with God will be. Oh, it is true that those who have rejected the Lord and spurned his love in Jesus will not know this eternal glory and wonder, but it sure will be ours. That’s what I want to focus on, this gift that God is going to give us, has given us in Jesus.

One final question. How do we know it will be? Because The Lord does it all! The Lord makes it known. That’s what He’s been doing the entire history of mankind. Revealing his plan. Revealing his salvation. Revealing his victory that will bring us eternal rejoicing, peace and comfort. It is the promise of God’s Word, the truth behind Jesus, and the hope of our lives. Amen.