

Isaiah 66:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.

Analysis

God answers His own rhetorical questions: "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God." Two questions affirm God's faithfulness to complete what He begins. The Hebrew *ashbir* (bring to birth) and *olid* (cause to bring forth) emphasize God's active role in conception and delivery. The questions are rhetorical—obviously God doesn't initiate labor and then prevent birth! The promise: God completes what He starts. "Saith the LORD" and "saith thy God" add double affirmation—this is covenant promise from Yahweh, the personal God of His people. From a Reformed perspective, this teaches the perseverance of the saints and the certainty of God's purposes. What God begins, He completes (Philippians 1:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:24). Those He predestines, He also glorifies—no one is lost along the way (Romans 8:29-30). God doesn't abandon His work mid-process. The elect will certainly be saved, sanctified, and glorified.

Historical Context

The post-exilic community worried that God's restoration promises might fail—they'd begun returning but circumstances remained difficult. God promised certainty: He would complete what He started. This principle appears throughout redemptive history. God completed His promise to Abraham despite impossible circumstances (Romans 4:18-21). He completed Israel's exodus despite obstacles. He completed Christ's redemptive work despite opposition. He will complete the

church's mission despite current difficulties. Final fulfillment comes when the last elect person is saved and the bride is presented spotless to Christ (Ephesians 5:25-27, Jude 24-25).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does this promise relate to the doctrine of perseverance of the saints?
2. What comfort does God's commitment to complete what He begins provide in personal sanctification?
3. How should confidence in God's completion of His purposes affect our perseverance in ministry despite obstacles?

Interlinear Text

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|---------|----------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|
| אֲנִי | אֲשֶׁבֶּ יֶרֶךְ | וְלֹא | הַמּוֹלֵד יֶד | אֲמַר |
| shall I | Shall I bring to the birth | H3808 | and not cause to bring forth | saith |
| H589 | H7665 | | H3205 | H559 |

| | | | | |
|----------|---------|------------------------------|------------------|-------|
| יְהוָה | אֲנִי | הַמּוֹלֵד יֶד | וְשָׁטַח רִגְלִי | אֲמַר |
| the LORD | shall I | and not cause to bring forth | and shut | saith |
| H3068 | H518 | H589 | H3205 | H6113 |

אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

thy God

H430

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 37:3 (Parallel theme): And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.

Genesis 18:14 (References Lord): Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

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