

“Do Not Fear, for I Have Redeemed You”  
(Isaiah 43:1-7)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. Our passage has to do with a dark time in Judah’s history.
  - a. Israel had forsaken God, had turned to other gods, broken His Sabbaths and His Laws.
  - b. As a result, the Lord took them out of the land of Promise into the land of the Chaldeans.
  - c. Instead of learning from their bad example, Judah seemed determined to follow it.
  - d. Already they had suffered many things from God’s judgment.
    - (i) In 42:19-20, Judah, the servant of the Lord, is portrayed as blind and deaf: “Who is blind but My servant, or so deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is so blind as he that is at peace *with Me*, or so blind as the servant of the Lord? You have seen many things, but you do not observe *them*; *your* ears are open, but none hears.”
    - (ii) The Lord had blessed them and made them great for the glory of His name, but He gave them over to be plundered and taken away to foreign lands, and there was no one to rescue them: “The Lord was pleased for His righteousness' sake to make the law great and glorious. But this is a people plundered and despoiled; all of them are trapped in caves, or are hidden away in prisons; they have become a prey with none to deliver *them*, and a spoil, with none to say, ‘Give *them* back!’” (vv. 21-22).
    - (iii) They were so spiritually dull that they weren’t even asking themselves why this happened to Israel and was happening to them. But the Lord tells them that it was for their sins: “Who among you will give ear to this? Who will give heed and listen hereafter? Who gave Jacob up for spoil, and Israel to plunderers? Was it not the Lord, against whom we have sinned, and in whose ways they were not willing to walk, and whose law they did not obey” (vv. 23-24)?
    - (iv) And with all this, they did not listen, repent or turn back: “So He poured out on him the heat of His anger and the fierceness of battle; and it set him aflame all around, yet he did not recognize *it*; and it burned him, but he paid no attention” (v. 25).
2. Now it might seem that the next words of the Lord would be that He was going to destroy them, but that’s not what we read.
  - a. He says, “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine.”
  - b. Most of them were still rebellious and wouldn’t listen to Him. Yet, strangely the Lord still cared for them.
  - c. He was still intending to show mercy on them that He might glorify His grace.

- d. The light of His love was breaking through the darkness of His wrath and shining brighter and brighter upon the spiritual seed of Jacob.

#### B. Preview.

1. What the Lord preaches to His people through Isaiah is the Gospel.
  - a. This is one of those glimpses of the coming work of Christ and the blessing that His people would receive from it.
  - b. Israel deserved His wrath. But out of His lovingkindness and His desire to magnify His grace, He gives them what they don't deserve: mercy.
  - c. As Paul writes, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Rom. 5:20).
2. What we will look at tonight are three things:
  - a. Judah should not be afraid because God cares for them.
  - b. They should not be afraid because of what God had done for them.
  - c. They should not be afraid because of what God was yet intending to do for them.

### II. Sermon.

#### A. First, Judah should not be afraid because God cares for them.

1. Why did God care for them?
  - a. They were His creation: "But now, thus says the Lord, your Creator, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel" (v. 1).
    - (i) Israel was the Lord's workmanship, created by Him for good works (Eph. 2:10).
    - (ii) He made them, gave them existence, formed them into a people, made His covenant with them.
    - (iii) God would never forsake those whom He foreknew.
  - b. They are the ones He bought, redeemed: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you" (v. 1).
    - (i) First out of Egypt.
    - (ii) Then from the bondage of many nations (see Judges).
    - (iii) But there were also those redeemed with the blood of His Son.
    - (iv) The Lord would never forsake His people.
  - c. They are His peculiar people: "I have called you by name; you are Mine" (v. 1).
    - (i) He set them apart from all others: they were a holy nation.
    - (ii) He called them by name.
    - (iii) They belonged to Him.
  - d. And He is their God by covenant: "For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior" (v. 3).
    - (i) They were His people, and He was their God.
    - (ii) He set them apart; they were holy to Him.

#### 2. And so the Lord tells them because of this, "Do not fear" (v. 1).

- a. God was for them, who could be against them?

- b. All they needed to do was to trust Him.
  - c. And they didn't need to be afraid.
- B. Second, they shouldn't fear because of what God had already done for them.
  - 1. God had already shown Himself to be faithful to His Word.
    - a. He had given Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba as their ransom.
      - (i) He could be referring to the fact that God destroyed Egypt in delivering them out of bondage.
      - (ii) He plundered the Egyptians, killed their first-born and drowned their army.
      - (iii) In Asa's time, He also destroyed an army of one million Ethiopians.
      - (iv) Or He could be referring to the fact that Sennacherib was now threatening them, but the Lord would turn him aside to these other nations to destroy them, instead of Judah.
      - (v) Either way, the Lord was promising to spare Judah.
  - b. They should trust Him and not be afraid.
- 2. The Lord also reaffirmed His love for them and that He was not intending to let them go: "Since you are precious in My sight, *since* you are honored and I love you" (v. 4).
  - a. God's chosen people are precious to Him.
  - b. They are His jewels, His treasure.
  - c. He loves them and delights in them, more than any other people.
  - d. This is really what makes them great.
  - e. Therefore, they should not be afraid.
- C. Lastly, they should not be afraid because of what God was yet intending to do for them.
  - 1. He would be with them during their greatest difficulties and dangers: "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you" (v. 2).
    - a. The Lord had shown that as long as He was with them, these things literally could not hurt them.
      - (i) They had passed through the Red Sea on the way out of Egypt.
      - (ii) They had passed through the waters of the Jordan at its flood stage coming into the land.
      - (iii) The Lord had spared Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah – or as they are they are better known, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego – from Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace (Dan. 3).
      - (iv) Even though they walked through the valley of the shadow of death, the Lord would bring them through it (Ps. 23).
  - b. Neither could any of the trials, difficulties or dangers these things represent hurt them.
  - c. As long as God was with them, they didn't need to be afraid.

2. The Lord would put the interests of His people above those of others: “I will give *other* men in your place and *other* peoples in exchange for your life” (v. 4).
  - a. Everyone would be cut off rather than God’s Israel perish.
  - b. The Lord would direct the affairs of the world for the good of His church.
  - c. They didn’t need to be afraid.
  
3. Lastly, He tells them that those who had been scattered would be gathered again:
 

“Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, ‘Give *them* up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not hold *them* back.’ Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made” (vv. 5-7).

  - a. Many of Israel had been scattered to the four winds.
  - b. Many in Judah were yet to be scattered.
  - c. But the Lord would stir their hearts and the hearts of their captors to let them go and return to Jerusalem.
  - d. But notice that this would apply to those called by His name and created for His glory (v. 7). It refers to the spiritual seed of Abraham.
    - (i) This is the same thing Moses predicted in Deuteronomy 30: “So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call *them* to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. And the LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live. And the LORD your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. And you shall again obey the LORD, and observe all His commandments which I command you today. Then the LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the LORD will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; if you obey the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul” (vv. 1-10).
    - (ii) This refers not only to elect national Israelites, but to elect Gentiles, all of whom make up those who are the true Israelites.
    - (iii) They didn’t need to be afraid.

III. Application: It's this last point that brings home the application to us: this good news preached to Judah so many years ago also applies to us, because we also are true Israelites through faith in Jesus Christ.

A. God cares for us.

1. We are His new creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works (Eph. 2:10).
2. We are those He has redeemed out of the kingdom of darkness and have been brought into the kingdom of light (Eph. 5:8).
3. We are the called of Jesus Christ (2 Thes. 2:14), His peculiar people (1 Pet. 2:9).
4. And He is our God by covenant (Heb. 8:10).
5. If God cares for us, there is nothing we should fear.

B. Consider what God has done for us.

1. We are a part of His church.
2. He has given people for us.
3. Whole nations have been destroyed over the centuries or key leaders taken out of the way, just to preserve God's church, to preserve us.
4. How many people has He judged just to keep His church in existence, and how many more will He give up to keep us?
5. In Jesus Christ, we are precious in His sight and He loves us.
6. This is our true greatness.

C. Consider also what God has promised He will do for us.

1. He will be with us through our greatest difficulties and dangers.
2. He will work all things together for our good and our sanctification (Rom. 8:28).
3. And none of us who have fled for refuge in Jesus Christ will ever be lost (John 10:29).

D. Therefore, we needn't be afraid.

1. If the Lord would do all this for us, how will He let us go?
2. Paul writes, "What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, 'For thy sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.' But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:31-39).
3. Trust in the Lord and receive the comfort these verses give.
4. Rest in His peace, no matter what your trial or affliction.
5. The Lord is your God through faith in Christ. He will never leave you nor forsake you. Amen.