

“Thus Says the Lord”

Isaiah 43:1-7

Introduction: As we begin the New Year, I’ve noticed that there are many things in our world that fill us with fear. The trials we’re facing today are not so much different from what God people faced in the Old Testament. The people and the stories of the Bible are sacred and important because they can form our lives with the promises and presence of God. The stories in God’s Word are intended to encourage us, not in fear, but in faith. Not in paralysis, but action and devotion as God’s people. The purpose of the message is to remind the people of God of what **“Thus Says the Lord.”**

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 43:1-7 (NKJV)

¹.But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. ² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. ³ For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. ⁴ Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honored, And I have loved you; Therefore I will give men for you, And people for your life. ⁵ Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west; ⁶ I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not keep them back!’ Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth—⁷ Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.”

FIRST: If God _____ it, that _____ it. When we read, *“Thus says the Lord”* we should pay attention because what follows is a divine imperative. *“Do not fear.”* This imperative appears 365 times in the Bible. Most often it is spoken to an individual. But in Isaiah 43, it’s spoken to a people. God’s chosen people Israel. It is also applicable to us God’s church.

SECOND: What is the foundation for the imperative not to fear? He says **“do not fear,” I have _____ you.”** This means that He has recovered or rescued us by settling an obligation. We have been set free. We have been bought with the precious blood of Jesus.

THIRD: We are _____, _____, and _____ by God. *“I have called you by name, you are mine.”*

FOURTH: God allows us to go through things to teach us, to strengthen our faith, and to mold and shape us into the image of Jesus. But His promise is that He will _____. *“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you.” “When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, ... I am the Lord your God your Savior.”*

FIFTH: God _____ a _____ when it looks like there is no way. *“because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you, ... do not fear, I am with you.” ... “Thus says the Lord.”*

Desmond Tutu poem:

I sometimes forget / that I was created for Joy.

My mind is too busy. / My Heart is too heavy for me to remember / that I have been called to dance the Sacred dance of life. / I was created to smile To Love / To be lifted up / And to lift others up. I O’ Sacred One / Untangle my feet from all that ensnares. Free my soul. / That we might / Dance and that our dancing / might be contagious.

Hafiz