

## “FEAR NOT” By Darcy Pearson



Are you a worrywart? Are your thoughts continually examining life’s circumstances? Are you consumed by irrational or catastrophic thinking? It is no wonder. Life is full of difficulties, diseases, dangers, toils, and death. Fears abound. We live in a scary and deadly world as the first nine months of 2020 has revealed.

Let us recap 2020 so far. First, there were apocalyptic wildfires engulfing Australia. Then the Iranian regime shot down a Ukrainian airliner killing all 176 people. This was one of several events that caused tension between the US and Iran, having the potential for war. Next came the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. I can never remember waking up to the news giving a death toll number each and every day. On the heels of this ongoing disease we have had unprecedented social and racial unrest due to the death of George Floyd May 25.<sup>th</sup> This event is still causing polarizing violence and destruction across America today. Plus, we have had earthquakes in Turkey and the Caribbean, a locust swarm in Africa, the sobering and tragic helicopter death of Kobe Bryant, murder hornets, devastating floods in Indonesia, riots in Delhi, a volcanic eruption in the Philippines, the stock market crash in March, and recently a major explosion in Beirut. The unemployment rate is 8.4% this month down from the top of 14.7% in April but far above a typical rate of 3.5%. And now the entire Western half of the US is on fire with millions of acres being destroyed and poor air quality for everyone in these states. The world is vastly different now than it was a short 9 months ago. Most people do not “feel” safe. Many are fretting, experiencing growing worry and anxiety. The Bible speaks to man’s fears

throughout its pages. Over and over again our compassionate God reminds us to FEAR NOT. In Isaiah 43:13 he lovingly says,

“For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, **‘FEAR NOT, I AM the one who helps you.’**”

Let us meditate on this passage. It is found in the Book of Isaiah, authored by the Prophet Isaiah, who for 40 years (760 BC to 720 BC) foretold during one of the worst times in the history of Israel. These were difficult and tough years the people were living in. He wrote during the volatile and divided time period marking the expansion of the Assyrian empire and the decline of the northern kingdom of Israel. Isaiah repeatedly warns the people of the southern kingdom of Judah that God will punish them for their sins. Their only hope for escape is God’s intervention, not political or government interventions, nor material wealth. The people had felt secure under faithful King Uzziah’s leadership, but when he died there was almost a panic. This is when the Lord showed Isaiah who was really on the throne. At the beginning of chapter 41 God tells the nations that He is sovereign, He controls history and at the end of the day they really have no control of their future (41:2-4). The LORD planned all that was occurring and will occur and is carrying out His purposes (41:4). He brings events to pass. The words Isaiah foretold to the people speak to the future judgment of exile and captivity as a consequence of their sin and unbelief, but mercifully he explained they were still **not rejected** by God. This is because the covenant the Lord made with Abraham was unconditional (Gen. 15) so his descendants need **not fear!** These soothing words of hope; “fear not,” remind the Israelites that He is still their God (Isa. 43:3). He is with them (43:5). He promises to strengthen them (40:31) and He upholds them with His righteous right hand (41:10). He will help them endure (41:13-14) and he will deliver them in time.<sup>1</sup>

Why the right hand? In the Bible, the words “right hand” are mentioned together over 130 times (see Gen 48:18; Num. 22:26; Heb. 12:2; Ps. 18:35). The right hand is considered to be a synonym for strength, power, and goodness. This passage is meant to be an encouragement to the sinning people of Israel and a promise that God will strengthen their hands so that they might persevere under pressure and dangerous threats. The Lord is taking them by the hand as their guide, to lead them in their way, help them when they fall, and when they are weak hold them up. He was giving His chosen people strength over fear, doubt, and a promise of deliverance over their adversaries, even as they were being disciplined for unbelief and betrayal to their God.

**FEAR NOT, I AM the one who helps you.**

The Bible is clear, God acts throughout history, proving his sovereignty over the nations. He reassures His people that, just as He acted on their behalf before, He will do so again. God is

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<sup>1</sup> John A. Martin, [“Isaiah,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1094.

good and promises his children his presence, his care, his protection, his strength, his cooperation, His effectual support, and deliverance. Therefore, believers should “fear not.” Although this passage contains words of comfort for the Israelites in their upcoming captivity, doubtless it is written for us today as encouragement to trust in God during the dark times. These verses help us silence our fears, encourage our faith in the midst of distresses and remind us that He is a faithful and a covenant-keeping God who proves every one of His promises true. He is trustworthy and therefore we take hope.<sup>2</sup> Our Lord is challenging us to not fear the enemy, to not doubt God’s promises, nor to worry that we would perish in the afflictions surrounding us.

Three main points to ponder:

First, are you feeling alone? God says we can depend upon His *presence*. God speaks tenderly to us, “Fear not, for I am with you” (41:10). He will never leave your side. It is impossible to be in a situation, location, or relationship where he is not present. God is with you.

Second, do you feel weak? He is the all-sufficient God during the worst of times. He says He provides concrete *help* during the trouble, “I will strengthen you.” “I will help you.” This is dependable assistance for the days at hand. God is pleased to help the weak. Because it is impossible for anything to exist outside of his control or for anyone/anything to be more powerful than Him, His help is all that is needed.

Third, are you ready to sink, falter, and give up? When you grow weary in the struggle, God says He will uphold you with His right hand. He will take you by the hand to guide you, lead you in the way of escape, deliver you from all your troubles and help you persevere to the end. It is impossible to completely quit because God will never quit you; “He who begun a good work in you will bring it to completion” (Phil. 1:6).

There is one requirement for the child of God however to access these promises and that is faith. Faith refuses to fear because faith rests in who God says He is and what He says He will do. In a trial, if we lose sight of God, who He is (especially His goodness), then we will fret, worry, and doubt. Today, will you choose to remember the One who is with you, who sovereignly controls all and promises you concrete help during these trying days? He is “I AM”, the One who grabs you by the right hand and leads you safely through. Transferring trust by remembering and embracing the fact that you are secure because of your union with the Mighty One of Israel is required. Then, and only then, will you be able to **Fear Not!**

Questions to Ponder- Where do I look for security in? Where has my life be diverted by unbiblical fear? What makes me feel safe? What truths about God should I preach to myself

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<sup>2</sup> Matthew Henry, [\*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume\*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 1152–1153.

during dangerous times? Have I transferred trust from myself and/or the things of this world into the all-sovereign loving hands of my God?