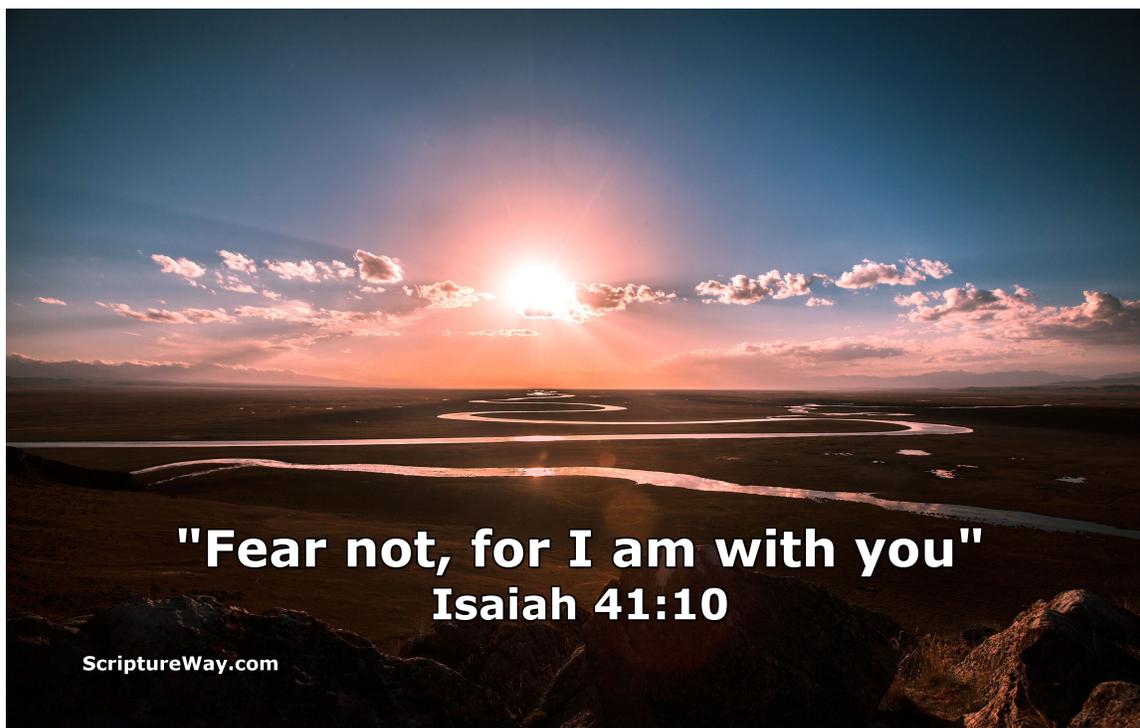


“Fear Nots’ of the Old Testament”

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Prairie River Sunrise with Isaiah 41:10 - Pixabay Photo - Used under license

"Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)

This article is the first in a series on the "Fear Nots' of the Bible." This article presents God's divinely encouraging "Fear not" and "Do not be afraid" statements from the Old Testament.

Consider. In our troubles and challenges of life, God comes to us and says, "Fear not," and "Do not be afraid." In addition to telling us, "Do not be afraid," God encourages us because God is with us and blesses us in a variety of ways.

God is Our Shield. Genesis 15:1 - "After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.'" God is our protector and defense.

God Blesses His People. Genesis 26:24 - "And the Lord appeared to him* the same night and said, 'I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake.'"

* Isaac, Abraham's son

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines *bless* as *invoke divine care, confer prosperity, protect, and endow with favor* (Ref. 1).

God Saves His People. When the Egyptian army was about to overtake the Israelites, and immediately before God divided the sea, Moses said to the Israelites, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today..." (Exodus 14:13).

When the Moabites and Ammonites came to make war against Jehoshaphat, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel and he spoke to the Israelites (2 Chronicles 20:14). "You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you" (2 Chronicles 20:17).

The Hebrew word for *salvation* in Exodus 14:13 and 2 Chronicles 20:17 is *yeshuah*, pronounced *yesh-oo'-aw* (Ref. 2). *Yeshua* also is the modern Hebrew name for Jesus of Nazareth (Ref. 3). In English, the name *Yeshua* is extensively used by followers of Messianic Judaism (Ref. 3).

God Goes with His Servants Into Battle. Deuteronomy 20:2-4 - "So it shall be, when you are on the verge of battle, that the priest shall approach and speak to the people. And he shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel: Today you are on the verge of battle with your enemies. Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified because of them; for the

Lord your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you."



Moses Says to Joshua, "The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed" (Deuteronomy 31:8). Moody Publishers / FreeBibleimages.org.

God Never Fails or Forsakes His People. In Moses' last counsel to all the Israelite people, Moses said, "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:1, 6).

Moses then said to his successor, Joshua, "The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed" (Deuteronomy 31:8).

God Strengthens Us, Helps Us, and Supports Us. Isaiah 41:10 - "Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

God is Our Companion in Trials. Isaiah 43:1-2 - "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. 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."

God indeed has redeemed his people. The Hebrew word for *redeem* is *gaal*, which means *to act as a kinsman and to buy back a relative's property* (Ref. 4).

God has already demonstrated that his promises in Isaiah 43:1-2 are true. God parted the sea for the Israelites to pass through on dry land

(Exodus 14:15-16). God caused the Jordan River to rise up in a heap so it would not overflow the Israelites when they crossed on dry ground (Joshua 3:13-17). Recall that King Nebuchadnezzar had Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego cast into the blazing furnace of fire because they would not serve Nebuchadnezzar's gods (Daniel 3:16-20). Scripture tells us that King Nebuchadnezzar saw in the fire a divine companion that God provided to be with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego during their trial. "'Look!' he answered, 'I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God'" (Daniel 3:25).

Apply. How do you need God's encouragement today to "Fear not" or "Do not be afraid"? Claim God's promises to be present with you, to bless you, to strengthen you, and to give you courage.

References

1. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bless>
2. <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/3444.htm>
3. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeshua>
4. <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/1350.htm>