



WINTER-TIME DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

January 11, 2023



Photo: Our Daily Bread

THE GOD WHO REDEEMS

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.

Isaiah 43:1

READ Isaiah 43:1 - 7

As part of a sermon illustration, I walked toward the beautiful painting an artist had been creating on the platform and made a dark streak across the middle of it. The congregation gasped in horror. The artist simply stood by and watched as I defaced what she'd created. Then, selecting a new brush, she lovingly transformed the ruined painting into an exquisite work of art.

Her restorative work reminds me of the work God can perform in our lives when we've made a mess of them. The prophet Isaiah rebuked the people of Israel for their spiritual blindness and deafness (Isaiah 42:18–19), but then he proclaimed the hope of God's deliverance and redemption: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you" (43:1). He can do the same for us. Even after we've sinned, if we confess our sins and turn to God, He forgives and restores us (vv. 5–7; see 1 John 1:9). We can't bring beauty out of the mess, but Jesus can. The good news of the gospel is that He has redeemed us by His blood. The book of Revelation assures us that in the end, Christ will dry our tears, redeem our past, and make all things new (Revelation 21:4–5).

We have a limited vision of our story. But God who knows us "by name" (Isaiah 43:1) will make our lives more beautiful than we could ever imagine. If you've been redeemed by faith in Jesus, your story, like the painting, has a glorious ending.

By **Glenn Packiam**

PRAY & REFLECT

Dear Jesus, thank You for never giving up on me. I surrender to You and ask that You please redeem what I've ruined. Amen.

How have you messed up? What has God provided for your restoration and redemption?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

Isaiah 43 is a great promise of God's rescue and redemption of Israel, but it must be seen in the context of what precedes it. Notice Isaiah 42:25: "So [God] poured out on them his burning anger, the violence of war. It enveloped them in flames, yet they did not understand; it consumed them, but they did not take it to heart." Though God had disciplined His people for their spiritual waywardness, His promised rescue is a reminder of His surpassing love for them—even though they'd turned from Him. Like Hosea with Gomer (Hosea 3:1) or the father with the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), our heavenly Father longs for us to return to Him and be restored to right standing with Him. – By **Bill Crowder**

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