



DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

December 6, 2023



Photo: Our Daily Bread

PRECIOUS TO GOD

You are precious and honored in my sight.

Isaiah 43:4

READ Isaiah 43:1-7

As a boy, Ming found his father harsh and distant. Even when Ming was ill and had to see the pediatrician, his father grumbled that it was troublesome. Once, he overheard a quarrel and learned his father had wanted him aborted. The feeling of being an unwanted child followed him into his adult years. When Ming became a believer in Jesus, he found it difficult to relate to God as Father, even though he knew Him as Lord of his life.

If, like Ming, we haven't felt loved by our earthly fathers, we may face similar doubts in our relationship with God. We may wonder, Am I a burden to Him? Does He care about me? But while our earthly fathers may have been silent and distant, God our heavenly Father comes close and says, "I love you" (Isaiah 43:4).

In Isaiah 43, God speaks as our Creator and as a Father. If you wonder whether He wants you to live under His care as part of His family, hear what He said to His people: "Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth" (v. 6). If you wonder what you're worth to Him, hear His affirmation: "You are precious and honored in my sight" (v. 4).

God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to pay the penalty of sin so that we who believe in Him can be with Him forever (John 3:16). Because of what He says and what He's done for us, we can have full confidence that He wants us and loves us.

By Leslie Koh

PRAY & REFLECT

**Father, I want to live each day as Your child, precious and honored in Your sight.
Amen**

What's your experience of relating to God as a Father? How can you remind yourself that you're precious to Him?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

Twice in Isaiah 43, God's precious people are commanded not to be afraid: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you" (v. 1), and "Do not be afraid, for I am with you" (v. 5). The pattern of "fear not . . . for" followed by a divine action is consistently repeated in Scripture when God instructs His people not to be afraid (see Genesis 15:1; Deuteronomy 31:6; Isaiah 41:10). To restrain fear, some promise, action, or truth about God is stated. Redemptive action (an act of rescue or salvation) comes into view in Isaiah 43:1. Though a tough path lay ahead for the Israelites (v. 2), their Savior would be with them (v. 3). God's presence restrains fear (v. 5). How reassuring to know that regardless of where life leads, we needn't fear. The psalmist said, "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me" (Psalm 23:4). – **By Arthur Jackson**

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