

## *Fear Not*

### **Isaiah 43:1**

**But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.**

The Israelites were at the end of their 70 year exile in Babylonia. They had deserved every minute of banishment by their idol worship. They had reason to be afraid. Into this situation comes the Lord with incredible words of comfort.

First God reminds them that he has created and formed them. He has done the same with us. Psalm 139:14 tells us that we **are fearfully and wonderfully made**.

The Lord says “Fear not, sinner. Fear not my people. Instead of punishment and judgment I will give you deliverance. The unexpected announcement to set aside fear comes for three reasons; all three of them trace the comfort back to the Lord Himself:

- First, the Lord says, “I have redeemed you.” The principle of redemption has been applied to more than just Judah’s release from Babylon. Redemption has come to be a familiar term to all Christians. We regularly confess that God has redeemed us. He paid the ransom necessary to secure our release from our spiritual bondage to sin, death, and judgment. The redemption did not come cheaply. God paid a dear price when He offered His Son, Jesus Christ, in exchange for sinful humanity.
- Second, God called His people by name. He singled them out from all the nations of the earth and called them. In biblical times a name often expressed something about the person named (Gn. 17:20; Is. 40:26). Naming someone expressed ownership or relationship. The Lord reminds His people that He has not forgotten His covenant promises to them. We are his people with his name.
- Third, these people were God’s own possession. He claimed them and us: “You are mine.”

When we read these words thousands of years later, we too find comfort in them. The Lord has redeemed us too but from that greater bondage. By our sins, we were slaves of sin and in bondage to death and punishment. The Lord redeemed us from sin, death and hell. He bought us with the price of the blood of Christ on Calvary. God called us by name when He washed us in the water of Baptism. All believers belong to the Lord; they are His possession.

Prayer: O blessed Holy Trinity, one true God, declare me righteous by Your grace alone, and call me by Your name, that I may bear witness to You among the nations. Amen. (TLSB)