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### Thoughts from the Study of Rev David G. Farrow

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## Set Free Through the Redeemer, the Lord Your God: Isaiah 43:1

As we have seen in the many news reports people can be kidnapped to be sold as slaves, for sexual pleasure, for building up a workforce, for revenge, or for a host of other reasons. When a ransom is demanded for the release of the kidnapped person, the cost is usually huge.

**The enormous price God paid to ransom His people is the subject of Isaiah chapter 43.** In the previous chapter, Isaiah said that the people of his day were continuing in their sin and refusing to turn back to the Lord. As a result, God's anger burned against them (42:23-25). Now we would expect God's hand of judgment to immediately fall upon the Israelites. We would expect Him to abandon and destroy them.

But the very opposite is true. God is longsuffering and not willing that any person should perish and be doomed to eternal separation from Him. With a broken heart over the people's

failure, the Lord reached out to ransom them from both their sins and their enemies. Remember that Isaiah had predicted the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the Jewish people

But he had also predicted that the Persians would miraculously free God's people from their Babylonian captivity (41:1-20). Furthermore, the Lord would set them free from all the enslavements and bondages of this life through the coming of God's very special Servant, the Messiah (42:1-25). Now God declares that His people can be set free through the wonderful redemption provided by the Lord.

The source of redemption is the Lord Himself. Despite Israel's continued sin and rejection of Him, the Lord still loved His people. He still reached out in mercy and goodness to them. "*Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*" (Romans.5:20). Looking ahead to the terrible hardships His people would face, the Lord wanted them to know that He would not forsake them. He would reach out to rescue them. Remember that Isaiah was predicting the Babylonian captivity, which still lay ahead for the Jews. The Lord promises to be with His people, even in the midst of such a terrifying experience as enslavement and exile. The first verse of chapter 43 is one of the great promises in the Holy Bible:

**1. In the midst of their awful affliction, the people needed to remember a significant fact:** the Lord Himself had created and formed them into the nation of Israel. The words created and formed are the same words used to describe the creation of man and woman (Genesis.1:1; 2:7). Thus, Israel is as much a creation of the Lord as the human race is.

God has a distinctive purpose for each, a purpose that must be fulfilled, just as His Word states. Although the Israelites would be exiled and scattered throughout the Babylonian Empire, those who trusted the Lord could rest assured that He would not forget

them. They were still His chosen people created by His own hand. True, due to the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people, Israel's future as a nation looked very bleak. Nothing less than extinction was staring Israel in the face.

**2. But note how God encouraged His people:** He told them two things they needed to remember.

**First, He had redeemed them.** In the very midst of their hardship, they could know that God would redeem them again. Their deliverance from the Babylonian captivity was as good as done. The day would come when they would be set free from their bondage and sufferings. Centuries earlier, the Lord had delivered His people from Egyptian bondage. Now He was promising to deliver them from their captivity in Babylon.

**But the Lord wanted His people to know a second fact:** He knew every one of them personally and called each by name. They were His people, and He was very concerned about them. They were bound to Him in a unique way, for He had a very special purpose for them. Remember that when Israel or the Jews are being discussed, their relationship to the Lord was based upon God's purpose for them, a threefold purpose that blessed the entire world:

- They were the people through whom God would send His Son, the promised seed, the Lord Jesus Christ into the world.
- They were the people through whom God would send His Word, the Holy Bible, to the world.
- They were the people God chose to be His witnesses to the world that He is the only living and true God.

**Thought:** Only the Lord can save us from the enslavement of sin, death, and hell. Being enslaved to sin means that we cannot keep from sinning; all of us sin because we have inherited a depraved nature from our parents (Romans.5:12). Consequently, we cannot keep from sinning. We cannot live a perfect or righteous life. And since we have inherited a corruptible nature from our parents, we are also enslaved by death.

From the day we are born, we are ever progressing to that inevitable day when our bodies will return to dust. But because God loves us, He has provided redemption for us. Jesus Christ paid the ransom for us by giving His life for us. We are redeemed by the shed blood of Christ. This is exactly what God's Holy Word says:

*“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Romans.3:23-24).*

*“In whom [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians.1:14).*

As believers we a great deal to thank God for ..... **if you are unbeliever reading this**, let me tell you that if you will renounce your sin and turn to Jesus Christ in faith, then this can be your experience also.

*“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John.5:4-5).*

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