

### Isaiah 43:1b-3

*“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have summoned you by name; you are mine.  
When you pass through the waters,  
I will be with you;  
and when you pass through the rivers,  
they will not sweep over you.  
When you walk through the fire,  
you will not be burned;  
the flames will not set you ablaze.  
For I am the LORD your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.*

These prophetic words were spoken at a time when the nations of Israel and Judah had experienced significant loss. Their homes had been destroyed and their people taken into exile. Their situation seemed hopeless. Speaking through the prophet, Isaiah, God reminded his people who they were and who he was.

God redeems. To redeem is “to ransom, liberate, or rescue from captivity or bondage, or from any obligation or liability to suffer or to be forfeited, by paying a price or ransom” (Webster Dictionary). In this passage, God is reminding his people he has already paid the price for them, he has rescued them and will do it again. He reminds us that we too are his redeemed people. Through Jesus Christ, we have been saved and God has paid the price for us. We are his.

In verse two, passing through water can be scary depending on the depth, the current, and temperature. It can be life threatening. In ancient times, water symbolized chaos. It was an uncontrollable natural element that could bring great destruction. Control over the waters demonstrated ultimate power. Only God, the Creator, had that kind power. That is why when Jesus calmed the wind and waves his disciples were terrified and asked, “Who is this?” (Mark 4:35-41). In Isaiah, God reassures his people, that’s us, that he will be with us, the chaos will not overtake you, the heat from the situation you are in will not harm you. He is God, the Creator, who has power over the waters. God is our Savior.

We are all experiencing a mix of emotions. We may feel overwhelmed by this last year, by Pastor David stepping down or other situations we face. We may be facing challenges in our lives and cannot imagine a way through them. God reminds us that he is our Savior, the one who rescues and redeems. He has called us by name because he loves us. And God promises that no matter what we face he will be with us and he will see us through the situations we are in.

I am confident of this: God is our Savior, there is nothing that God is not powerful enough to handle, God will be with us and God’s will, his plan, will be accomplished. Together, let us seek God, our Savior.

Serving Christ with you,  
Pastor Katherine