



Peters Green News Sheet Issue No: 27

Sunday 13th September 2020

Isaiah 41 verse 10

Do not be afraid

First of all may I take a moment to thank Peter for including me in the circulation of the news sheet. I have enjoyed reading them and have been encouraged and challenged as a result.

I wonder how many handwritten letters you have received recently. Have you received one during the past month or perhaps during lockdown?

Hand written letters seem to be a thing of the past! People now communicate by Email, Facebook, Twitter, Zoom. I am sure there are many more ways of communicating but I really enjoy reading a letter.

Have you received a note from someone to encourage you during this pandemic? Have you sent a word of encouragement to someone else? I have two friends who make their own cards and often they write out a text and put it in a card or a gift.

I was sorting out a bookcase and a card with Isaiah 41 verse 10 fell out of one of the books. It was sent to me some years ago and I had obviously used it as a bookmark but it seemed very apt in this present situation. I have had to remind myself several times during lockdown that God is in control and we should not be afraid.

Isaiah is quite clear:-

We should not be afraid

We should not be discouraged

Why? 'Because I am your God and I will strengthen you and help you' – even during a pandemic! He goes even further. He promises to uphold us with His victorious right hand

I am told that 'Do not be afraid' appears 365 times in the Bible. That's a daily reminder from God that we should live every day being fearless. Another Bible commentator says that 'Do not be afraid' appears 366 times in the Bible – an extra one to cover a leap year! I cannot verify the numbers but I know as I read my Bible that God tells us on many occasions that we shouldn't be afraid because, if we have accepted Jesus as our Saviour, God has promised He will take care of us.

Many of the elderly folk, who we have been contacting during lock down, are so lonely. They really appreciate receiving a card or letter in the post as well as a telephone call. Lockdown has affected people in different ways. Some have used the time to pursue hobbies, others enjoy reading. For many the television helps them relate to the world outside their four walls. Others cannot bear listening to the news because it is full of such doom and gloom!

As some of the restrictions are being lifted several people we know, who are in the vulnerable group, are now afraid to go out. They are scared of the consequences. Will people keep their social distancing? Will they have to wear a mask? The world is a different place to the one they isolated from in March.

If we trust in God then we should not be afraid. The angel told Zechariah not to be afraid when he was told Elizabeth was going to have a baby. Gabriel told Mary not to be afraid because God had chosen her. The shepherds were terrified when they saw the angels but they too were told not to be afraid. So we should not be afraid or discouraged in these 'unprecedented times'. How often have we heard that in the past six months?

Do not allow fear to destroy your trust in God. The best way to combat fear is to know your heart is right with God. A believer can live and die without fear. Why? **Because God is with us**. He will strengthen us and help us. He will uphold us in difficult times.

Are you afraid of what lies ahead....illness, loneliness, money problems, death? Hold on to the promises in Isaiah 41 verse 10 –promises repeated many times in God's Word. Do you remember the Footprints verse? When the difficult times come He carries us that is why there is only one set of footprints seen at times on our walk with Him.

Fear knocked on the door

Faith answered it and no one was there !

May God keep you all safe and well during the coming months as I think this virus is likely to be with us for some time to come but **God is in control** and 'underneath are the ever lasting arms'.

Why not use the time to write a word of encouragement or make that unexpected telephone call.

Diane

Abide with me

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness
Where is death's sting, where grave thy victory
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me

Be bold

Be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you
Be bold, be strong for the Lord your God is with you
I am not afraid ...no, no, no,
I am not dismayednot me
For I'm walking in faith and victory
Come on and walk in faith and victory
For the Lord your God is with you

