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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor
on Thursday Evening, November 4. 1982.

Lesson. Isaiah 40.

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God:
I will strengthen thee; ~~yea, I will help thee;~~ yea, I will help thee;
yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Isaiah 41. 10.

There is a complete body of divinity here, and we are cognisant of
the spiritual fact that a whole volume ^{of} sermons to one's life's end needs
to be preached from the text, and then one would only be on the fringe of
it. It is one of the ^{exceeding} great and very precious promises that are exclusive
to the living family of God. I will demonstrate to you. He says to them,
"Fear thou not; for I am with thee." He could only say that to those
whose sins were atoned for at Calvary so all their sins were expiated,
drowned in the depths of the sea, gone for ever. He could only say it to
those loved with an everlasting love, those He delights in, His chosen,
redeemed people. It is His message to us amidst all the troubles, trials,
distresses, afflictions, sorrows that ever befall us as we journey to the
blessed Land, the Happy Land of pure delight you were singing of, and we
have a good hope of entering triumphantly, Christ receiving us to Himself
at the strand. So I present it by His grace to you beloved friends in this
way. It is the Lord's message to you; to all who fear and love and seek
and need Him.

With all the various conditions of anxiety, concerns, responsibilities,
travail, exercises, overwhelms He says to you, "Fear ye not." Why?
Because your Saviour will be with you. "For he hath said, I will never
leave thee, nor forsake thee." I regard this blessed Scripture as a
message from Heaven to you who are redeemed, who love the Lord and know
the preciousness of the Lord Jesus in your souls and are united to Him.
It is a message that is so much needed. Servile fear is a painful,
paralysing emotion. It puts you in bondage and all is so dark, and Satan
takes advantage of the situation and adds to things. Why do we fear? It
is remarkable after so many years that you still fear. God has been so
kind, faithful, good, merciful; He has never left you to sink in trouble,

never forsaken you in time of need, yet servile fears rise. It is desirable that we should try to analyse fear and know the reason why we fear. Why should we fear? The reason is because we are sinners, fallen creatures. Adam and Eve in their pristine innocence did not know what fear was, and they did not fear God in that sense. There was no terror in their minds in relation to the Almighty, their Creator. Immediately they transgressed, violated the commands of God they feared; they were fallen, and the Lord God came into the garden in the cool of the day and they were afraid. That is the origin of fear, and they did what they had never done before; they fled to hide themselves. They were naked, stripped of their pristine righteousness; they had no merit so they fled from God. They feared and we fear because we are fallen creatures in Adam. We fear because of sin and guilt, and there are things that bring distress - our wicked deceitful hearts, and we fear.

Wonderful it is that the Lord is able to remove fear. You may fear specifically. You may fear certain issues, symptoms of illness and disease. You may fear creatures, responsibilities laid on you. I am sure God's ministers are often very fearful in going into the pulpit. Satan says, "You will be in bondage, forsaken, in confusion." and in a variety of ways the people of God fear. And you may fear death. What is it will remove fear? First, the love of God and the sweet presence of the Lord in the soul. "Perfect love casteth out fear." Get a taste of the dying love of Christ and have you any fear? No. When you feel the sweet, blessed, sacred presence of the Saviour do you fear? No, there is nothing to fear. A word from His precious mouth, a word of strength, comfort, consolation and all fear is removed. I am not here to make personal references: you will soon recognise what I shall say. So many years ago we had terrible fear and temptation that something drastic was about to take place that would plunge us in the depths of sorrow and misery. I was preaching at Crowborough Cross and the Lord sent us with the word, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." In the sermon after ten minutes the preacher was completely delivered; there was no fear. Coming out of Chapel and returning home it had completely gone; all fear and temptation was removed, and we never

went back into it. O my friends, God is so kind, gracious, good, and this is the word with the preacher. The Lord gives a minister a special word for you; it is all for you. There may be others as well, but it comes with heavenly unction, divine power, grace, efficacy to your soul and you are completely delivered from your fears.

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee." So this is the word I want to deliver to the dear friends. It shows the Lord loves you and you are His child, His bride, All your sins were atoned for at Calvary. And it shows that He will demonstrate His divine faithfulness in your life and concerns so you will show forth His eternal praise. He says to you, "Fear thou not." Why is there nothing to fear? Because the curse is removed. You will never enter the pit. Your cup is full of mixture; there are bitter things in it, but there is no penal wrath in it. There is love in it; His love in it. I believe the Lord is able to use the message tonight to take from some fears that may cause you agony, distress, suspense in your mind. There is another application of it. As you are praying for loved ones, and you may be deeply concerned because of events, the Lord says, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee." There will be a good issue: your prayers will not be in vain. It is a beautiful word. "Fear thou not; for I am with thee."

There are two exhortations to the people of God. The first is, "Fear thou not." Do you fear the future, the present, your condition of ill-health? Do you fear providence, or concerning your soul? Do you feel the Lord has forsaken you and yours and will not come back? The word sounds with divine power, "Fear thou not" and soon your fears will be removed. I am reminded of a minister who was called on to preach at some special services, and he saw one of the princes of the Church, and he said to a colleague, "I cannot preach, It is impossible. I must go home." His friend said, "I will go with you to the station." They went off and the friend went to the ticket office and said to the clerk, "A ticket to Tarshish, please." The clerk had never heard of it, so the friend said to him, "There you are, you must go back." He went back and preached, and the Lord helped him. We are poor fearful creatures, but the Lord loves us: it is to His glory. When He says to you, "Fear thou not" there is nothing to fear.

What are the two exhortations? "Fear thou not; for I am with thee:

be not dismayed." Dismay is an advanced condition. One is discouraged, one loses heart and feels one has got to the end and must give up. It is illustrated in Elijah's case. He was threatened by Jezebel, and he was not looking to the dear Lord. He knew what a determined, ruthless woman she was, and he thought she would fulfil her threat, and he fled into the wilderness and sat down under a juniper tree. He was dismayed. I know you may view it as the aftermath of a great success. If we have been highly favoured and indulged we soon begin to sink in our minds. Elijah felt he could not go further and he asked the Lord to take his life: it was enough. That is a most graphic illustration of dismay, and we at times know something of it in the journey. You feel dismayed if things get worse and you say, "Lord, how can I go on?" and Satan says, "With all your prayers look what is happening. The case is worse." Poor soul, if you are in a condition of dismay, almost lost heart, lost the will to live and the power to rise. He speaks to you, "Be not dismayed." Why? "For I am thy God." See the emphasis: "thy God." You will say, "My God? Yes, I believe I call Him my God." And you know the issue with the prophet: the Lord came and nourished him. He had more work for him to do, and to anoint his successor, and he was one of those who were translated. An amazing thing it is when soul and body are glorified and one is taken to Heaven.

So "Be not dismayed." In the journey of life you will know a feeling of dismay. Some may think you are favoured and have no sore troubles. If you are on the way to Heaven there will be times when you feel dismay. How can you go on? He says to you, "Be not dismayed; for I am thy God." and you will prove it by His divine faithfulness, immutable love and compassion and unfailing goodness, and, "This truth to rejoice in, The Lord will appear." He does. So there are two exhortations for you who fear God. "Fear thou not; for I am ~~thy God~~ with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God." I will ask you a question. Has the Lord ever forsaken you? has He ever left you to sink in trouble, trial, distress? Has He? And when you are tossed, tempted, bewildered, your heart sore pained in you, has the Lord abandoned you? I know what the answer is. He has never forsaken you. That is a sweet hymn,

"He who has helped us hitherto,
Will help us all our journey through."

How faith is strengthened and nourished by a retrospect of the character of God, His unfailing goodness and love!

"He who has helped me hitherto,
Will help me all my journey through;"

and I appreciate the language,

"And give me daily - every day - cause to raise
New Ebenezers to His praise."

So these are the exhortations, and when the Lord comes with divine power and irresistible love; if Jesus Himself draws near and goes with you, you will obey the exhortations. All fear is removed, and you will know what it is for the Lord to revive you. You have not come to the end yet. The Lord has something in store for you. Your heart may be so affected by events that you feel dismayed. He says, "Be not dismayed." These things overwhelm you and cause much distress. "Be not dismayed; for I am thy God. I am there. I wait to answer prayer. I have all power in Heaven and in earth. Be not dismayed; for I am thy God." There is everything in that.

I will demonstrate from the Word of God where there was no fear. David came to the camp, and the Philistine, Goliath had issued a challenge and all were afraid of him. There was no one in the camp to go against Goliath, a man of tremendous height. You may have this in your experience. Here is a stripling come to the camp with provisions for his brethren, and he is accused of naughtiness. "Is there not a cause?" Things may seem mysterious to you - is there not a cause? When David hears of the challenge he says, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." Then he reiterated his experience with the lion and the bear and his love to his flock. The wild animals came against the flock and he slew them. It was supernatural, divine strength. It was miraculous for a lad to slay a lion and a bear. His faith was strong and he said. "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." There was no fear because he had proved his God, and it is possible for you. When you prove the divine faithfulness of God He will nourish your faith so you have no fear. It is not self-confidence; it is humble trust in the Lord and the strength of faith.

Keep close to the blessed One, my friends, and render unto Him the glory due to His Name for all He has done for you and helped you over the years. They put armour on David, but he had not proved it. Don't you go with any thing you have not proved. Divest yourself of everything of the flesh and go in the Name of the Lord. That is how David went. Goliath disdained him: he was unarmed and he cursed him by his gods. "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel." and soon the giant was slain. This is an example. "Fear thou not." If you are favoured to be near the Lord and divest yourself of leaning on an arm of flesh, lean hard on your Beloved. The harder you lean the better. David did not fear then: he did afterwards. He feared Saul. The Lord's people do know what fears are: that is why the Lord is so merciful to say, "Fear thou not." Paul and Silas were in the inner prison and their feet fast in the stocks. They were in pain, and at midnight they prayed and sang praises. They were singing: they had no fear. You see what the Lord is able to do for us, for you, for this poor man, for any who fear Him. "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God." You know the issue in the case of Paul and Silas. There was a great earthquake, and the wonderful conversion of the jailer and his household. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The jailer washed their stripes and they were baptised straightway.

So what a word for you. "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God." I will do three things for you. "I will strengthen thee." Remember how the Lord Jesus was strengthened in Gethsemane by an angel from Heaven. It is certain with the load you carry you will feel how great your weakness is - physical, mental, spiritual, cardiac, may be, and weakness of the nervous system. Whatever would be the case if the Lord did not strengthen you? You would fail. "I will strengthen thee. I will." There will be strength that is divine from Heaven, and it will flow to your very person. He has and He will continue to strengthen you, uphold, sustain you, so you have strength commensurate with your days until you are safe Home. There will never be a day but you will be strengthened. "I will strengthen thee; yea," It is the divine affirmation and seal of Heaven. "yea, I will help thee."

Do you feel the Lord helping you? It means everything the Lord knows you need. That is help. "Yea," Cheer up then, dear heart. "Yea, I will help" in all your concerns, soul, body, family, Church. "I will help thee," so you can go forward with confidence, I hope. I hope the word will be heavenly music in your soul, so sweet to you. You can plead before the Lord and say, "Lord, Thou didst send the message on Thursday. Lord, fulfil it." "Yea, I will uphold thee." It shows how we need the Lord to do everything for us. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." You are in His blessed arms. "Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." It means the Lord's goodness, omnipotence, almighty power and favour. It is His right hand. He loves you. He has a favour to you. It is the right hand of infinite goodness. "Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Righteousness stands for the Man of His right hand, His Son, and all the infinite merit of His dear Son, especially all the fruits of His suffering Suretyship - joy, peace, reconciliation, comfort, love - all the fruits of His dolorous, vicarious sufferings. "Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Amen.