

# Isaiah

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[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you.

Hear 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 uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

The tenth verse of the forty-first chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah.

I lost this very lovely text. And I was conscious of the fact that since my last visit here to take the services, a lot of water, as you would say, has gone under the bridge.

And the last time I was here, in September last year, little did I realize then that in November I would be having a series of operations to remove a tumor from my left eye.

[ 1 : 47 ] But none of us knows the why that is before us. It is not a question of our why is hidden from the Lord, but often our why is hidden from our lies.

And we are glad sometimes that it is the case with us that we can only see one step before us. And so all the anxiety we might experience if we knew all that was going to be before us.

But God has kindly by all that was going to be before us. But God has kindly by all our eyes that we might not see the future in that sense. And we are glad that. It was on the occasion that I had to go to hospital.

Strangely enough, the Sunday, if you like, which was the anniversary of the 38th year of my Christian faith and profession. And one might think that that's a strange way after 38 years to find that on the anniversary of one's conversion, that they were found having to go into hospital with quite a serious condition.

Now it would not be true that I did not admit to many fears and alarms which fill my heart. Fear is one of those natural things in us, and we all suffer from these fears.

[ 3 : 15 ] And fear comes in a variety of ways, even to the Lord's people. That is why in the scripture, as is particularly the case here in this verse, the Lord often commands us to fear not.

For we do believe that the Lord is always with us and going before us. And yet still we fear and we quake, and we begin to question at times the Lord's providence in our lives.

It is easy when the sun shines as it were in our lives to be able to say, and we know that all things work together for good to end up not gone. But when things are difficult, and when we are faced with a situation such as I was faced with at the end of October last year, the first reaction that comes to our hearts is this.

Why me? And it comes to us as a great shock, when suddenly something is touched in our own lives. Now it could well have been the case that Job has felt the same.

For he was a God-fearing man. Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in all the earth, God says. And yet all the things that happened to him.

[ 4 : 41 ] He must have been bemused at times by the events. And yet he had the fight beside the Lord gave, and the Lord had taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

But here in this verse, is a verse which gives great comfort to the Lord's people. And it was intended to do that. That is what I've got to call it in the Scriptures.

And we find that it recognises the fears which God's ancient people had. We discussed this morning something of their dilemma and difficulty at the time, when these words were prophesied.

How they were there in captivity in Babylon, and they were feeling in a desperate state. And many fears must have filled their hearts.

Their great desire to once more see their homeland. And to dwell in their own houses and in their own families. And yet they spent those long, weary years in that awful place.

[ 5 : 50 ] Babylon, which is a type of the world. But God, the God of all comfort, as the Scripture describes him, come and speaks this gracious word.

And it is a gracious word, isn't it? He says, Fear thou not. The Lord knew all the fears that were in their hearts. He knows their hearts.

And he knows your heart. And he knows mine. And the Lord comes, as only he can come, with this gracious word. You know, friends, my pride for us, and my sake to encourage us, and do many things, and it's a good thing when we watch people do that.

And it has been, to me, one of the most blessed experiences, to think of all the concern, for all the love which has been shown to one like me.

And I am indebted to you for your prayers, and I'd like to take opportunities, as it has occurred in recent months, as I've run to one congregation and another, to publicly express my gratitude to me, in my experience.

[ 7 : 01 ] But we'll come back to that in a moment. But we'll find, then, that this people, years ago, will have a fearful heart. And you and I may have fearful hearts this afternoon.

It may not be because of an operation. It may be that we are fearful, and we think with good reason, about this cause of truth here, and the gospel, and the needs of men's hearts, and that they might know the grace of God in this day.

We are fearful and concerned about this, and maybe other things too. But this verse, I would like to describe in this sense.

I believe that this is the antidote of fear. Fear thou not, says the Lord. Now, I was going to say this, my dear friends, that this is a word from the Lord.

If you need an antidote for fear in your heart and life, then you need a word from the Lord. If there is one thing which will overcome our fears more than anything else, it is when God, in his infinite grace and condescension, is pleased to speak some word to our hearts.

[ 8 : 19 ] And this fear not, which we find here in the 41st chapter of Isaiah, I believe is unique in one sense. There are many fear nots in Scripture.

Indeed, there are other fear nots in this chapter. But it specifically says, fear thou not. And in that sense, it is the word of the Lord to these people.

It is the word of the Lord to us as individuals. Now, I love this verse. Yes, I always loved this verse. I've attempted to speak upon it on a number of occasions going back over many years.

But it was only when I was to go into hospital that this verse became really precious to me in the sense that verses of Scripture came.

For I had obviously those personal fears. But this word came with such sweetness, first of all, when I was in Watchtile. And then, between going from Watchtile to Glasgow, and then when I got to Glasgow, three times over, this verse was either read it, I received it, or it was quoted in a sermon.

[ 9 : 39 ] Now, I don't know. I always feel that when you have a trinity in this sense, three times over, a verse is brought in fairly rapid succession, if ever we needed a confirmation that it was a word from the Lord, that in itself should be insufficient.

You know, there are those who seek a sign from the Lord, and like Gideon did, the fleece wet and the fleece dry, he received two signs for his confirmation.

But the Lord is very gracious when his people are in difficulty and in trouble. and I believe that he personally came with this word to minister to my deepest fears at that particular time.

Fear thou not. And if I remembered nothing else about this verse, those three words will go with me to my dying day.

They will ever stand as a testimony that the Lord was gracious and appeared unto me in my time of need. Now I'm confident of this, that these words written in this verse, fear thou not, not only were made a blessing to me, and not only made a blessing to Israel and all in their captivity, but surely, even amongst our little company this afternoon, there are those who have derived great comfort themselves from these words, for they are a personal word from the Lord to the believer's heart.

[ 11 : 14 ] And when you are in difficulty, my dear friends, found solace in this promise, fear thou not. I know it is so that if we fear God, then we have nothing else to fear.

But you know it, our friends, dear friends, he remembereth that we are blessed. And this great and wise physician sees the need of these fear nots in the world.

Fear thou not. What is it this afternoon causes you anxiety and concern? As I say, that all your fears, all your worries, all your caring, will not necessarily affect the situation one with.

Now, it is a truth I often joke with Grace that she's wasting another lot of good worry because worry does nothing sometimes to soul situations. It only affects us as individuals.

Now, we must stay our minds upon Jehovah. Such minds are fully blessed. And we must come to the God who says to us, Fear thou not.

[ 12 : 31 ] Now, that was a great comfort to me and encouraged me not to just take three words but to take the whole verse for I'm sure that the whole verse was intended for my spiritual well-being.

So, the first antidote then to fear is that we receive a word from the Lord. Here is the second part of the antidote the presence of the Lord.

For I am with thee. For I am with thee. Now, friends, it begins, that phrase begins with the word for.

For I am with thee. The circumstances which may have surprised me, which owe to all my plans, did not owe to the plans of God at all.

For the Lord was in this. That word for reminds us of that. we do not have to send for the Lord in being taken by surprise in these circumstances.

[ 13 : 37 ] The Lord was already there. For we believe that it is the Lord that does go before us who never leaves us nor forsakes us. We are only following him. Some are reluctantly, some are unhappily, some are fearfully, but we are to follow him.

Now, we would have reason to fear if we were walking in a path where God was not present. But you see, the Lord says, fear thou not, for I am with thee.

Now, the people he was speaking to on this first occasion were on a difficult path, but it was a great encouragement to them in their fearful state, this word from the Lord, that they had the presence of God with them, even in Babylon.

That God knew where they were, and that God gave to them the blessed assurance of his own personal and glorious presence with them. It is a wonderful thing, isn't it, to know that the I am of Scripture is with us.

Now, that is a study in itself. But you remember that Moses, when he stood at the burning bush, he saw this bush burning, but it was not consumed. And he turned aside to see this great sight, and then, to his amazement, a voice spoke to him from out of the bush.

[ 15 : 04 ] But off thy shoes from off thy feet from a place whereon thou stand is this holy ground. And we know that God was in that burning bush. And he speaks there to Moses.

And later in the conversation, Moses said, who shall I say had sent me? I am that I am, the voice declares. For he was God, the self-existent one, and you see his sovereignty displayed in that burning bush.

For normally, the fire would have consumed the bush. But no, the fire was the symbol of the presence of the almighty God who had made the fire and made the bush, and who was sovereign over its power.

So the bush was not consumed. We know that in a literal sense, that was brought to pass in the experience of those three young men who were cast into the fiery fires, fiery fires.

Those young men were there in the midst of the fire. The fire had no power upon them, and the Lord was there. Beloved friends, and even today, when the church of God is in persecution, and where it is tried for its faith, the Lord is present there in the fire of affliction.

[ 16 : 30 ] So whatever the circumstance may be, whether God intends a man to be called to some great work, whether he identifies with those who stand for a sure testimony to their God in the days of idolatry, and thence are called to suffer for his sake, or whether it be the case that God, indeed, should be with his people as the church in the midst of afflictions, we see how God is present always with his people.

And it makes no difference, you see. This glorious God, this self-existent God, this Jehovah, this God who is self-sufficient, this God who is all-sufficient, this eternal God, this unchangeable God, for all these aspects of this glorious God are to be found in that great I am.

This glorious God was to be with his people, was with his people, and this same God is with us today. That is encouragement of our faith.

As we are here in Charlesworth, we believe that God is with us, and if God be for us, who can be against us? We believe that God was in Christ.

For how often times the Lord Jesus used this same expression, I am. Oh, they did not like his preaching and his teaching. For he declared himself to be the Son of God with power.

[ 18 : 15 ] But then that was his rightful title. That is who he really was. For God was in Christ, the great I am. So, dear friends, when we are faced with circumstances which are trying to flesh and blood, and God comes with these gracious words to our hearts, what are we then to fear?

For we have this personal word from the Lord, and we have the promise of his glorious presence. I am with them.

Now, there was no condition attached to that. God was not with them just in their journeys. God was not with them just at certain times, like on Sundays or on the Jewish Sabbath.

God was always with them in every experience, and that is the wonder of our Lord. God was with them. And I must admit, that very much appealed to my mind as the fears began and began to rise in my mind of the unknown and unexpected events which had overtaken me personally.

I derived tremendous comfort from these words from the Lord which said, I am with them. And I thought, you know, of that twenty-third song, not that I expected to pass through that valley.

[ 19 : 47 ] I did not believe that was God's purpose, but we know that the psalmist says, Yadda, I walked through the valley of the shadow of death. Even there thou art with me.

You see, there isn't a place where God is ever separated from his people. He is always with them everywhere and at every time. And I thought, well, that's a great encounter.

So in those hours when I come to have this operation, that's if they could operate, of course, and they get really anaesthetic and I go unconscious, there'll be someone there who is present to watch over all those proceedings.

And I found tremendous comfort from that. As David Oldham said to me, he said, we pray that there might be another hand that guides the surgeon's hand.

And I thought that was a very nice thought, you know, at that particular time. But to think that the Lord was present there. In fact, I've had to say to the surgeon on more than one occasion about all the prayers of God's people on that particular day.

[ 21 : 01 ] And I said, they have prayed for you as well as they have prayed for me. And that's very true, of course, as you know. And it's been a wonderful thing with hindsight now.

You know, we're always good at hindsight, usually. But you see, I had this verse beforehand. And I've been able to venture upon it, to trust in it, and to prove it.

And that's the wonder of it, isn't it? Now, you've been saying to me, well, we've all sorts of, yes, we have all sorts of difficult problems. And there's only a few of us this afternoon. We've got all these circumstances which seem to press upon our spirit.

But nothing can hold to the fact that when God speaks that personal word, which is a word like this described here, and we prove it in our experience, all of the events of the day can say what they will.

All the circumstances might lead us to these conclusions of unbelief. But these experiences prove to us the glorious reality that God is with us everywhere we go.

[ 22 : 05 ] And it mattered not whether one was in hospital or wherever we were, that the Lord was there. And we must never forget that. The Lord is always present.

And to think that we have him with us is a most wonderful thing. I cannot express to you my sense of incredulity and wonder that the God who made the earth and set the stars in their places should keep company with such a sinner as me in the hour of my need.

I am humbled to think that God could be so gracious. If ever there was an expression of divine love, it is surely that. you know, when the Lord Jesus Christ was called to go to the tomb of Lazarus, he wept, and they said, behold how he loved them.

It is a lovely portion of scripture I whispered. And my dear friends, the fact that the Lord went with me during that experience that I had was to be a similar thing.

I could say with wonder in my heart, and with amazement, it is wonderful how much he loves me, sir. So, as a second part of this great antidote of fear, then, that we have the presence of the Lord with us, I don't think that's true, you know, if I might add just that one again.

[ 23 : 31 ] It is true here. I mean, I know things are not easy, and that's demonstrably the case, but that's often been the way with the Lord's people done for years.

Don't just run away with the idea that up until the present day, everything's always been prosperous. That has never been the case. But, my dear friends, when the Lord is in the midst, can we have disdain to go to that place?

Should we not desire to be found there? Should we not rejoice in his presence? It is only when the glory of the Lord vacates the house and moves on, it is then, and that Ichabod is coined and written across that face, the glory of the Lord is departed from Israel.

But while the Lord is here, we must continue in this place. Israel of all were never to move on. They were to never run ahead of the Lord.

They only moved when the power of glory moved on. My dear friends, whilst the Lord is settled here, and we know his presence and his blessing, even amidst all the difficulties of the way, then why should we seek some other place to tabernacle in?

[ 24 : 43 ] For better to be where the Lord is than in some other place which to human judgment might seem better and far more prosperous and more desirable. There can be no more desirable place than to be found in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But then, the third aspect of this antidote of fear is found as we look further into this verse. For God says, Fear thou not, for I am with thee.

Be not dismayed, for I am thy God. Now, here is a blessed assurance, spiritually, to the Lord's people. We like to sing blessed assurance, Jesus is mine, oh, what a foretaste of glory divine.

Well, it is a good hymn, providing the words are appropriate, and amended slightly from the original, for there is a thought of universalism in the hymn, but nevertheless, in most of its matter, it is a lovely hymn.

The blessed assurance that a believer has in the salvation of his God. God is God. For here we read, I am thy God.

[ 25 : 59 ] Now, you see, all this verse is couched in these personal words. Fear thou not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God.

Oh, what a wonderful thing when God says that word to us. It is not we who are professing that that God is our saviour, but God is coming to us and speaking to us in our hearts.

I am thy God. This mighty God, this glorious God, this self-existent, all-sufficient God and saviour is our saviour too.

We have the witness of his spirit with our spirit that we are the sons of God. Isn't it a wonderful thing when God comes to us with this sweet assurance?

I am thy God. And he is our God in this sense, dear friends, he is our saviour. For salvation is of the Lord, as Jonah proved when he was delivered from the belly of the great fish.

[ 27 : 04 ] And we have proved this in our experience many years ago, that God in Christ is the salvation of sinners. And what one feels in difficult times, and we ponder the part of our faith, and what is going to happen to us, and what shall be for us in this experience or that, and I was just the same, to think that God could come with this blessed assurance to our heart, to assure us that it is true that he is our saviour, and that we have a saving interest in the death of Jesus Christ.

In a sense, the other things did not matter so much, for he was a word which assured us of our safety spiritually in our God and Saviour.

Whatever else might befall, what might result as the outcome of the operation, and why should we go into the anaesthetic and not recover, will we be ready to meet the Lord.

And when the Lord comes with this blessed assurance that we are saved characters, not because we wanted to be saved, but because he has saved us by his grace, for that is the thought and implication here, I am thy God.

That's a glorious thing. He was the God of our salvation. And because God has saved us, then he is that one who is the sovereign over all our lives.

[ 28 : 39 ] And we sang that hymn this morning, number 64, sovereign ruler of the skies. And it is a reminder to us that God is in all our lives, in sickness or in health.

And whilst I had all sorts of plans laid for that particular week when first I went to hospital and all those plans came to naught, all God's plans which he had made concerning me, that he had made concerning his ancient people, that he has made concerning you, do not fall to the ground when these things happen, they are all part of the glorious plan, and pleasant as though they might be in one sense to flesh and blood, yet it is God doing what we often desire he would do, and that is work out his sovereign purpose in our lives.

Now some of those purposes cause us pain and inconvenience and suffering and so on, and some have even died in the most solemn circumstances, because that was in the purpose of God for their lives.

But Christian people do not believe that this life here is the end, but they believe that there shall come a day when they shall be with Christ, which is far better.

So whatever may be for us below, we need that grace, and we need that submissive spirit to say, nevertheless, thy will be done, for there must be some good in this, for my soul and for all my spiritual need.

[ 30 : 22 ] If there was another verse which I found of great help to me, it was Romans 8.28, and I've discussed that verse with a number of characters, both in my stay in hospital and on occasion since.

I've spoken of it in correspondence, particularly with the man who operated on my eye, and I see no shame in that, because it is part of the all things that are in our lives.

And I was brought to a deeper understanding of that verse than perhaps I have before, because I never had anything like that happen to me. and it's interesting to study one's own reactions to such circumstances.

But here was this God speaking to me, this God of the Bible, the God of all the earth. Shall he not do right? And God it is who speaks to me this blessed word, these glorious promises.

I have no hold upon him, I am not deserving of his things, but he is pleased of his free grace to shower the promises upon me. Fear thou not, for I am with thee.

[ 31 : 38 ] Be not dismayed, for I am thy God. Now let us be truthful, we can feel dismay when circumstances are trying and difficult.

But beloved friends, when we have the assurance of our salvation in God our Saviour, it lifts us up above these things. And I knew that whatever the outcome was, it would be well with my soul.

And that was the most important thing, was it not? And then we have even more. It seems that God goes on and on and on in this verse.

There is a fullness here. He says, for I am thy God, I will strengthen thee. And that's a great mercy.

For you need strength in a trying hour. And God knows that, as we mentioned this morning. But you notice again the repetition of those words, I am thy God.

[ 32 : 42 ] He seems to wish to fix in the mind of these people so many years ago, the same as he would fix in mine and in yours this afternoon. But here is this great and glorious God who speaks the promises of Scripture.

And those promises are yea and amen. They are not fallible. They will not be broken. My dear friends, they are ever sure. And God promised divine strength.

Now that is a wonderful thing. Now we receive strength through the grace which God is pleased to give to us every day. Now in one sense, on the Sunday before I went into hospital for the operation, I spoke upon his words, I suppose, as Bill Wollstone said at the time, you are well prepared.

But my dear friends, it wasn't just the grace of Sunday we needed, it was the grace on Monday and the grace on Tuesday and the grace on Wednesday and the grace on Thursday and so on. Now the wonder about the grace of God, the grace of God is always there.

And we have proved that over these years. Grace, my dear friends, is not like these reservoirs upon the earth. As soon as the heavens are starting from rain, they begin to dry up and the waters seem to flee away.

[ 34 : 02 ] There is a limited source of water in them. There is no limit to the supply of grace. There is an ocean fullness in our glorious world.

There is a reservoir of grace which can never be drained. However great our need shall be. And this amazing God has amazing grace. to suit its people's needs.

Whether it is to save them from their grace or to save them from their fears. Grace is present there. I knew nothing about hospitals at all.

I'd only ever visited them. I knew nothing about the routine and the procedures and the sort of days one had. Apart from one's own particular circumstance case.

And I suppose that it be said in all honesty, the cry goes up more in such extraneous circumstances for the supply of grace than it would do in a normal day or a normal week as we might say.

[ 35 : 02 ] When we are still the recipients of grace but we take it all for granted. But at that time as I pondered the passing of the days and what would the surgeon say?

What would be the diagnosis? Should I lose the eye? Would they operate? And so on and so forth. We ponder all these things that God had promised.

I will strengthen them. And I have to testify to that glorious truth. I have been amazed. It has nothing to do with me, it has all to do with him.

That amazing grace which sustained me in my faith in the trying hour. Now my trial was not as great as perhaps some others have enjoyed.

But nevertheless he gives daily grace for daily needs. And I have proved as you have proved yourselves that his grace is sufficient for us.

[ 36 : 03 ] And then we find too in this wonderful verse we have the promise of divine aid. for God says, yea, I will help me.

Yea, I will help. That word yea comes in. The emphasis which is given here. We're to take note of what the Lord says. We're not to disregard it or pass it by or to ignore these words or to lose sight of them.

They are part of the glorious promise. Yea, I will help me. Well, in a sense I suppose we went, in my circumstance, we went with a view to receiving some human aid.

We suddenly began to realise how dependent we were upon the modern aids of medicine and the training and dedication of those who were involved in seeking to ameliorate the problems which arise in our physical frame from time to time.

And of course they are engaged upon this work all the time. There are many thousands of people even as we speak who are today in hospital for one reason than another. Not all of their diseases can be cured.



[ 37 : 24 ] And so we needed that human help. And we thank God that there are so many institutions in our land which are dedicated to this work and as Christian people we must remember that many of them sprang up because of God-fearing men and women.

In the days in this land of the great awakening when so many people thronged a house of God there were those who the world would call philanthropists who dedicated their lives their gifts and their substance to forwarding much of the work upon which modern hospitals and medicine is founded.

There were some wonderful men that God raised up and open their eyes that they might use those resources which were there. They might be employed to assist in medication.

We know that things like chloroform and so on were invented by or discovered by Christian men and many other things too. So we went in a sense depending on that skill and wisdom which they themselves have.

But the word says I will help thee. Oh I love the showers and woes of scripture. Here's the God of the covenant. The Lord says, Brian however, I will help thee.

[ 38 : 47 ] Isn't it wonderful to think that God should say that to me. To think that God should say it to you. The Lord will help us. He doesn't promise that he will necessarily remove the thing that causes the need for his help.

But I think sometimes we have these experiences that we might realise our dependence upon the Lord. And I have felt on a number of occasions in my life how I have been dependent upon him.

But I suppose if you can understand I felt probably more dependent upon the Lord at that time than heretofore. But the Lord's promise is here.

I will help thee. And you know it comes over and over again as you go through this passage, the Lord's help. And my dear friends, if it were not for the Lord's help we could not have continued unto this day.

Now some might look at some chapel or church and say well they've got a good pastor or a good man. Just the good pastors and good men that keep congregations together.

[ 39 : 52 ] It might be good men under the help of the blessing of Almighty God who are unable to do that. But they do so in the help which God gives to them. They go in dependence upon the Lord.

And that is the only way in which one could venture. It was true for me and it is true to you. We have the promise of that divine aid that God will undertake in all our circumstances.

Now remember he was the God who is the author of our circumstances. He is the one who can take our case in hand. He is the one who will govern direct and control.

Whatever the participants do in their various roles is in a way incidental for they are all subject to his command. God. It may be that the human instruments do not recognize God.

But in the case of a believer we believe that all these people they come under the sovereign sway of almighty God.

[ 40 : 55 ] In that these things are designed for our good. God causes these things to work together. Causes these people to work together for our good. The Lord undertakes for us.

You find that people are constrained to do things and to say things and provide things. Which you begin to realize perhaps is a little beyond what you would normally have expected them to do.

I found to be in the utter amazement the lengths at which some people were prepared to go who did not know the Lord as far as I could judge for many conversations I have had from them.

But their concern for me was something which I attributed, you might say rightly or wrongly, but I attributed it to this effect that the Lord's help was present there.

He was undertaking and he was over ruling and God was making a way in those circumstances and that is what he was going to do for these people of old. They could not see how they should be brought forth from their experience.

[ 41 : 55 ] They could not make the way, they could not undertake for themselves or provide for themselves, but God comes and promises to do it for them. And God promised, I believe that to me and he undertook for me throughout all that experience to the glory of his name.

I would not boast about it, only what the Lord had done for me. My dear friends, that is true in principle of all the Lord's work. It is true here. It is true in your personal lives.

It is true in the church life. God, my dear friends, in as far as these things form part of his eternal purposes, will undertake and overhaul and make a way always for his people.

You may not see the way. You cannot see the way cleared up. But God can make a way. When you think of the ways that God has made unexpectedly over the years, you know that to be true.

God made a way in the Red Sea. God made a way in the Jordan. And God has made a way for sinners to be saved by grace through the death of his own dear son on Calvary's tree. Who could have thought?

[ 43 : 00 ] Who could have conceived of such a plan? Who could have enacted it and brought it to pass that sinners might be saved by grace? It is only the God of whom we speak here.

And then the Lord goes on to say this. He says, Yea, that word comes in again, Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Now, my dear friends, I said at the beginning in regard to the prayers of the Lord's people, the one thing I found most interesting of all in my personal experience over those weeks was the sense of being upheld.

Of course, one is upheld in the ministry. One can usually tell when the congregation have been praying for the minister. He has been upheld in their prayers.

And usually, when the people have prayed, the Lord commands the blessings. And of course, we pray the more when the circumstances are so much unusual and expected.

[ 44 : 09 ] For example, when we came on that particular Saturday of the 150th anniversary, I did not expect to be standing there. You didn't expect me to be stood in that forfeit. But the Lord knew all about it.

But the people prayed, and they knew what happened. And one was born by the Spirit of Grace in a most remarkable way. that some of us will never forget.

It's divine support. Being upheld. And you know, the Lord's people and their prayers have a vital part to play. That is where your prayers for me were so important to me.

I thank God for every one of them because I believe that God heard and answered those prayers. And I felt a sense of union and affection which was there.

It was a wonderful experience to be upheld. And not to feel any sense of any fear whatsoever. Now, I could not have believed that to be possible. But you see, we have the Lord's divine support in our lives here.

[ 45 : 17 ] God's love for you. I, the Lord says, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness. He is the one who sustains us.

He is the one who preserves and comforts us. And all these things are gloriously true. God's love for you. And I'm glad to be able to testify this afternoon to the reality which I have found in this lovely verse in my own experience at that particular time.

I found of a truth that this multitude, this cluster of promises from God which he makes here to his ancient people were made real and precious to me and proved to be the antidote to all my fears.

The antidote, then, is the word of the Lord, the presence of the Lord, the assurance of our salvation. of the Lord, the The reboategic of Jesus.

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