

## Isaiah. 41:8-10 “Anxious Friends”

**For the Children:** Boys and girls may be frightened of all sorts of things – a large, barking dog; thunder; meeting new people; a strange noise in the middle of the night. Adults are often worried by things, too. But the Lord tells us that we do not be frightened. He has chosen us to be His special people, His servants, and even His friends. He has promised to be close to us, to help us, support us and strengthen us. With all those promises, who needs to be scared? **Questions:** What sort of things frighten you? How has God made us His friends? How come we can benefit from promises made to Abraham – he has been dead for a very long time?

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### Introduction:

#### First Point: Assurance from the Way the Lord Regards Us

- 1) To Abraham's Children: This encouragement is addressed to the Descendant of Abraham, Israel/Jacob. But in context, it is addressed to all Israel. Those who have faith in the great Seed of Abraham (including us) are Abraham's spiritual children (Gal. 3:7; Rom. 4:16-18).
- 2) The Chosen: Abraham's children are taken, called and chosen by the Lord. This includes our election in God's eternal decree, as opposed to rejection; the election of the nation, Israel; and the choosing of God's people to serve Him. Having chosen us, He will not desert us.
- 3) Israel My Servant: In the Bible, Masters had an obligation to care for their servants and treat them fairly, with righteousness and even in the case of fellow-believers, to love them (Duet. 24:14-15; Col. 4:1). This obligation springs from the nature of our great Master. We can be sure that our Master will not cease to treat His servants well, even when our circumstances are most trying.
- 4) Descendant of My Friend: The Lord condescended to call Abraham His "friend" - someone He loved, and who loved Him in return. See 2 Chron. 20<sup>7</sup> and James. 2:23. As Abraham's spiritual descendants, in Christ, we are also friends of God. See John. 15:13-16. Since Christ has already laid down His life for us, there is no way that God will cease to care for His friends/children, in all our trials.

#### Second Point: Assurance from What the Lord Gives Us

- 1) For Our Assurance: In order to re-assure us of the Lord's loving care, the word "surely" is mentioned twice in v. 10. We are also told not to fear or look anxiously about.
- 2) What the Lord Gives: To re-assure us from what the Lord has done, is doing and will do for us, 5 blessings are listed. We are assured of God's Presence (v. 10); we are assured that He is present in the way of mutual belonging, in the covenant-relationship – He is "your God"; He will strengthen us (Phlp. 4:13). He will help us; and He will uphold us by His righteousness (v. 10) – ultimately through the all-powerful, saving work of Christ. In view of all these re-assurances, we do not need to fear what this year may bring for us, in the Lord's providence.

### Conclusion: