

Fear Not

I love being outdoors. I take great pleasure in watering my plants, digging in the soil and pulling weeds. But I live in an area where rattlesnakes exist, even though in 40 years I have never encountered one.

Apparently, a nest had been stirred up in an empty lot recently, and my neighbors were suddenly finding them in their yards. One even appeared in a neighbor's garage.

After the snakes moved in, my pleasure was replaced with fear. Now when I ventured outside, I stood anxiously holding the hose as my eyes darted about, alert to any danger. Every time I went into my garage, it was with fear and trepidation, wondering if a snake was lurking in a dark corner.

One day it occurred to me that I was not without defenses. When my husband died, I claimed as my own Isaiah 54:5. I held onto that promise, often calling upon the Lord during the times when I felt alone and defenseless. Over and over again those prayers were answered.

I decided it was time to call upon the Lord once more. I prayed: "God, You know how afraid I am to go outdoors. Please help me." Then I sat down and pictured my house and my property, as I built an invisible wall all around it.

After that prayer, I relaxed and forgot about the snakes. Many weeks later I was pulling out weeds when a neighbor stopped by to visit. "Aren't you concerned about the rattlers?" he asked.

I smiled and told him I was sure they were gone. Actually, I might have smirked rather than smiled.

"I think you're right," he said. "I haven't heard about one in quite a while."

At that moment, I felt very sheepish. Here I had been so

concerned about my own fears that I had neglected to ask for protection for the entire neighborhood. Nevertheless, the Lord with His infinite wisdom took care of us all. There has not been a report of a snake sighted in our neighborhood in the year since then.