



## Something New (His Refreshing is Coming)

Isaiah 43:14-28 Sunday, February 7, 2021

We all have experienced painful and difficult things in our past, and many have experienced moments worth celebrating. It is not wrong to look back, but following Jesus means He is creating something new in all of us. Perhaps God desires to do something in and through you?

### Setting the Scene (vs 14-16):

- Isaiah takes his readers back to the past to remember God's faithfulness. It is a call to give witness to their history and their future.
- A path through the sea (Vs. 16), a way through the wilderness (Vs. 19) They are called to remember the Exodus. God is the Lord of Nations and Nature. He demonstrates great love!
- "Your sakes" and "Your Holy One" Look at all of the usages of "I." (He is personal)
- God has not brought you this far to abandon you.
- However, He then tells them to forget all about that. He is going to do something new.

<sup>6</sup>For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup>So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Ephesians 2:6-8

### Something new to refresh our soul

#### 1. Fresh Vision (Vs. 18-20)

"New" *chadash* (חָדָשׁ, 2318), "to renew, fresh"<sup>1</sup>

- Our past can often distract us from fresh vision. It can even paralyze us from moving forward. Three Memories that Cripple: Hurts, Failures, Shame. Also, past successes can stop fresh vision: Live off our past rather than creating new stories, limit God's power, and tend to be satisfied living in the past.
- Do not focus on the past; look forward.

<sup>8</sup>He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding. <sup>9</sup>God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan. <sup>10</sup>**And this is the plan:** At the right time he will bring Everything together under the authority of Christ—Everything in heaven and on earth. Ephesians 1:8-10

- Memory -----To Expectation
- God has a plan! He is working! Do you believe it?

"Here then are the choices we all face moment by moment: Will we aim to be impressive? Will we expect to be in complete control? Will we ensure that we always come out on top as winners? Or will we be happy for the power of Christ to rest upon us in our endless weakness? 'No man can give at once the impressions that he himself is clever and that Jesus Christ is mighty to save.' Neither can any church."—Ray Ortund, *The Gospel: How the Church Portrays the Beauty of Christ*

God is not limited to our past experiences, our traditions, or what we think the church's next step should be. We must leave room for divine mystery, for surprise. God never acts out of character but he does exceed our expectations. Ray Ortund, *When God Comes to Church*, pg 31

God promises to transform the desert created by the arrogance and false trust, the place where unclean animals live, into a place of "water" and "streams" where his "chosen" may have all their needs supplied (43:20). As a result, his people will bear witness to his deity; they will "proclaim my praise" (43:21).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Vol. 1, p. 160). Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.

<sup>2</sup> Oswalt, J. N. (2003). *Isaiah* (p. 491). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

## 2. Fresh Worship (Vs. 21-24)

- They are reminded that there is a reason for their situation they find themselves in. God is not saying they were not worshipping, He is saying their worship is not about Him.
- The sacrifices were to be signs of a changed heart and life. God is not interested in mindless and ritualistic worship. He wants us!
- Worship reflects the heart. Worship should not be burdensome.

*"Our natural drift is to worship God, not to unburden ourselves, but to obligate Him." Ray Ortlund*

- Have we come to worship, or have we come to appease God so that He would honor us?
- Worship is a means of grace to help those who are weary.

## 3. Fresh Souls (Vs. 25-28)

- They are buried in sin and need a lifeline.
- Do you know what God owes you? Nothing
- Do you know what you owe God? Everything
- They are guilty, and things are not getting better, but God shows his great love by redemption, not because they deserve it, but because of who He is.

### Questions to Ponder:

What does God want from me? There is no reason to ask why. It calls for bold faith.

How will I do it? It calls for sacrifice.

*Do not let all the failures of yesterday or fears of tomorrow cripple you of your trust of today.*

**One Last Thought:** To celebrate our glorious future, we have to deal with our present reality.