

1. Two weeks ago, we began a series of messages from the book of Isaiah chapter 43.
2. I consider this to be a word from the Lord for the transition into the new year.
3. More specifically, as we move out of what has been the craziness of 2020, how does that affect 2021 and beyond.
4. And the words that have been rolling over in my heart for many weeks is the phrase. A new thing. God would say to you, to me, and to us that he is doing a new thing.
5. This idea of God doing a new thing is seen in **Isaiah 43:18-19** "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. 19 See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.
6. From this passage we made a couple of observations.
7. God does in fact want to do a new thing for us, but it is entirely possible for us to miss this new thing. Why?
8. Verse 19 says, now it springs up. Meaning it comes out of nowhere.
9. And because it comes out of nowhere, Isaiah asks a question. Do you not perceive it? In other words, God is already doing it, but they were having trouble recognizing it.
10. And the third reason we can miss this new thing God is doing is because verse 18 tells us to forget the former things and don't dwell on the past.
11. That is an extremely hard command for us to keep. All of us can be susceptible to being bound by our past rather than being free from our past.

12. So, because it is possible for us to miss this new thing God is doing, I gave you three guides for not missing this new thing.
 - **This is not your thing.** Meaning, what will happen will not be a result of what you or I do. We are not the source. The weight will not be on us to make it happen.

- **This is God's thing.** Why must this be God's thing? Because sometimes our thing isn't anything like God's thing. That's not to say we miss God's thing because of sin. We can have the best and most honorable of intentions, and still not be on the same page with the Lord. What we seek is something that can only come from Him.
 - **Let Him do his thing.** Don't resist this new thing God wants to do.
13. Each of those thoughts point to surrender. A laying down of our will.
 14. A taking up of God's will.
 15. And the willingness to let him do what he wants.
 16. So, this morning we are going to begin to dissect what this new thing that God wants to do is.
 17. I told you last time, that to understand this new thing, we have to go all the way back to the beginning of the chapter.

TEXT: **Isaiah 43:1-3** But now, this is what the LORD says-- he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. **2** When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. **3** For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead.

TITLE: **The Lord's will in this new thing.**

INTRO:

1. We are going to focus today on the word will. Specifically, we are going to seek to identify some of the things that will happen as the Lord does this new thing.
2. Said another way, what is God up to.
3. What I believe these three verses do is they build the foundation for what God is up to.
4. As many of you know, the foundation of a building is one of the most vital parts of the structure.

5. If the foundation is right, then everything on top of the foundation has the potential to be right.
6. But if the foundation is installed incorrectly, chances are everything placed on top of it will crumble and fall.
7. Here's the thing about foundations, however. Foundations aren't pretty, nor are they magnificent.
8. The vast majority of the foundation is under ground and cannot be seen.
9. Very seldom does someone walk up to a magnificent building and proclaim, what an awesome foundation.
10. But without the proper foundation, nothing of value is going to be built on top.
11. So, walk with me as we lay the foundation for what the Lord wants to do in this new thing.
12. This foundation is made of 3 blocks or stones. And these blocks or stones are truth. They are three things that have to be in place in order for the new thing to be built on top.
13. Here are the three foundation blocks.
 - The lost will find their way.
 - You will be ok.
 - The Lord will make a way.
14. We can see each of these truths illustrated in each of the three verses. So, let's start with verse number one.

The lost will find their way.

1. Isaiah 43:1 But now, this is what the LORD says-- he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.
2. One of the first things the Lord wants to do is move us from emotions or feelings into the realm of truth.
3. Now. Before we move on, I want to be very clear that I am not speaking against feelings or emotions.
4. Do not leave here and say, well Pastor Jeff told us that feelings and emotions are bad.

5. Feelings and emotions are not bad. That said, feelings make terrible foundations stones in our lives.
6. Although feelings and emotions are not bad, they are not very stable and strong.
7. Basically, our feelings and emotions change from moment to moment, minute by minute, hour by hour, and so on.
8. But truth is stable, strong, unchangeable, and unmovable.
9. In the middle of verse 1 God says to the Israelites, do not fear.
10. Now for sure, fear is an emotion. But the Lord says to them and to us. Reject this emotion.
11. And fortunately, as with all the other 364 places in the bible where we are told not to fear, the Lord gives us some very good reasons why we should reject this emotion of fear.
12. **We can reject fear because of the truth.** What is the truth.
13. As I read this first verse over and over again, the word that kept coming to mind was the word lost. Living by fear creates in us this feeling of lostness.
14. **2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. (NLT)**
15. The opposite of fear is power, love, and self-discipline or self-control.
16. So, what fear brings are feelings of powerlessness, feeling unloved, and a lack of self-discipline or self-control.
17. Said another way. Out of control.
18. Again, the word I think of is lost. This overwhelming feeling of being lost.
19. But what the Lord desires to do. Part of this new thing he is up to is that he is helping us find our way out of this lost place.
20. That is indicated by the word ransomed back in Isaiah 43:1.
21. Do not be afraid for I have ransomed you. I love the definition of the word **ransomed: to release (a prisoner) after receiving payment.**
22. These overwhelming feelings of fear or being lost leave us feeling like prisoners.

23. But the Lord says, I have ransomed you. I have paid the price for your release.
24. What is the price of release? It is the acceptance of the truth.
25. And the truth is this. **Isaiah 43:1 But now, O Jacob, listen to the LORD who created you. O Israel, the One who formed you says, "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are Mine.**
26. How do the lost find their way? When they remember it is the Lord God who created us and formed us.
27. And it is also the Lord God who intimately calls us by name and proclaims, you are mine.
28. One of the things the Lord wants to do this year is help you find your way out of the lostness.
29. What you have been feeling is lost. But the truth is you are not lost at all.
30. God created and formed you. And even when you felt lost and away, God has known right where you are all the time. You are not lost to him.
31. And he wants to replace that lostness or that distance with closeness and intimacy. He wants to call you by name and proclaim to the world. They are mine. They belong to me.
32. Have you been feeling a little bit lost this past year? That's ok. You will find your way back to intimacy with the Lord.
33. But let's clarify what that way out looks like and what it doesn't look like.

You will be ok.

1. **Isaiah 43:2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.**
2. In this second verse, Isaiah identified three things. Waters. Rivers. And fire.
3. It is believed that waters signify those times when you are in deep water, and the water is over your head. And as a result, becoming tired and drowning is a possibility.
4. Rivers signifies the pulling of currents against your life.

5. You want to stand firm with your feet on the riverbed, but the currents are pulling against you, threatening to pull you downstream.
6. Fire here signifies those times when you feel like the heat is on if you will, and the fire is threatening to not only burn or do damage, but to also consume up all that you have.
7. So, we have identified that the Lord will help the lost find their way. But we need to be clear that the way will not be pretty.
8. **Helping the lost find their way is not an indication of a carefree, worry free life.** In fact, just the opposite.
9. When you pass through the waters. When you pass through the rivers. When you walk through the fire.
10. Not if, but when. So, when you pass through the waters, God says, I will be with you.
11. When you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.
12. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned, and the flames will not set you ablaze.
13. Write this down. It will probably be the most freeing thing you hear all day.
14. God's promise is not that everything will be ok.
15. God's promise is not that some things will be ok.
16. **God's promise is that you will be ok.**
17. What does that mean in regard to this new thing God is doing? It means that the focus of our prayers should not be that things are ok, rather a trust that in God's hands we will be ok.
18. It is human nature when faced with uncertainty, difficulty, newness that we didn't initiate. We want to go back to the way things were when we were relatively comfortable.
19. But God said through Isaiah in verse 18 that we are to forget the former things; and do not dwell on the past.
20. With all the love I have. Stop praying that in 2021 everything will go back to normal. Go back to the way it was.
21. It's not going back to the way it was. It never will.

22. But pastor. What you just said rubs me the wrong way. It rubs me the wrong way too. I don't like it. But we can believe and accept that truth when we know that we know that God has promised us no matter what we pass through, we are going to be ok.
23. In this new thing, there will be waters and rivers and fire, but you will be ok.
24. And lastly, we can be secure even in the water and river and fire because...

The Lord will make a way.

1. Isaiah 43:3 For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead.
2. Now. I have heard all my life that the Lord is our savior. And that is very true. He is the one who saves us from our sins.
3. But when God says, I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your savior, he is not referring to saving us from our sins.
4. He is referring to being the savior who rescues us from all harm.
5. I nearly missed the point here because I couldn't understand how the words, I give you Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead, meant anything.
6. But here is exactly what they mean.
7. I give you Egypt for your ransom refers to when the children of Israel were fleeing from the people of Egypt, and the Egyptian armies were hot on their tail.
8. When they got to the edge of the Red Sea, they thought they were goners because they were hemmed in on every side.
9. But then the Lord opened up the sea and allowed them to cross on dry ground. And when the Egyptian army went in after them. The walls of water came crashing down and not one Egyptian escaped alive.
10. Here's what, I give you Egypt for your ransom means. When it looks like you are surrounded on every side. Don't be afraid. I will make a way. You will not be destroyed. Your enemy will be destroyed.

11. How about when it says, Cush and Seba in your stead?
12. This refers to an event that occurred in the book of 2 Kings chapter 19. I don't have time to read it to you, so I encourage you to look it up later.
13. The king and kingdom of Assyria had attacked the nation of Israel and captured many of their cities.
14. Then those Israelites who were left fled into the city of Jerusalem, and the Assyrian army surrounded them on every side in an attempt to starve them out.
15. Then on top of that, the king of Assyria sent messengers to terrify the people so they would give up in fear.
16. But God made Israel a promise. And the promise was that the king of Assyria will hear the report that his nation is being attacked by the kingdom of, guess who? Cush.
17. So, the king of Assyria gets the report, runs away to fight the people of Cush, leaving the people of Israel with no one surrounding them anymore.
18. Oh, and by the way, a little time later, that same king who had surrounded Jerusalem and tried to scare the people to death was killed by some of his own people.
19. So, when Isaiah says, I will give Cush and Seba in your stead, what he is saying is, when it seems like you are surrounded and there is no way out. Understand that I am in the process of making a way for you even before you see a way for you.
20. When everything seems lost, it is then that the Lord's deliverance is right around the corner.
21. In this new thing, darkness and impossibility are not the end of the story. In fact, they are just the beginning of a new story.
22. A story of deliverance.

Conclusion:

1. What is a part of this new thing God is doing?

- The lost will find their way.
- You will be ok.
- The Lord will make a way.

2. Part of this new thing is that in 2021. By faith in Jesus Christ. We will not be led by what we see, feel or experience; but rather we will be led by the truth that our god is the source of victory in spite of those things.

3. Prayer.

4. You need a savior.

5. I feel kind of lost. Confess. The Lord has paid the ransom that I can be set free.

6. I have been battling the water, river, or fire. Confess. Your word says that I will be ok. Things don't have to be ok for me to be ok.

7. I have been feeling surrounded on ever side. Confess. Lord. I believe you are making a way even when I can't see it.

8. Close with song.