

Week three

Vision through the lens

What does God want to do with you?

and apart from me there is no savior.

ISA 43:12 I have revealed and saved and proclaimed--

I, and not some foreign god among you.

You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "that I am God.

God is declaring Himself. He is speaking through a prophet. The book of Isaiah is kind of like a collection of sermons. This collection is over a number of years and has different flavours. Some people would say that there are 2 or 3 different Isaiahs. I don't think so, I just think the guy grew and changed a bit as he preached. That sounds logical. I know I preach differently now than I did 10 years ago. I will probably preach a fair bit differently in another 10 years. The point is; What has this God who is revealing and proclaiming to you got in mind for you this year?

As Isaiah developed, so must we. Notice it says here 'We are God's witnesses'. That gives us a clue as to what God requires of us. More about that later.

ISA 43:13 Yes, and from ancient days I am he.

No one can deliver out of my hand.

When I act, who can reverse it?"

ISA 43:14 This is what the LORD says--

your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:

"For your sake I will send to Babylon

and bring down as fugitives all the Babylonians,

in the ships in which they took pride.

The people that Isaiah is talking to will be subject to the Babylonian Empire. Isaiah is saying God is going to deal with the problem. There is a problem in the life of Isaiah's people and God will deal with it.

Again we ask ourselves how does this impact on us? Well, we know that God is powerful enough to deal with the whole Babylonian Empire, so logic has it that He can deal with our issues. There is nothing God can't deal with. The problems of the last year, God can and has dealt with, they are now history.

ISA 43:15 I am the LORD, your Holy One,

Israel's Creator, your King."

ISA 43:16 This is what the LORD says--

he who made a way through the sea,

a path through the mighty waters,

ISA 43:17 who drew out the chariots and horses,

the army and reinforcements together,

and they lay there, never to rise again,

extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:

Here we see God reminding the people of how He has dealt with things in the past. Notice He points out amazing miraculous feats. God is powerful enough to deal with what we perceive to be impossible. All things are possible, God's purposes will not be thwarted. Hey, we need to remember that. We need to know that the God who has worked in the past is still working, and working with us.

Look what is said next.

ISA 43:18 "Forget the former things;

do not dwell on the past.

Lets keep this in context. Isaiah isn't saying that all that has gone before is to be ignored. He is saying, that God will do new miraculous acts of assistance to His people. Just like the old days, but relevant to the people in need. Isaiah continues.

ISA 43:19 See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the desert

and streams in the wasteland.

Here we have God saying I am going to do something for you like I have in the past. I will get you back to Israel a different way. Note here that the way back from Babylon was via the fertile crest route. The long way round but the only safe way. They needed water and security. Across the desert wasn't an option. God is saying, I'll make a way.

That is what is prophesied in Isaiah 40 regarding God providing a way for His people to get back to God.

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ISA 40:3 A voice of one calling:

"In the desert prepare

***the way for the LORD;
make straight in the wilderness
a highway for our God.***

This is the passage quoted to describe John the Baptist's ministry

***MT 3:1 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea ²
and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." ³ This is he who
was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:
"A voice of one calling in the desert,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.' "***

He was preparing the way for Jesus, which is God's way of getting His people back to God. This was a new thing.

What is the new thing God is doing with you? Is He wanting to use you to prepare the way for Him? Most probably.

Is the new thing about God not about you? Yes.

What is it? I don't know for you individually, but stay open to God.

How? Get into God's word. He might show you the new thing there, if not he will prepare you for it.

Get into communicating to God – Prayer, do it by yourself, do it with others start a group to do it – but do it. Pray your socks off.

Investigate. – Start looking for what you can do for God this year.

Think about it, pray about it, investigate it, then do it. You never know what this new thing could do.