



water from rock

## Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- December 9, 2023

The Lord be with you.

The old song asks, “Are you facing rivers you think are impossible? Mountains you can't tunnel through?” So how about it? I mean, could that be you today? If it is, I mean, if you're going through a difficult time, I have some good news for you as I'm looking at the word of God through the prophet Isaiah, Isaiah chapter 43.

OK, here's the setting of today's scripture- as under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the prophet Isaiah is writing to the Jewish people who are in exile. I mean, it doesn't get much worse than that as they are captives and far away babbling because of their rebellion against God, because of their sin and the people of God. Well, they're thinking that God has forgotten them. They're thinking that they have absolutely zero hope for any future. But then God steps in and God through his prophet Isaiah gives these words to his people and to you and me today Isaiah chapter 43 verse 16 and following thus says, the Lord who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters who brings out chariot and horse army and warrior.

They lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quench like a wick. Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I'm about to do a new thing. Now it springs forth. Do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. Now follow what the Lord is saying to us today. God is saying, remember now, forget, remember now forget, remember what I once did for my people in the Exodus out of Egypt. Remember my great saving power, remember, ok. Not forget it, forget it. Don't get fixed on what I once did because I'm about ready to do something new and wonderful for you.

God is saying, do not let memories of what once God did keep you from believing what God is about to do, ok? Now keep in mind that it was God who had commanded His people to celebrate Passover every year to help them to remember the Exodus, how God had made a way for them through the sea. He'd made a way through the mighty waters. And, and now after centuries of telling his people to remember the Exodus. God says, ok, now forget it. Why?

Because God says, I'm, I'm about to do something even greater. Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old because I'm about to do a new thing. God says, don't get stuck on what I once did, don't let believing in what I once did keep you from believing in what I'm doing now, as I'm about to do a new thing. God says it springs forth. Do you not perceive it?

The Hebrew language here is the language of a tiny little seed out of sight in the ground, silently germinating and then the shoot springs up and, and then there's a flower and there's fruit. And



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God said that this new thing is springing up now in our lives. Do you not see it? I don't know about you, but I can get so stuck on what God once did that. I do not let myself see. I do not let myself believe in the new thing that God is already beginning to do now.

I mean, I even had a pretty good theological system to explain my unbelief, my practical atheism if you will about what God was doing something new in my life. And so the prophet Isaiah writes to people who will have given up hope for the future. I mean, people who were stuck on what God once did in the past, who, who just couldn't imagine that God would do anything new in their time. And so the Lord says to them, I'm about to do a new thing now it springs up.

Do you not perceive it as I look at scripture? I see how God is the God of the new, a new covenant, a new birth, a new creation, a new life, new heavens, new earth. God says that he gives us a new song. God gives us new, surprising experiences of his love and grace. So probably the favorite prayer of my wife and me is to pray. Simply Lord surprise us because we know that God can do that. God likes to do more than we can even ask or imagine. I mean, just like Paul says in Ephesians three, they're like parents like to surprise their Children at Christmas. So God likes to surprise you and me with his love. And goodness God says in today's scripture, I will make a way in the wilderness. I will give you rivers in the desert.

And you know, I've, I've learned through the years that, that this is true that this is trustworthy that God does make a way for us in the wilderness. God does give us rivers in the desert and that is why we call this ministry water from rock. Because as we journey through the wildernesses of the life, God knows how to bring water from a desert rock.

I tried to live by a song II, I learned when I was a child, maybe about five years of age. A song that has proven true. All these years. The song goes like this:

*My Lord knows the way through the wilderness.*

*All I have to do is follow*

*Strength for today is mine all the way.*

*And all that I need for tomorrow.*

The Lord knows the way through the wilderness and that's God's word for you today. God's word for me. God says I'm about to do a new thing. Now. It springs forth. Do you not perceive it?

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.