

Message Title: **"A NEW BEGINNING W/ OUR WALK W/ GOD!"**

Message Text: **ISAIAH 43:14-15:5**

Introduction:

ILLUSTRATION: "First Things First"

IT IS RATHER COMICAL WHEN THE PRIMARY THINGS OF LIFE ARE MADE SECONDARY. VICTOR BORGE TOLD ABOUT A COUPLE GOING ON VACATION, STANDING IN LINE WAITING TO CHECK IN THEIR BAGS AT THE AIRLINE COUNTER. THE HUSBAND SAID TO THE WIFE, "I WISH WE HAD BROUGHT THE PIANO." THE WIFE SAID, "WHY? WE'VE GOT SIXTEEN BAGS ALREADY!" THE HUSBAND SAID, "YES, I KNOW-- BUT THE TICKETS ARE ON THE PIANO!" *(Unknown, <http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/f/forget.htm>)*

THIS STORY I THINK IS TRUE OF GOD'S PEOPLE! HOW OFTEN DO WE FORGET THE WORK OF THE LORD IN OUR LIFE? THIS SIN OF FORHETFULNESS REMINDS ME OF GOD'S PEOPLE ISRAEL IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. BEFORE THEY ENTERED CANAAN, THEIR PROMISED LAND, THE LORD ALREADY ADMONISHED THEM.

"When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give you—a land with large and beautiful cities that you did not build, houses full of every good thing that you did not fill them with, cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you eat and are satisfied, be careful not to forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery."
(Deut. 6: 10-12)

"You may say to yourself, 'My power and my own ability have gained this wealth for me,' but remember that the Lord your God gives you the power to gain wealth, in order to confirm his covenant he swore to your ancestors, as it is today. If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods to serve them and bow in worship to them, I testify against you today that you will certainly perish."
(Deut. 8: 17-19)

AND YET WE KNOW THAT INSPITE OF THOSE WORDS, THE ISRAELITES STILL FALL ON THIS SIN OF FORGETFULNESS WHICH LED THEM TO BEHAVE UNFAITHFULLY BEFORE THE LORD & LATER CAUSED THEIR DESTRUCTION.

“These things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our instruction, on whom the ends of the ages have come.”
(1 Cor. 10:11)

SO, I THINK THIS QUOTATION WAS RIGHT IN SAYING,

“THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR IS TO CONTINUALLY REMIND THE LORD’S PEOPLE OF WHO THEY ARE IN CHRIST & NOT FORGET IT!”
(ANONYMOUS)

TODAY, AS WE ENTER & FACE THIS BRAND NEW YEAR 2021, THE LORD LED ME TO OUR PASSAGE THAT WILL REMIND ALL OF US NOT ONLY WHO THE LORD OUR GOD IS, BUT ALSO WHAT IS HIS PURPOSE & HIS PROMISES TO US!

IF WE ARE TO BEGIN A NEW WALK WITH THE LORD IN 2021 & BE ABLE TO FACE THIS NEW YEAR WITH ALL ITS UNCERTAINTIES & CHALLENGES WITH CONFIDENCE & HOPE, WE ARE TO BE REMINDED AGAIN & THESE IMPORTANT TRUTHS IN OUR LIFE!
LET US PRAY!!!

TEXT BACKGROUND. CONTEXT OF PASSAGE. THE BOOK OF ISAIAH CAN BE EASILY DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS/SECTION- CHS. 1-39 IS ALL ABOUT THE LORD’S JUDGMENT OF HIS PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THEIR UNFAITHFULNESS TO HIM. THIS CAUSED THE LORD TO DESTROY JERUSALEM THRU KING NEBUCHANEZZAR & SENT THEM AS CAPTIVES TO BABYLON FOR 70 YEARS AS PREDICTED BY JEREMIAH. WHILE CHS. 40-66 IS ALL ABOUT THE LORD’S PROMISE OF REDEMPTION & HOPE FOR HIS PEOPLE, WHICH INCLUDES ISAIAH’S PROPHECY ABOUT THEIR RETURN TO THE JERUSALEM. OUR PASSAGE TODAY, CHAPTER 43-44, THE LORD THRU THE PROPHET ISAIAH IS REMINDING ISRAEL HIS PEOPLE THAT HE IS THEIR ONLY HOPE & SAVIOR. NOW THOUGH THE SETTING & CONTEXT OF OUR PASSAGE IS ABOUT GOD’S PEOPLE IN THE O.T., BUT I THINK THE SPIRITUAL TRUTHS &

PRINCIPLES THAT IT TEACHES IS VERY APPLICABLE TO GOD'S PEOPLE IN ANY GENERATION OR TIME PERIOD.

A. WE ARE TO **KNOW** WHO OUR **GOD** IS!!

THE FIRST TRUTH IS THAT I WOULD LIKE US TO SEE IN OUR PASSAGE IS FOR US TO CLEARLY KNOW WHO IS OUR GOD! THE LORD THRU ISAIAH HERE IS REMINDING ISRAEL TO KNOW WHO THEIR GOD IS! REMEMBER THAT FORGETFULNESS IS ONE THOSE SUBTLE ENEMIES THAT ALL OF US NEEDS TO TAKE BE AWARE OF. FROM TIME TO TIME ALL OF US NEEDS TO BE REMINDED OF WHO THE LORD OUR GOD IS!

1) HE IS YOUR **CREATOR** & **KING!**

ISAIAH REMINDS THEM THAT THE LORD IS THEIR CREATOR & KING OF THE UNIVERSE!

Now this is what the Lord says—the one who created you, Jacob, and the one who formed you, Israel—“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are mine.” (v. 1)

2) HE IS YOUR **REDEEMER** & **LORD!**

Now this is what the Lord says—the one who created you, Jacob, and the one who formed you, Israel—“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are mine.” (v. 1)

BUT NOT ONLY HIS CREATOR BUT ALSO HE IS YOUR REDEEMER! TAKE NOTE HERE THAT HE WAS REFERRING TO HIS REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL FROM THEIR SLAVERY FROM EGYPT. BUT IT ALSO FORETELLS OF THE REDEMPTION THAT HE WILL DO THRU THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN DUE TIME WHICH IN FACT, ISAIAH HIMSELF PREDICTED THAT WILL TAKE PLACE IN FULNESS OF TIME (ISA. 7:14; 9:6-7). TAKE NOTE THAT HIS SALVATION IS PERSONAL (“I HAVE CALLED YOU”) & IT IS CERTAIN (“YOU ARE MINE!”)

THIS ACUALLY LEADS US TO OUR NEXT POINT. THE LORD IS ALSO YOUR LOVER!

3) HE IS YOUR TRUE **LOVER!**

“Because you are precious in my sight and honored, and I love you, I will give people in exchange for you and nations instead of your life.” (v. 4)

“This is what the Lord says: ‘The people who survived the sword found favor in the wilderness. When Israel went to find rest, the Lord appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, I have continued to extend faithful love to you.’” (Jer. 31:2-3)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ: even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love: having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace...” (Eph. 1: 3-6)

B. WE ARE TO KNOW WHAT IS HIS PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE!

THE SECOND TRUTH IS THAT I WANT US ALL TO SEE IS THAT GOD HAS AN ORDAINED OR APPOINTED PURPOSE OF FOR OUR LIFE! THE LORD THRU ISAIAH IS REMINDING HERE THE LORD’S PEOPLE OF THEIR GOD-ORDAINED PURPOSE IN LIFE!

1) HE CREATED & FORMED YOU TO GLORIFY HIM!

“Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back!’ Bring my sons from far away, and my daughters from the ends of the earth - everyone who bears my name and is created for my glory. I have formed them; indeed, I have made them.” (vv. 5-7)

a. WE GLORIFY THE LORD BY MAKING HIM KNOWN TO OTHERS AS THEIR CREATOR & REDEEMER!

“Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, ‘Give

*them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back!’ **Bring my sons from far away, and my daughters from the ends of the earth-- everyone who bears my name and is created for my glory. I have formed them; indeed, I have made them.**” (vv. 5-7)*

THIS REMINDS ME OF THE GREAT COMMISSION OF THE LORD JESUS!

“All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matt. 28: 18-20)

b. WE GLORIFY THE LORD BY DECLARING HIS PRAISE TO THE NATIONS!

THE LORD ALSO CHOSE & SAVED YOU & ME TO BE HIS WITNESSES TO DECLARE HIS EXCELLENCIES & HIS PRAISE TO THE NATIONS OR ALL PEOPLES!

***“You are my witnesses”—this is the Lord’s declaration—
“and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. No god was formed before me, and there will be none after me. I—I am the Lord. Besides me, there is no Savior. I alone declared, saved, and proclaimed—and not some foreign god among you. So you are my witnesses”—
this is the Lord’s declaration—“and I am God.”*** (vv. 10-12)

TAKE NOTE HERE THAT THE LORD WANTS US TO PROCLAIM THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD & SAVIOR! THERE IS NO OTHER GODS BESIDE THE LORD! HE IS ONLY ONE! THEN, HE WANTS US TO DECLARE HIS PRAISE!

“The people I formed for myself will declare my praise.” (v. 21)

THIS REMINDS US ALSO OF THE WORDS OF APOSTLE PETER IN 1 PETER 2 WHEN HE SAID,

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” (1 Peter 2:9-10)

c. WE GLORIFY THE LORD BY BEING FAITHFUL IN WORSHIPING & SERVING HIM AS OUR GOD ONLY!

BUT NOT ONLY BY MAKING HIM KNOWN TO OTHERS & BRING TO GLORIFY HIM & PROCLAIM HIS PRAISE BUT TO BE HIS OWN POSSESSION! PETER ALREADY POINTED THIS OUT IN HIS LETTER BUT LOOK AT OUR TEXT IN VERSE 1 AGAIN. THE LORD SAYS, “YOU ARE MINE!”

Now this is what the Lord says—the one who created you, Jacob, and the one who formed you, Israel—“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; YOU ARE MINE.” (v. 1)

NOW, WHAT THE IMPLICATION OF THIS? HE ACTUALLY HAS BEEN POINTING THIS OUT IN VERSE 10-13 – THAT HE WANTS YOU & ME TO WORSHIP ONLY HIM FOR WE ARE CREATED TO WORSHIP & LOVE THE LORD ALONE! HE WANTS US TO BE FAITHFUL AS HE WAS FAITHFUL TO US!

THEREFORE, CHURCH/FRIENDS, ARE THERE OTHER LOVERS OR GODS IN YOUR HEART RIGHT NOW WHO WANTS TO TAKE OVER YOUR HEART? REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE HIS ALONE! WE ARE TO WORSHIP & SERVE ONLY THE LORD OUR GOD!

c. WE ARE TO KNOW WHAT ARE HIS PROMISES FOR YOU!

FINALLY, THE THIRD TRUTH I WANT YOU ALL TO SEE IS THE PROMISES OF THE LORD TO HIS PEOPLE! THE LORD THRU ISAIAH REMINDS THEM OF HIS PROMISES TO THEM AS HIS PEOPLE!

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and the rivers will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, and the flame will not burn you...Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east,

and gather you from the west.” (vv. 2, 5)

1) THE LORD PROMISES HIS PRESENCE TO GO WITH US!

NOW THIS IS A GENERAL PROMISE THAT THE LORD PROMISES HIS PEOPLE BOTH IN THE OT & NT! THE LORD GAVE THE SAME PROMISE TO MOSES WHEN HE LED ISRAEL OUT OF EGYPT. HE ALSO GAVE THIS PROMISE TO JOSHUA WHEN HE LED ISRAEL IN ENTERING & CONQUERING CANAAN.

THIS WAS ALSO WHAT HE PROMISED THE PROPHETS & SERVANTS THAT HE USED TO CARRY OUT HIS PLAN & PURPOSES FOR HIS PEOPLE. THIS IS ALSO WHAT HE PROMISE TO US IN THE NT PARTICULARLY IN HIS GREAT COMMISSION AS WE “GO & MAKE DISCIPLES OF THE NATIONS!” HE PROMISED TO BE WITH TILL HE RETURNS & USHER IN THE END TIMES!

BUT IN OUR TEXT TODAY, WE CAN SEE THIS PROMISE OF THE LORD MANIFESTED IN VARIOUS MANNER/WAYS IN THE LIFE OF HIS PEOPLE.

a. HE PROMISES TO PROTECT YOU AS WE FACE CHALLENGING & DIFFICULT TIMES IF WE WILL LIVE BY FAITH IN HIM & NOT IN FEAR!

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and the rivers will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, and the flame will not burn you.” (v. 2)

b. HE PROMISES TO INTERVENE SUPERNATURALLY IN YOUR LIFE IF YOU BELIEVE OR LIVE BY FAITH IN HIM!

NOW, WE SEE THIS TRUTH IN VERSES 14-21. IN FACT IN VERSES 14-17, THE LORD PROMISES ISRAEL TO PUNISH BABYLON THEIR ENEMY & SEND THEM BACK AS FUGITIVES TO THEIR HOMELAND.

“This is what the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel says: ‘Because of you, I will send an army to Babylon and bring all of them as fugitives, even the Chaldeans in the ships in which they rejoice. I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.’”

(vv. 14-15)

IN FACT, IN THE NEXT VERSES, THE LORD PROMISES TO **MAKE ALL THINGS NEW** FOR HIS PEOPLE! IN THE LORD WE CAN START ALL OVER AGAIN! HE IS A GOD WHO TURNS THINGS AROUND!

*“This is what the Lord says—who makes a way in the sea, and a path through raging water, who brings out the chariot and horse, the army and the mighty one together (they lie down, they do not rise again; they are extinguished, put out like a wick)— ‘**Do not remember the past events; pay no attention to things of old. Look, I am about to do something new; even now it is coming. Do you not see it? Indeed, I will make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.**” (vv. 16-19)*

c. HE PROMISES TO **ANSWER YOUR PRAYERS** IF YOU **RETURN** TO HIM & **REPENT** OF YOUR SINS!

*“**But, Jacob, you have not called on me, because, Israel, you have become weary of me.** You have not brought me your sheep for burnt offerings or honored me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you with offerings or wearied you with incense. You have not bought me aromatic cane with silver, or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices. But you have burdened me with your sins; you have wearied me with your iniquities. **I am the one, I sweep away your transgressions for my own sake and remember your sins no more.**” (vv. 22-25)*

WE KNOW THAT IT WAS THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE THAT IS THE PROBLEM WHY THEIR PRAYERS WERE NOT ANSWERED!

d. HE PROMISES TO BE YOUR **HELPER** & **BLESSER** OF YOUR FAMILY IF YOU WILL **LISTEN/OBEY!**

*“And now listen, Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen. This is the word of the Lord your Maker, the one who formed you from the womb: **He will help you. Do not fear, Jacob my servant, Jeshurun whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your descendants and my blessing on your offspring...**” (Isa. 44:1-5)*

APPLICATIONS:

(1) AS WE ENTER & FACE 2021 WITH ALL ITS UNCERTAINTIES & CHALLENGES, KNOW FOR SURE THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE – THE LORD YOUR GOD IS WITH YOU!

JUST LIKE BEFORE JOSHUA ENTERED & CONQUERED CANAAN, WE TOO WERE GIVEN A PROMISE BY THE LORD TODAY! HE PROMISED THAT HE WILL BE WITH US AS WE ENTER & FACE THE UNCERTAINTIES & CHALLENGES OF 2021!

Now this is what the Lord says—the one who created you, Jacob, and the one who formed you, Israel— “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and the rivers will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, and the flame will not burn you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, and your Savior...” (Isa. 43: 1-3)

(2) AS WE ENTER & FACE 2021 WITH ALL ITS UNCERTAINTIES & CHALLENGES, LET US LIVE BY FAITH IN OUR GOD & NOT IN FEAR! AS WE DO OUR TRUSTING & OBEYING & BEING FAITHFUL, LET US EXPECT THE LORD TO BE FAITHFUL IN FULFILLING HIS PROMISES TO US!

“Now without faith it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” (Heb. 11: 6)

a. THE LORD PROMISES TO PROTECT US!

b. THE LORD PROMISES TO INTERVENE SUPERNATURALLY IN OUR LIFE! THE LORD PROMISES TO TURN OUR SITUATION AROUND! OUR PROBLEM INTO PRAISE! OUR TROUBLE/TRIAL INTO TRIUMPH! OUR BURDEN INTO BLESSINGS! OUR PAIN INTO GAIN! HE PROMISES TO TURN OUR SITUATION AROUND!

This is what the Lord says—who makes a way in the sea, and a path through raging water, who brings out the chariot and horse, the army and the mighty one together (they lie down, they do not rise again; they are extinguished, put out like a wick)— “Do not remember

the past events; pay no attention to things of old. Look, I am about to do something new; even now it is coming. Do you not see it? Indeed, I will make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.” (vv. 16-19)

c. THE LORD PROMISES TO ANSWER OUR PRAYERS IF WE WILL RETURN & REPENT OF OUR SINS!

“But, Jacob, you have not called on me, because, Israel, you have become weary of me. You have not brought me your sheep for burnt offerings or honored me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you with offerings or wearied you with incense. You have not bought me aromatic cane with silver, or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices. But you have burdened me with your sins; you have wearied me with your iniquities. “I am the one, I sweep away your transgressions for my own sake and remember your sins no more.””
(vv. 22-25)

“Indeed, the Lord’s arm is not too weak to save, and his ear is not too deaf to hear. But your iniquities are separating you from your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not listen.” (Isa. 59: 1-2)

ACCORDING TO ISAIAH, THE REASON OUR PRAYERS ARE NOT ANSWERED IS BECAUSE OF OUR SINS. IT TIES THE HAND OF GOD & HE CAN NOT DO ANYTHING UNLESS WE REPENT & FORSAKE THESE SINS!

d. THE LORD PROMISES TO BE OUR HELPER & BLESSER OF OUR FAMILY IF WE WILL LISTEN & OBEY HIS COMMANDS!

“And now listen, Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen. This is the word of the Lord your Maker, the one who formed you from the womb: He will help you. Do not fear, Jacob my servant, Jeshurun whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your descendants and my blessing on your offspring. They will sprout among the grass like poplars by flowing streams. This one will say, ‘I am the Lord’s’; another will use the name of Jacob; still another will write on his hand, ‘The Lord’s,’ and take on the name of Israel.”
(Isa. 44: 1-5)

(3) AS WE ENTER & FACE 2021 WITH ALL ITS UNCERTAINTIES & CHALLENGES, LET US LIVE OUR LIFE WITH A LASER-FOCUSED GOAL – TO FULFILL OUR GOD-ORDAINED PURPOSE – TO GLORIFY & PRAISE HIS NAME IN OUR LIFE!

FOR THE LORD HAS MADE IT PLAIN & CLEAR TO US THRU OUR PASSAGE TODAY – THAT HIS DESIRE FOR HIS PEOPLE IS TO GLORIFY HIM & PROCLAIM HIS PRAISE!

“Because you are precious in my sight and honored, and I love you, I will give people in exchange for you and nations instead of your life. Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back!’ Bring my sons from far away, and my daughters from the ends of the earth—everyone who bears my name and is created for my glory. I have formed them; indeed, I have made them.” (vv. 4-7)

*“And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”
(Col. 3: 17)*

CLOSING PRAYER!