

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE	New in 2022, part 1
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SERIES	New in 2022
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DATE	1/2/2022
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KEY SCRIPTURE	Isaiah 43:18-21
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SYNOPSIS	God is already doing a new thing. We will see his mighty works. Do we still believe his promises?
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HIGHLIGHTS	Table discussions included. Close singing Way Maker.
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☞ New in 2022

Isaiah 43:18-21

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. 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. The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because

☞ I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.

Forget; do not dwell on the past – everyone has a past, and for most there are at least a few things you regret. The human condition tends to focus on the problems of our past. But God says, “Let it go.” There’s a time and place to confess and repent, but then it’s time to move on. The Holy Spirit brings conviction to get us on the right track. The Devil brings condemnation to ☞ keep us stuck in the past. It’s time to let it go; **forget your regrets**; move on.

God is doing a new thing. God is all about doing something new. The word “new” is used nearly 200 times in the bible. God talks about a new covenant, a new command, a new creation, new mercies, a new attitude, a new self, a new order, a new name, a new song, a new heaven and a new earth.

We all enjoy new things and probably got some new things just recently, with the Christmas holiday. Yes, there is some sentimental value in old things, but new and shiny is attractive. God is up to something new. Even when God “re – stores”, “re – news”, and “re – vives”, it won’t be the same as before. He is up to something new and fresh. It won’t be just like anything before. There may be some similarities, but it will be new. God is doing a new thing.

☞ **Now it springs up. He has already begun this new thing.** It is in progress as we speak. In fact, just back one chapter in Isaiah 42:9 he says, “See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.”

This “springing up” has to do with agriculture. The new thing is sprouting up; it is budding. We understand this. In the Spring, trees which have been dormant through the winter begin to bud again and we know they will soon be full of leaves and perhaps some fruit. Crops are planted and in no time, there are sprouts turning the black dirt green. We know that in no time there will be an abundance of crops.

In God’s eyes this new thing is already budding and sprouting. That means there will be new and abundant growth very soon.

Do you not perceive it? Here is where faith comes into play. His opening word here is “see.” Can we see what God is doing? God says the new thing is now springing up. We may not see it in the natural, but do we believe God? He has made some impressive promises to OBC and ☞ some have been a long time in coming, but **do we still believe?** He has promised new things



and revival and more than we have imagined. We might look in the natural and think, “where are the promises? This doesn’t look new; this doesn’t feel revived.” But, will we believe what God has said? Will we look with spiritual eyes and begin to perceive what God is doing?

☞ **God is making a way.** He is paving a road in what seems like a wilderness of obstacles. It may seem like a great distance to get from where we are to where he is leading, but he is ☞ paving the way. **We tend to focus on the difficulties, but God is focused on the destination.** He sees the new thing already. We must trust him and simply begin moving in that direction.

When God called Abraham, he told him to go, but he didn’t tell him exactly where.

Hebrews 11:8-10

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. 9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

God is calling us forward as well. He will make a way where there seems to be no way.

God is making streams in the wasteland. Even as we are on the way to God’s new thing, we must pass through some dry places. Some would say we have already been in those dry places, especially this past couple of years. But there have always been times of refreshing even in the most difficult and dry seasons. God is making streams even as we go. Streams represent the Holy Spirit.

John 7:37-39

"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.

☞ **God gives us his Holy Spirit to help us stay fresh in troubling times.**

While we may as yet not have experienced everything God has promised, he gives us tokens along the way. He reminds us that he is still with us. Every one of us can think of times that God has proven himself faithful, even though troubles were all around.

☞ **Table talk** ...Share something that proved God was still with you this past year.

Wild animals, jackals, and owls will honor God. This is a picture of how much God’s new thing will influence the entire area. These are images of unbelievers and enemies. Wild animals are those who have yet to come into God’s sheep pen. “Jackal” is often rendered as “dragon” in other bible translations. The dragon is the enemy. So, even unbelievers and enemies of the faith will see the provision and blessing of God. And, **many will turn to God** when they do.



At the very least we know that one day soon every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Philippians 2:10-11.

Water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. This is a repeat of what was just said. It's a double emphasis on the promise. Water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland are miracles of God. Since God chose to emphasize this twice in the same passage, it indicates his determination to make it happen.

When Pharaoh had two dreams about the same situation, Joseph took note and said, "The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon." Genesis 41:32.

☞ **God will pour out his Spirit and people will take note. His promises will be fulfilled.**

To give drink to my people. This is God's purpose. He doesn't want us to dry up spiritually. **He ☞ wants us to be content with his company and saturated with his Spirit.** Just like the woman at the well, he offers us living water.

John 4:10-14

10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." 11 "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" 13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

This offer is still available today. If you have not yet received Jesus into your life, today is the day. Receive him and be refreshed. If you have received Jesus, it's high-time for that living water to well up to overflowing. **Keep on being filled with the Spirit!**

My people; my chosen; people I formed for myself. This is how God sees us. We are his chosen people. We need to see ourselves this way, too. While it's true that we are sinners, saved by grace, that is not all that we are. We are God's chosen people; we are priests of royal descent; we are holy to the Lord; and we belong to him. 1 Peter 2:9.

Some translations say that we are a peculiar people, and some of y'all are taking that a little too literally. 😊 It doesn't mean that God has called us to be weird. It means that **we are special ☞ and valued by God.**

Do you have some prized possessions? Maybe something that is collectible or of great value? How do you handle those things? Don't you treat them with great care? Collectible items are often put in some sort of display case to keep them clean and pristine. Valuable items are often stored away in a safe place and they are handled with great care. Royalty is treated with special respect and honor.



That is how God sees us. We are his prized possessions, treated with great care. We are royalty and highly honored. This is how God thinks of us. And because he thinks so highly of us, he will provide what is needed. In this case, he will pour out his Spirit so that we may be refreshed ☞ and renewed. **He will do a new thing in us. He will do a new thing with us. He will do a new thing through us.**

That they may proclaim my praise. This means to count and recount; it is to proclaim and declare. There will be a day when God's blessings are so obvious, praise will flow easily. We have grown accustomed to praising God in spite of our troubles...

Praise you in this Storm by Casting Crowns

*I was sure by now God, You would have reached down
And wiped our tears away; Stepped in and saved the day
And once again I say, "A-men" and it's still rainin'
But as the thunder rolls I barely hear You whisper through the rain "I'm with you"
And as Your mercy falls I'll raise my hands and praise the God who gives and takes away
And I'll praise You in this storm; And I will lift my hands
For You are who You are no matter where I am
And every tear I've cried You hold in Your hand
You never left my side and though my heart is torn
I will praise You in this storm*

I believe the sentiment of this song is true. We should praise God and give thanks in all circumstances. Even when everything is going sideways, God deserves our praise. So, praise him in the storm. But the day is coming when it won't be a storm. Instead, it will be a new thing; it will be a new way and a new day; it will be a new outpouring of God's Spirit. **We will ☞ see the mighty works of God and praise will come easily.**

In fact, I think we can praise God in advance of the promises being fulfilled. He says he is already doing a new thing. He asks if we can perceive it. Can you, in faith, see what God is ☞ doing? **Do you believe his promise of something new? Then praise the Lord!**

Way Maker