



DIAKONIA Prayer Letter May 2019

When the Israelites were in exile in Babylon, they longed to go back to their own country and former life. However the prophet says:

*Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.
I am 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. (Isaiah 43: 18-19)*

In pointing to what was happening in the society around them, the prophet actually drew from the traditions of the Israelite people. The past was not irrelevant but held truths which shaped and informed the future.

Sometimes change seems to be all around us. This reading reminds us that our way forward must be understood and interpreted in the light of the past. What was of value then, remains in some way relevant and valued for us now and into the future.

That's the reality that the disciples had to work out too. The fact was that Jesus had been crucified – he was dead. But somehow he had come alive again, in a new way. They came to realise that his life and their time being with him was not wasted as they had originally thought. Those years of his teaching, healing and ministering, together with his death and resurrection proved to be the foundation for the early church.

Now there was a wonderful new twist, that Jesus was alive – in them. Their past was not useless, but it had become transformed as they discovered Jesus did a new thing in them and in the world.

Easter is a desperately needed reminder every year that pain, loss, and death don't get the final word. The resurrection of Jesus teaches us that there always is and always will be hope. We can see this hope mirrored in our lives and happenings around us. The new context is a new opportunity, for reworking, reshaping, refreshing and renewing the old.

*Prayer: Loving God, you offer us hope anew.
You confront us with your reality
And transform us from hopelessness and despair.
Your love calls us and enfolds us
As we seek to follow in your way.
Call us anew to be part of the new thing you are doing in our world.
Amen.*

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