

Isaiah 43:18-19 - "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."

We have just crossed the Great Divide, that looming chasm that marks the passing of the old into the new. If you're like me, it's more than just flipping a page on the calendar. It's like little Lucy tentatively opening the door to the wardrobe that reveals Narnia - a whole new world.

Mentally transitioning from the old to the new affords us the spiritual opportunity to leave the former things behind and walk into the fullness of everything God has prepared for us as His beloved children. God himself instructs us to forget the former things and not dwell on the past. But how? What if we are burdened by sickness, pain, troubled relationships, financial burdens, even a feeling of hopelessness?

There's no coincidence that our celebration of the birth of Christ comes just before the onset of a new year. We have just been reminded that Jesus, the Light of the world, came to earth in the form of a baby so that we would know that He fully understands everything we endure in this life. He who knew no sin became sin for us, so that we could become the righteousness of God.

God's word in 2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us that if we are in Christ, we are a new creation; the old things have passed away and all things have become new! This is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, confirmation that God is indeed doing a new thing. And He does not leave us alone to fend for ourselves, but offers His continual indwelling presence as God with us, Emmanuel; Christ in us, the hope of glory.

Everything you encounter, Jesus experiences with you. He feels your pain, and has paid the price to overcome it. He sees your difficulties with those who have hurt you, and offers Himself as the Counselor and Mediator. He knows the challenges you have with finances and family responsibilities, and promises that He will help you to find a way to meet them.

As you stand at the portal of this new year, remember that Jesus is standing at the door, knocking. If you hear His voice, take a step of faith to open the door and let Him come in and fully fellowship with you. I guarantee it will be even better than Narnia.

