



“Take This With You”

Isaiah 63:7-9

There is an old gospel song that instructs us to “Count your blessings—name them one by one; count your blessings and see what God has done.” We do not know what inspired the hymn writer to pen these words; however, they do fit this particular passage of scripture.

Here we are presented with a historical prologue recalling Israel’s deliverance from Egypt. Held captive no longer by that which would enslave them and prevent them from living as God intended, Israel is led safely through Sinai into Canaan. Yet there is difficulty along the way.

As the people of God pressed on towards a new beginning, somehow the sense of release, of deliverance, is gone. All they seemed to recall was the struggle. They were in danger of taking with them the negativity of where they had been—without the celebration of what God had done in the midst of it.

In these verses, Isaiah calls to the people to remember the steadfast love and faithfulness of their God, and to recall what God had done for them. In other words, ‘count their blessings, make a list of things that God has done for which we should praise Him.’ Maybe that is what we need as the old year passes away and the new year is ushered in. Most of us have a prayer list of those things we are seeking God for in these troubled times. There are situations that must be solved and needs that must be met. While these things represent our current reality, what we also need is a praise list. A list that reminds us of what God has already done for us. How He has brought us out. In this way, we can enter the new year with the reassured hope that God still makes a way.

In these few days before we cross the border into the new land of 2009, there is a decision to be made. What will we take with us? Only the sting of our trials and tribulations or will it be the joy of knowing that no matter what we may encounter, our God is able to do exceedingly, abundantly more than we can imagine?

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