

Isaiah 43:16-21

John 12:1-8

### Introduction

I always have a cup of tea in bed first thing in the morning to wake me up and get me ready for the day. A couple of days ago I got into bed clutching my cup of tea and realised something was missing. What I had was a transfuser full of tea leaves but no refreshing drink. I had to get up again and pour the boiling water into the cup to hydrate the leaves and produce the flavour and aroma I needed.

Our God is a God who transforms and renews. He created us to be close to him and to worship him but through the ages people turned away from him and disobeyed him. They became sinful and cut off from God. That meant that they were spiritually dead. ~ dry and useless - a bit like the tea leaves.

God wasn't content to leave things like that. Our passage in Isaiah 43 tells us part of the story

God is reminding his people of things that had happened many years before.

The Hebrews were slaves in Egypt. They were suffering and unhappy

God intervened to change and transform the situation

As a result of God's working

The people were allowed to go. (explain briefly how)

The Egyptian army chased them. God rolled back the waters of the sea and the Israelites went through to freedom. The waters rolled back and destroyed the army.

At the time of this prophecy - when God was speaking to his people through the prophet Isaiah things have gone full circle again. The people had disobeyed God and stopped following him. They had been defeated by the Babylonian army and were captive in Babylon. God reminds them of how he transformed the situation when they were captive before.

He tells them he is going to do a new thing ~ to rescue them from exile in Babylon

God likens this to streams of water flowing in the desert bringing new life and new hope. Pouring water into a desert transforms it.  
*Tell of what happened in Aden*

Isaiah 43:16-21

John 12:1-8

In the same way God's spirit poured into human hearts transforms us : and gives us new spiritual life

slavery

\ describe what we are like apart  
from God

/  
dry desert

slaves to sin

dead and unfruitful

God's plan is to transform us

We are the people that God made for himself. His plan is for us to love him and want to please him and that we will sing his praises and bring glory to him in all that we do and the way we live our lives *read verse 21*

*for I give water in the wilderness,  
rivers in the desert,*

*to give drink to my chosen people,*

<sup>21</sup> *the people whom I formed for myself  
so that they might declare my praise.*

God is immensely powerful and he is able to transform us, to change us completely  
BUT not without cost to him.

This is shown in the Gospel reading we heard earlier.

Mary anointed Jesus with the very expensive perfume to show her love for him : worship

But it was also a symbolic action. Jesus told the people who were there that she was also preparing him for his death.

The way that he would win our freedom from sin and make us spiritually alive again was very costly for him. It meant his death on the cross for us.

It cost Jesus everything to transform us.

**Isaiah 43:16-21**

**John 12:1-8**

With my tea: water poured into it transformed it  
In the desert: water flowing into it transforms it  
With us: God's Spirit in our hearts changes and transforms us.

Have we opened our hearts to him to allow him to: transform us

free us from sin  
give us new spiritual life

In these last two weeks of Lent let's ask God if there is any new work he wants to do in us and be willing for him to transform us and change us into the people he has called us to be.