

## ***Theme for 2019***

**‘The God of Another Year, is a God of Wonderful and Amazing Grace.  
He is the God of Forgiveness and He is the God of Beginning Again.’**

### **365 DAYS OF POSSIBILITIES!**

*“O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. I will praise You, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.”*

**Psalm 51:15 (ESV); Lamentations 3:22-23 (NKJV); Psalm 9:1-2 (NKJV)**



### ***This Week’s Thought – June 23, 2019***

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*“Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, with no one passing through, I will make you majestic forever, a joy from age to age.”* Isaiah 60:15 (NRSV)

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**365 DAYS OF POSSIBILITIES**—The poetic language of Isaiah finds the prophet reflecting upon one of the darkest periods in all of Israel’s history, a roughly 70-year exile in Babylon. This was long enough for an entire generation to be born, live, and die. Like slavery in Egypt, their grief, sorrow, and loss were intense and all that many had ever known; so much so, that many likely had begun to think their story and identity was defined by tragedy and loss. Yet in the face of this temptation, Isaiah speaks a new word, holding onto hope that there is a reality greater than their pain.

In our own day, like Israel, we are constantly tempted to allow the tragedies of our lives to define us. Filled with sin and suffering, the world is not as it is meant to be, and as a result, not a single one of us will pass through this life without some sort of sorrow and pain. In each of our stories we have suffered deep wounds: the death of loved ones, abuse as a child, abuse from a relationship, betrayal by someone closest to you, loss of hopes and dreams for a family or for children, etc. and as a result you likely will spend much of your life working through your greatest pains in search of health and wholeness.

Like Israel, you and I can often feel neglected, forgotten, and hopeless. We feel like cities with “*no one passing through*” (v. 15), which is one of the worst things you could say about a city. We are wounded and beaten down, neglected and ignored. And yet, Isaiah says in the face of every wound and tragedy we face, “*Arise, shine; for your light has come.*” (v. 1)

As Christians, we must believe that if God can bring Jesus back from the dead, it means our hope isn’t in vain! It means we have real, concrete reasons to believe that our darkest moments are not the most defining parts of our identity! As a popular worship song I heard one day on a Contemporary Christian music station reminds us, “*there’s no story you can’t redeem.*” This statement is so much more than a song lyric, or maybe an empty sentiment found on the inside of a greeting card. It is the heart of the Christian faith and the source of our hope for the future. Dark Times Don’t Define You! In Jesus, God has done what we are unable to do for ourselves!

**On today, may the blessing of peace rest upon you...the blessing of joy abide within you...the blessing of success and favor surround you...the blessing of love flow out through you. May all the Blessings of the Lord be yours in abundance as you ‘Encounter the Possibilities’ this day will bring!!**

**Application:** Do you believe the Lord can shine His light on the darkest part of your life story and bring beauty out of ashes? Can you thank the Lord for working all things together for your good and His glory, bringing healing to your wounds and hope to your greatest fears?

**Prayer of reflection you might pray this week: “Thank you, Lord, for being there for me and allowing me to cry out to You in my times of need. It is amazing to me that You...the Lord of the Universe would take time to listen to me and to care about what I say. Heavenly Father, there are things happening around me right now that I do not understand. Some of these things make me feel weak, helpless and afraid. Even in the midst of this, I know that You are the Lord. I know that the situation is in Your hands, and I trust You. I beseech You for strength, wisdom, stability and structure that I would be able to endure this situation and be able to handle it in a way that would bring glory to Your name. This is my prayer in the matchless, wonderful and compassionate name of Jesus. Amen!”**

***“And then God answered: “Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what’s coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn’t lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It’s on its way. It will come right on time.” Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)***

Yours in Christ, Pastor King