

EXPOSITON OF ISAIAH

Message #62

Isaiah 43:14-28

There was a man who worked for a company who was such a disloyal employee that the company eventually had to let him go. He undermined everything and everybody and so the management decided they would let him go. The company had a legal department and all they were legally required to do was to pay him what they owed him, including his vacation. But in an amazing demonstration of grace, they gave him a severance package that enabled him to live very comfortably for quite awhile. This man did not deserve this severance package, but the company decided, in pure grace, to give it.

This is precisely what God has done and will do for Israel. Israel does not deserve one blessing from God. She has rejected God's Word, God's leading and God's Son. **What God actually owes Israel is His wrath, but what God says He will give to Israel is His grace.**

What is true for Israel nationally is also true with us individually. We do not deserve any blessings of God. We cannot even count the times we have rejected God's Word. What God really owes us is punishment, but what God has given us is His grace.

In this text God informs Israel and us that He will ultimately save her by His amazing sovereign grace, but before He does He will permit her to experience some negative things as a chastisement because she refuses to remember Him and turn to Him.

This text is all about God doing exactly what He says He will do in regard to His own people even though His own people do not deserve it. The primary point of this section is this:

GOD WANTS ISRAEL COMFORTED TO KNOW THAT HE IS GOD AND HE WILL EVENTUALLY FULFILL EVERYTHING HE HAS PROMISED TO HER, NOT BECAUSE SHE DESERVES IT BUT BECAUSE OF HIS AMAZING GRACE.

One of the great proofs that God will ultimately deliver Israel is other predictions He made of other deliverances. God proves that He will do everything He has promised to do for Israel by delivering her from various enemies at various times. The particular power that He stresses here is Babylon, modern day Iraq. This had a near application during the days of Isaiah, but it also has a far-reaching future application in our day.

What is amazing is, at the time Isaiah makes this prediction, Babylon was not even in the picture as a major threat against Israel. The big threat was Assyria. But God is basically saying, I am going to allow Babylon to come up against you and then I am going to deliver you from her and this will prove to you that I can one day deliver you from all your enemies and give you all My Blessings.

There are two main central themes that run through these verses:

THEME #1 – God promises that He will deliver Israel. **43:14-21**

We need to carefully see how God identifies Himself in **verses 14-15**. **These titles connect God to Israel in a very special way**, and if you do not see this you are blind. It is quite clear that God wants Israel to know that He is the commander and chief over all things in the universe. Although we can make some wonderful applications from this passage, it is not about the Church; it is about Israel. You cannot possibly interpret the Bible accurately until you see this. Now the titles that God gives to Himself are titles that prove He has the power to do what He says He will do for Israel.

Title #1 - He is the LORD . **43:14a**

This title means He is Jehovah, Israel’s covenant God, the great “I AM.” The only True God who is capable of doing whatever He wants. I don’t have much use for people who want to quibble about the sovereignty of God. Just His names prove He is an Almighty Sovereign God. He is Jehovah.

Title #2 - He is Israel’s Redeemer . **43:14b**

God is Israel’s Redeemer. This is the title that Isaiah uses some thirteen times: 41:14; **43:14**; 44:6, 24; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7, 26; 54:5, 8; 59:20; 60:16; 63:16. The Redeemer is Jesus Christ. It is staggering to consider that the all powerful God is Israel’s personal God and Redeemer. The tragedy for Israel is that her Redeemer actually came into Jerusalem to save her from her sins and she rejected Him.

Title #3 - He is the Holy One of Israel. **43:14c**

This title is used by Isaiah some twenty-five times. It is a title that contrasts the Holiness of God with the sinfulness of Israel. **This title indicates that one would come who would be Holy who would be capable of putting sinful Israel into a right relationship with God.** That one is Jesus Christ.

Title #4 - He is the Creator of Israel. **43:15a**

Isaiah uses the Hebrew word “bara” meaning God made and created this nation out of nothing. He started with one man, “Abraham,” whom He called from an idolatrous land. He gave him a son, Isaac, and He gave Isaac a son, Jacob, and He changed Jacob’s name to Israel (Gen. 35:10). He literally brought Israel into existence. He planned her, designed her and created her. Israel belongs to God.

Title #5 - He is the King of Israel. **43:15**

J. Vernon McGee said, “Let every anti-Semite take note of this.” God is Israel’s King (*Isaiah*, Thru the Bible, Vol. 3, p. 293). God is never called the “King of the Church,” but He is called “the King of Israel” and “the King of the Jews.” He is called “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” God is a Person and He will reign as a King. **We know from Revelation 19 that this King of Kings and Lord of Lords is none other than Jesus Christ.** This is a reference to the Majestic Messiah who will come to reign.

Now the point of using these titles is to emphasize the fact that this is God speaking to Israel (43:13, 16).

What God says He is going to do is that He will change Babylon the conquerors into Babylon the conquered. Now there is a sense in which this has been partially fulfilled.

What is described in **43:14** is that Babylon was big in shipping, specifically in war ships. She navigated her way up and down the Euphrates and out into the Persian Gulf. God will cause her naval fleet to be annihilated. God said I will punish Babylon for the sake of Israel. He says to Israel, I want you to think back of how I delivered you from the Egyptians (43:16-18). I parted the Sea for you and I extinguished them like a wick on a candle and I will do the same thing again. In Psalm 114 there is a distinct connection between what God did for Israel in Egypt to what He will eventually do for her in the future.

One of the big mistakes we make as people of God is to forget about all we have seen God do in the past, just like verse 18 says. It is true we should not live in the past, but memories of how God has cared for us in the past should prompt us to have a security in the present and in the future.

It is interesting to note that God has so demolished Israel-haters that even though they were once great political powers, they were so demolished by God that they never did rise again to totally dominate Israel. He demolished the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Greece, and then Rome.

What God says in verse 19 is that I am going to do something new for you which you will not even recognize. God says I am going to care for you and provide for you like I did back then. I will wipe out the Babylonian world and will take care of My chosen people (43:19). **Only this time I will not make a way of escape through the sea but through the wilderness.**

God says I will take dry, barren, desert areas and flow water through them for My people (43:19-20). **God's chosen people, God's elected nation is Israel.** The doctrine of election is a Biblical doctrine whether one likes it or not. God is going to do some spectacular things for Israel.

In fact, God says when I do this even the wild animals and beasts will glorify me. There is promised a time when the lions and bears and wolves and tigers and panthers will praise God. There is coming a time when the most vicious animals like jackals, to the most timid animals like owls will all get along and bring glory to God.

Does God have the power to literally change the nature of the wild animal world? Remember Daniel who was thrown into a den of lions? They behaved like quiet kittens and Daniel didn't even have a scratch on him. Based on the authority of God's written Word, there is coming a millennial Kingdom in which Israel and the Promised Land will receive "an extreme home makeover" by God.

THEME #2 – God will deliver Israel completely by His grace for His glory . **43:22-28**

I love something William Kelly said, “Man has failed God in every possible way and that is why God must always do things for His own sake” (*An Exposition of Isaiah*, p. 311).

Now there are **three distinct messages** that God gives to Israel:

Message #1 - God will not do these things because of Israel’s great spirituality . **43:22-24**

There are Jewish rabbis who actually believe and teach that God will one day deliver Israel because she is such a worshipful and religious people connected to Abraham. Nothing could be further from the truth. What God does here is spell out how He sees Israel.

There are five specific conditions Israel finds herself in to this very day:

(Condition #1) - Israel has not called on God. **43:22a**

In Psalm 50:15, God summons Israel to call on Him for help and deliverance. The truth is Israel is not a praying nation today. She may recite a few phrases in Hebrew, but she certainly is not a nation who prays to God through Jesus’ name. There is coming a moment when as a nation she will call on God for help, and she will call on Jesus Christ to deliver her (Matthew 23:39). That time will occur in the Great Tribulation when the Antichrist is on a worldwide rampage to destroy her.

(Condition #2) - Israel has become weary of God. **43:22b**

Israel should have responded to God and taken in His Word. Instead of her acknowledging that God has permitted things to happen to her so she would turn to God, she has become weary of God. For the most part she doesn’t even study His Word anymore; she is weary of that.

(Condition #3) - Israel has not worshipped God with proper sacrifices . **43:23a**

God found no pleasure in the sacrifices that were offered to Him (Isaiah 1:10).

(Condition #4) - Israel has not worshipped God with proper offering . **43:23b**

God called Israel’s offering worthless (Isaiah 1:13).

(Condition #5) - Israel has done nothing but pile up sins . **43:24**

Everything about Israel’s worship is nothing but a compilation and multiplication of sin and transgression. Israel has rejected the forgiveness found in Jesus Christ. She will not admit she even needs His salvation.

Message #2 - God will do these things for Israel out of His pure grace . **43:25**

God does not owe Israel His grace. What God is going to do for Israel is not what she deserves. One commentator said that **Isaiah 43:25** is the pinnacle verse “of God’s grace in the Old Testament.”

(Grace Action #1) - God will wipe out Israel’s sins for His own sake. **43:25a**

(Grace Action #2) - God will not remember Israel’s sins. **43:25b**

John Calvin said take a good look at this verse because any person who looks to their works to save them are deceived by their own hypocrisy. The only chance we have for forgiveness of sins is to look to the goodness and grace of God (*Commentary on Isaiah*, Vol. 8, p. 350).

Message #3 - God calls all sinners to admit they deserve God’s curse and wrath . **43:26-28**

God will permit Israel to be reviled and banned from her land because she refuses to remember her God. God says you are all sinners - from Adam to Abraham to the prophets and priests and teachers. Therefore, I am allowing you to be chastised and scorned.

Dr. Franz Delitzsch said, “Even the history of Abraham was stained with sin, and did not shine in the light of meritorious works, but in that of grace and of faith laying hold of grace” (*Isaiah*, Vol. 7, pp. 200-201).

We would do well to acknowledge that Abraham and the great prophets and teachers of Israel were way above us in status with God, and if they are classified as being sinners and transgressors, then we are far short of them.

Deuteronomy 28:37 says that if Israel did not obey God she would become a horror story and a proverb among all the people of the world, and that is exactly what she has become.

Verse 28 is exactly the condition of Israel to this very day. Her religion is polluted and she is reviled by most people on the earth. But God says this will not be your final state. There is a promised Kingdom that God will give Israel. She will be blessed. She will be forgiven. She will be honored.