

## EXPOSITION OF ISAIAH

Message #63

Isaiah 44:1-8

Not long ago a famous actor died. Before he died he said that it was important that he stay positive and kept believing in himself because if he did that, he could defeat cancer. It didn't work. He stayed positive and kept believing in himself and he died. If your whole life is given to believing in yourself, you are placing your faith in the wrong thing. You cannot control the future, and in many respects you cannot even control the present. But the Scriptures reveal that there is a God who can and does. God wants His people believing in Him and trusting Him. That is what He wants for Israel and that is what He wants for us.

The greatest days for God's people are ahead. But these days ahead are not great because of our greatness, but because of God's greatness. **This text is designed to zap the fear out of God's people.** No matter how intimidating your present situation, if you belong to God, you have nothing to fear.

At the end of chapter 43, God tells Israel that she will experience some negative things. She will be banned and she will be reviled. Ever since the days of Isaiah, those prophetic words have come true. We can see evidence of this verdict even to this day, as Israel is the most despised nation on the face of this earth. But life for her will not always be this way. There will come a day when Israel will shine as the nation of God and there will be no more idolatry in the world. All will worship the true God of the Bible and all will honor Israel.

If you have believed on Jesus Christ you belong to God, and even though you may be a spiritual mess and may be in some emotional, physical or spiritual disaster, you are still His property. You have nothing to fear. You belong to God, a God who is an Almighty God. You will notice that the point of not being afraid shows up two times, **verse 2** and **verse 8**. That point is very clear when you take an honest look at Israel.

**ISRAEL HAS NOTHING TO FEAR FOR THE ONLY GOD WHO HAS CHOSEN HER AND CREATED HER WILL ALWAYS HELP HER AND IN THE FUTURE HE WILL BLESS HER.**

**God's people have nothing to fear because their future is bright!** The conjunction "but now" (**44:1**) that begins chapter 44, sits in sharp contrast to the threats that end chapter 43. It is true that God would permit Israel to experience some very negative things, but He still was her God. In this text, God challenges His people to "listen" to Him (**v. 1**) and hear what He has to "say" (**v. 2**). God does not want His people living in fear of the future. He wants them knowing that they belong to Him and He is the only God who will do great things for His own.

If ever you want a comforting text it is this one. As I understand it, there are three reasons God presents that should prevent God's people from ever being afraid.

**REASON #1** – God does not want Israel to be afraid because of how God views her. **44:1-2b**

When we belong to God, we need to Biblically think in terms of ourselves and our position. We need to see ourselves from God's perspective. There were four ways God viewed Israel:

**Way #1** - Israel is God's servant . **44:1a**

When you look at modern day Israel she doesn't look much like a servant of God. The Hebrew word "servant" implies that Israel is a nation who is a slave of God, a worshipper of God, a minister of God, and an ambassador for God (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 599). What God says to His rebellious nation is I want you to know that one day you will be My servant.

**Way #2** - Israel is God's chosen . **44:1b**

In **verse 1** God tells Israel that He has chosen her and in **verse 2** He repeats it and substitutes the name Jeshurun. This name only appears four times in the Old Testament. Once here and three times in Deuteronomy (32:15; 33:5, 26). William Gesenius says that this Hebrew name was "a tender and loving appellation of the people of Israel." The Hebrew spelling is closely related to the word "uprightness" or "righteous" or "straight" (*Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 375-376). So the point is that God has chosen Israel to be His upright, righteous nation and one day His election and choice will guarantee this reality.

We cannot help but notice how many times God reminds Israel of the fact that He is her Creator and He is the One who has chosen her. She belongs to Him and she did not choose Him.

When you are experiencing some negative things and you certainly know you aren't perfect, it is comforting to know that you have been chosen by God. This apparently becomes a major key to not being afraid concerning the future.

**Way #3** - Israel has been made by God. **44:2a**

The word "made" (asah) means that God prepared and produced and created His nation. The difference between this verb and the next (form) is that this verb stresses more the activity and action of God whereas the next verb stresses more the predestined planning (Mounce, p. 431).

**Way #4** - Israel has been formed by God. **44:2b**

The word "form" (yatsar) means that God put Israel together as an artist who thought about, planned and formed His creation. He formed it in His mind, planned it, predestined it, and created it (*Ibid.*, p. 361). When God says He formed her in the womb, He is basically saying, I am Almighty God who actually conceived, planned and formed you and brought you into existence. This describes a prenatal condition. Long before Israel was even born, it was God who conceived the plan and then carried out His plan.

God says to His people you have nothing to fear when you consider that I am the One who made you and designed you and predestined you to be Mine. When you are part of God's family your future is bright.

**REASON #2** – God does not want Israel to be afraid because of what God will do. **44:2c-5**

There are five amazing promises that God makes to Israel in these verses:

**Promise #1** - Israel will always be helped by God. **44:2c**

According to Gesenius, this word “help” (azar) means to help or aid in the sense of surrounding and defending as an ally in war (p. 619).

Israel will always survive because of her special connection to God. God will always help take care of Israel.

**Promise #2** - Israel will be physically blessed by God. **44:3a**

God will pour water on a dry land. Many passages teach God will eventually turn Israel’s Promised Land into the most beautiful land in the world.

**Promise #3** - Israel will be spiritually blessed by God. **44:3b**

God will not only pour out water on the land, but His Spirit on His people. God will pour His Spirit on Israel’s descendants. This eschatological event is predicted to occur when the people have returned to their land (Ezekiel 36:24, 27-35; 37:6, 14; Joel 2:25-29; Zechariah 12:10). Edward Young said, “Salvation by grace stands out in this verse” (*The Book of Isaiah*, Vol. 3, p. 166).

The Apostle Peter referred to this episode to say that it was that which was similar to the beginning of the Church, when God poured out His Spirit on the Church thus beginning the Church Age. The demonstrative pronoun “this” (Acts 2:16) is anarthrous (without article) which means this is the character and quality of the kind of thing Joel spoke of; it is not the specific event. There are some very misguided people who do not see the distinctions between Israel and the Church. So they exegetically butcher the O.T. passages and try to make them fit into Acts 2.

**But when you compare Acts 2:13ff with what is actually predicted here and in Ezekiel, Joel and Zechariah, there are some major differences.** **First**, in Joel 2:30-31 this will happen when God is doing spectacular cosmological things on earth and in heaven, which are predicted to occur when Jesus Christ returns. **Second**, Joel predicts that God will pour out His Spirit on all of mankind (Joel 2:28) and in Acts 2:41 the number of people on whom God poured out His Spirit was about 3000. **Third**, the nation Israel will be in her land and it will blossom like a Garden of Eden (Ezekiel 36:35; 37:14)). **Fourth**, when God pours out His Spirit, all the nations of the world will honor Israel (Ezekiel 36:36). **Fifth**, when God pours out His Spirit, the entire nation will mourn over what happened the first time to Jesus Christ (Zechariah 12:10). In fact, we may observe from Zechariah that these people of the law will become people of grace. Israel will one day fully grasp the grace of God in Jesus Christ. **None of these things have yet happened to Israel.**

What is predicted here by Isaiah is that there is coming a special prophetic moment for Israel when God will pour out His Spirit on every one in the nation.

**By virtue of the fact that Isaiah says it would be to “your descendants” (44:3), we know it was futuristic . By virtue of the fact that Jesus spoke of this very event (Matt. 24:29-31), we also know that this will happen when Jesus Christ returns to earth a second time.**

God is going to preserve Israel and eventually take her into her land and pour out His Spirit on all who are there. This will be a national moment of glory for the entire nation.

**Promise #4** - Israel will be multiplied by God. **44:3c-4**

Once God has redeemed Israel nationally, He will multiply her numerically. Abundant growth and amazing growth will come upon Israel by the hand of God.

**Promise #5** - Israel will be honored by God and Israel will honor God. **44:5**

When God does these things, the Jews will be excited to share the fact that they are Jewish.

At this time every Jew will be broadcasting the fact that he is a Jew. No Jew will try to hide or be ashamed to testify of their Jewish heritage. The entire world will honor every Jew because every Jew will be honored by God.

**REASON #3** – God does not want Israel to be afraid because of who God is. **44:6-8**

There are nine wonderful realities that God presents to His people that should take away fear.

**Reality #1** - God is King of Israel. **44:6a**

There will come a theocratic Ruler, a real, literal King who will rule over the world and will rule from Jerusalem. This King of Kings is none other than Jesus Christ.

**Reality #2** - God is the Redeemer of Israel. **44:6b**

Israel does not only need a King, she needs a Redeemer who can save her from her sins. Her Redeemer and ours is Jesus Christ. One of the biggest problems with Israel today and with so many individuals today is that they do not admit they need a Redeemer.

**Reality #3** - God is the LORD of hosts . **44:6c**

God is the God who controls everything in heaven and on earth.

**Reality #4** - God is the I Am who is the first and last of everything. **44:6d**

God is the first cause of everything and He will be the last of everything.

**Reality #5** - God is the only God. **44:6e**

There is no God but the God of the Bible and the God of the Bible is the God of Israel.  
There is none beside Him.

**Reality #6** - God is a noncomparable God. **44:7a**

There is no God like God. The emphasis of the Hebrew “like” means there is nothing whatsoever that corresponds or is like God (*Ibid.*, p. 401).

**Reality #7** - God is the only prophecy fulfilling God. **44:7b**

God says I challenge any who can rehearse their plan from beginning to end other than Me. God wrote His plan down for Israel in His Word of exactly what He intends to do and He will do it. Let’s see any religious or political leader do that.

Many claim they have discovered their own “god,” but God says no other but Me can plan, create, design, and carry out the future. No other Being but Me can proclaim and predict the future and then control all events so that everything happens just as I say it will.

God challenges any created thing to produce evidence of how they created a nation and made a plan for a nation and protected the nation and then fulfilled everything planned. Truth is, only God can do this.

**Reality #8** - God has declared Israel will be His witness. **44:8a**

God’s sovereign plan is designed to take Israel into her land and bless her and her land. Israel will become a witness for Almighty God.

There is no one else who can accomplish this but God.

**Reality #9** - God has declared that He is the only Rock. **44:8b**

God is Israel’s Rock and He is ours. There is no other God on whom you may lean except the God of the Bible. God, Himself, says there is no other God to trust who can actually make His people’s future bright.

God asks the question is there any other Rock? The answer from God is “I know of none.”

This is the God of all eternity telling us there is no other Rock but Him. Do you understand this point? There is no other Being you can lean on for your salvation than Jesus Christ. If you lean on Jesus Christ, you have nothing to fear.