

Isaiah Chapter 43

Verses 1-13: In spite of Israel's deliberate rejection of the Lord as her rightful king, God reassures them, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee." The theme of redemption appears 22 times in the Servant passages of the Book of Isaiah.

It indicates a redemption from physical and spiritual bondage as well as the eschatological redemption yet to come (43:5-7; 44:22; 49:16-17). In addition to redeeming Israel, God also announces that "all the nations" (Gentiles), will be gathered to Him for salvation.

Isaiah 43:1 "But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called [thee] by thy name; thou [art] mine."

"Formed": The only explanation for the ongoing existence of the nation of Israel is God's sovereign grace, which brought her into existence from nothing (Deut. 7:6-11), and sustains her. Since she was God's creation, she could find comfort in knowing that no one or nothing can destroy her, not even her own wickedness (43:18-25; Romans 11:1-2, 25-27).

"Jacob ... Israel": This double designation for God's chosen nation is used by Isaiah 21 times (16 of them in chapters 40-49). This speaks of the Lord's special attachment to Abraham's physical seed.

"Fear not": The Lord repeated His word, relieving Israel's fear (35:4; 41:10, 13-14; compare 7:4).

"Redeemed": God's redemption of His people from exile is not to be complete until His Servant returns to reign over the faithful remnant in the land of Israel who have believed on Jesus Christ. The limited return from Babylon only typified the final return.

"Israel" means prince of God, so you can easily see, they are called of His name. The creation always belongs to its Creator. Creator God ("Elohim"), as we have learned in other lessons, is the Word of God. The first chapter of John is definite about that.

Jacob, in the verse above, means the physical house of Israel. God has not forgotten His people and the Scripture here, shows that God is their Deliverer.

Isaiah 43:2 " When thou passest through the waters, I [will be] with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

"Waters ... rivers ... fire ... flame": Many perils symbolized by these words have confronted the Israelites through the centuries and will continue to do so until the nation's final redemption, but the Lord promises the nation's survival through them all.

The passage of Moses' and Joshua's generations through the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21-22), and the Jordan River (Joshua 3:14-17), and the preservation of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the fiery furnace, illustrate His care for Israel.

We know that God had brought them through the water at the Red Sea, on their flight from Egypt. We also know that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were saved in the fire of the furnace, when they refused to turn against God.

God was their very present help in trouble. He is our help, as well. Tribulation comes to all of God's people to make them strong. He is there to strengthen us in our trouble.

Isaiah 43:3 "For I [am] the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt [for] thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee."

God is by nature a Savior (verse 11), both temporally and eternally. God delivered Israel from Egypt and will deliver her from Babylon and all future exiles, as well as bring her to spiritual salvation (Zech. 12:10 – 13:1; Romans 11:25-27).

“Ethiopia ... Seba”: A country either in southern Arabia or across the Red Sea in northeast Africa, near Cush, or Ethiopia. Egypt, Cush and Seba became a vicarious compensation so that God could spare Israel. “Sabians” is another name for the inhabitants of Seba (45:14).

God had spoken to Moses in the wilderness and called Himself "I AM". This tells us that God is the God of the present, whenever that present is. He is everlasting, and unchangeable. He was God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and yet, He is the LORD our God today.

He is the Self-existent, or Eternal One. The Holy One of Israel, or Savior, is speaking of the One we know as Jesus. We have mentioned before that "Jesus" means Savior. God would have completely destroyed Egypt, if they had not let His people go.

Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba were not too high a price to pay for God's people.

Isaiah 43:4 "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life."

We know from our study of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land, that God truly allowed their enemies to be destroyed before them. God had a plan for His people, and He left nothing undone to accomplish His plans.

Many lands, they went through on the way to the Promised Land, were inhabited by ungodly people. God allowed them to be overthrown to help His people. As long as Israel was faithful to God, He destroyed their enemies before them.

Isaiah 43:5-6 "Fear not: for I [am] with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;" "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;"

“East ... West ... North ... South ... ends of the earth”: The Lord will regather to the land of Israel the faithful remnant of His people from their worldwide dispersion in conjunction with the institution of the Messiah’s kingdom on earth (11:12).

Just as they had been delivered from Egypt, they would be delivered from Babylonian captivity. They may have wandered away from God and gotten themselves in a predicament, but God loves them and will come back and help them. He will bring them back to their land of promise.

This prophecy is not only for their immediate future, but looks on down into time when they are scattered all over the world, and God brings them home to start His new nation, Israel. This started in 1948.

Isaiah 43:7 "[Even] every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."

“Called by my name ... created him for my glory”: The faithful remnant of Israel will bear the Lord’s name and exist for one primary purpose: to glorify Him (44:23).

God is explaining to them in this, that they are not only His family, but His creation, as well. He created them for a purpose. He has put His name on them. Christians bear the name of Christ. This is what this is saying. Israel, whether physical, or spiritual, bears the name of their God.

We mentioned early on in this lesson that Israel means "prince of God". He formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed the breath of life into him. Our very life and breath is in Him.

Isaiah 43:8 "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears."

“Blind ... have eyes ... deaf ... have ears”: Restored Israel will have their spiritual eyesight and hearing restored. They have been blinded by sin, but their eyes and ears of understanding are opened in the knowledge of God.

Isaiah 43:9 "Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, [It is] truth."

“Their witnesses”: Who among the idolatrous soothsayers could predict Cyrus would deliver Israel from Babylon, or make prophecies of any kind that already were fulfilled? The gods of the nations showed no ability to reveal accurately “the former events” as the Lord had. So the nations had no witnesses to accredit that their gods could speak prophetic truth.

This is just saying that the world has nothing to offer. There is no true knowledge in the world and its system. There is no man justified by the works of his hands.

Psalm 143:2 "And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified."

Justification is not even in keeping the law. Justification comes through faith in God.

Galatians 2:16 "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

The only truth is in God.

Isaiah 43:10 "Ye [are] my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I [am] he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me."

"You are my witnesses ... my servant": Israel's God repeatedly predicted the future accurately, enabling Israel to witness to His truthful accuracy (verse 13), and thus the reality that He was the only eternal, living God. This witnessing they will do again in the millennial kingdom (Joel 2:28-32).

This is expressing the eternity of God. He is "Alpha and Omega", "The Beginning and the End". There is none before Him, or after Him. Israel was the witness to the whole world, of the One True God. Christians are the witness to the world of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is Spirit. The work that must be done on the earth for God is work that is done by the followers of God. We are the hands for God. We are to serve Him here on the earth. We carry His message to the world. Our witness must be of the Father and the Son.

We Christians, are like an ambassador for Christ. We witness to the Truth. We witness of Christ raised from the dead. This does not mean that it does away with the law that the physical house of Israel witnesses to. It is an explanation of the fulfillment of the law in Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 43:11 "I, [even] I, [am] the LORD; and beside me [there is] no savior."

The best way to explain this is with another Scripture.

1 Timothy 4:10 "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe."

God has made salvation available to all mankind, one at a time. God will save each person who believes.

Romans 10:9 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Man cannot save himself. Only God can save man.

Isaiah 43:12 "I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when [there was] no strange [god] among you: therefore ye [are] my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I [am] God."

“Declared and have saved and I have showed”: As in the deliverance from Egypt (Exodus chapters 3 and 4), God declared in advance how He would redeem Israel from their captivity. Then there came the actual events of the saving process, followed by the Lord’s proclamation of that deliverance by way of reminder. The people, on the basis of such omniscience and omnipotence, gave testimony to the true and only living God.

The one thing the LORD will not tolerate is other gods. An idol is nothing. It cannot save anyone. God had proved over and over to these Israelites that He alone was God.

One of the best examples of this was when Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal. Their god did not devour the sacrifice at all. God devoured the sacrifice with fire, devoured even the water surrounding the sacrifice, and destroyed hundreds of Baal's prophets. Elijah had told the people, they must choose that day who they would serve. There was no question, God is the only God.

The following Scripture should be the way all Christians should answer this question.

Joshua 24:15 "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that [were] on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

“As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD”.

Isaiah 43:13 "Yea, before the day [was] I [am] he; and [there is] none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?"

Before the first day of creation when time began and throughout all periods of history, God exists and manifests His will and purpose.

“None ... my hand”: The Hebrew behind this clause is identical with the comparable clause (in Deut. 32:39). God’s actions are irreversible and can never end in frustration.

God does not have to get anyone's permission to "let Him". He does as He wishes. Satan has just as much power as God allows him. He is no match for the LORD. Let us look at what Jesus said about this.

John 10:29 "My Father, which gave [them] me, is greater than all; and no [man] is able to pluck [them] out of my Father's hand."

Isaiah Chapter 43 Questions

1. Why were they not to fear in verse 1?
2. What does "Israel" mean?
3. The creation always belongs to its _____.
4. Who is Creator God?
5. Who is meant by speaking of Jacob?
6. Who is the Deliverer?
7. When had the Israelites been saved passing through the water?
8. Who were good examples of being saved in the fire?
9. Why do God's people suffer tribulation?
10. Who had God called Himself, when He spoke to Moses?
11. What does that name tell us about God?
12. What are some other names that describe God?
13. The name "Jesus" means _____.
14. As long as Israel remained _____ to God, He destroyed their enemies.
15. Just as they had been delivered from Egypt, they would be delivered from _____ captivity.
16. When was the prophecy of them returning to their homeland fulfilled in our time?
17. Why had God created them?
18. Whose name do the Christians bear?
19. God made man from the _____ of the earth, and _____ the _____ of life into him.
20. What type of blindness is verse 8 speaking of?
21. Who is justified by the works of his own hands?
22. What is verse 10 expressing about God?
23. What must our witness be of?
24. What happened when Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to prove their god.

25. What did Joshua say that should be our statement, as well.