

Isaiah 43 • The Coming Redemption of Israel

Introduction

It's truly amazing to try and count the number of times that Israel strayed from God and was brought back into a right relationship with Him, whether during the period of the judges, the kings, or until Christ's First Coming. Over and over and over again, God adhered to a pattern of judgment, grace, and redemption which is once again explained through Isaiah as it relates not just to historical Babylon, but to the future iterations or "types" of Babylon to follow. Israel's chance for redemption did not end with its rejection of Christ and His acceptance by Gentiles, but will experience one final, ultimate fulfillment in the End Times. What happened historically in Isaiah's time repeats itself throughout history and is due to happen one last time again.

¹But now, thus says the Lord, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!"
²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you.
³For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place.
⁴Since you are precious in My sight, Since you are honored and I love you, I will give other men in your place and other peoples in exchange for your life.
⁵Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, And gather you from the west.
⁶I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not hold them back.'
Bring My sons from afar And My daughters from the ends of the earth,
⁷Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made."

[Read v.1-7]

Q: What are the 3 things God has done for Israel according to v.1?

- "formed you"
- "redeemed you"
- "called you by name"

It is the complete, biblical picture of salvation that includes the past, present, and future combined into God's plan of redemption. His calling is unique, yet tied to His will for them to carry out His work and ways.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10

Q: What do the references to water and fire in v.2 represent?

A: Waters generally refer to persecutions from men, fire to personal afflictions in the course of this life. God's people are not exempt from experiencing these things, but protected in the course of them.

[Note: We know that Babylon as a biblical entity occurs again and again throughout Scripture, that the original, historic Babylon teaches about a repeated pattern throughout Jewish history until its final fulfillment in the Last Days. A possible interpretation of v.2 is that "the waters" represents the Egyptians, "the rivers" the Babylonians, "the fire" the Greeks, and "the flame" the Romans as this pattern repeated itself.]

Q: What are the words which connect v.1 and v.3 to solidify the entire opening message that regardless of earthly circumstances, Israel is safe and protected by God?

A: "Redeemed" (v.1) and "ransom" (v.3). The literal Hebrew meaning of the word "redeemed" means "to ransom by a price paid in lieu of captives". This is the very picture of what Christ did on the cross for us, paying our ransom so that we would no longer be captives to sin.

Q: How is it possible that Egypt and the others are given by God in Israel's place?

- First, bear in mind that Seba is descended from Cush, and Cush at times has been part of the Egyptian empire; therefore they can be thought of as a single entity.
- Secondly, this was the essential choice of the Exodus: Egypt or Israel? God obviously chose Israel.
- Thirdly, this occurs again in history with invasions by the likes of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans. They're part of the pattern

surrounding Israel that is repeated in kind.

- Lastly, this occurs again in the End Times, when these nations are once again overrun by the same world power that rises up against Israel in the final, ultimate fulfillment of these things.

Q: What is God's motivation? Why does He say that He will do this on Israel's behalf?

A: There are 3 reasons given in v.4:

- "you are precious in My sight"
- "you are honored"
- "I love you"

God's communication of these things is supposed to alleviate Israel's fears of the circumstances, knowing that He is working for their good.

Q: What action will God undertake which will act as proof of His affection for Israel?

A: According to v.6, He will return them to the land of Israel from wherever they have been dispersed throughout the earth. (Note how this has happened more than once and is again a recurring element of the overall pattern.)

Q: What is intimated in v.7 to reveal to us God's overall, combined goals for these actions?

A: For His name and glory.

Point: What began here has repeated itself throughout history, and has a final fulfillment to come in the End Times. God is not through with Israel yet. What happened then will happen again.

⁸Bring out the people who are blind, even though they have eyes,

And the deaf, even though they have ears.

⁹All the nations have gathered together

So that the peoples may be assembled.

Who among them can declare this

And proclaim to us the former things?

Let them present their witnesses that they may be justified,

Or let them hear and say, "It is true."

¹⁰"You are My witnesses," declares the LORD,

"And My servant whom I have chosen,

So that you may know and believe Me

And understand that I am He.

Before Me there was no God formed,

And there will be none after Me.

¹¹I, even I, am the LORD,

And there is no savior besides Me.

¹²It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed,

And there was no strange god among you;

So you are My witnesses," declares the LORD,

"And I am God.

¹³Even from eternity I am He,

And there is none who can deliver out of

[Read v.8-13]

Q: What are the 2 basic groups that are being compared and contrasted in these verses?

A: Those who cling to the One True God, and those who cling to false gods.

Q: Of what kind of formal "meeting" or venue does the language used in these verses speak of?

A: The references to "present their witnesses" and "let them hear" are legal terms describing, if possible, a courtroom-type of hearing wherein every nation is gathered together at the same time to hear and provide evidence for their god.

Q: What is the specific role of Israel within this context?

A: "You are My witnesses" (v.10 & 12). Their testimony as outlined here highlights God's divinity, sovereignty, salvation, and power over every entity real or imagined. God's people are supposed to be a stark contrast in both knowledge and faith concerning spiritual matters, not blind or deaf as the non-Believers are described.

Q: What is the repeated theme in these verses that teaches about the relationship of God to all peoples on the earth?

A: The repeated theme is salvation.

- "...there is no savior besides Me..." (v.11)
- "...I...have...saved..." (v.12)
- "...there is none who can deliver out of My hand..." (v.13)

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My hand;
I act and who can reverse it?"

¹⁴Thus says the LORD your Redeemer, the
Holy One of Israel,

"For your sake I have sent to Babylon,
And will bring them all down as
fugitives,

Even the Chaldeans, into the ships in
which they rejoice.

¹⁵I am the LORD, your Holy One,
The Creator of Israel, your King."

¹⁶Thus says the LORD,

Who makes a way through the sea

And a path through the mighty waters,

¹⁷Who brings forth the chariot and the
horse,

The army and the mighty man

(They will lie down together and not rise
again;

They have been quenched and
extinguished like a wick):

¹⁸"Do not call to mind the former things,
Or ponder things of the past.

¹⁹Behold, I will do something new,
Now it will spring forth;

Will you not be aware of it?

I will even make a roadway in the
wilderness,

Rivers in the desert.

²⁰The beasts of the field will glorify Me,
The jackals and the ostriches,

Because I have given waters in the
wilderness

And rivers in the desert,

To give drink to My chosen people.

²¹The people whom I formed for Myself
Will declare My praise.

Point: God's opening message to Israel in v.1-7 of His plan of redemption for Israel is expanded here to encompass everyone. There is no salvation for **ANYONE** apart from it being effected by God and God alone.

[Read v.14-21]

Q: What is God promising to do in v.14?

A: He's promising judgment on Babylon. They were very proud of ships which they used to navigate the Tigris and Euphrates to the Persian Gulf, which they tried to escape in when the Medo-Persian Empire overthrew them. It's a kind of turnaround on the fact that they trusted in their own strength to save them.

Q: Why is God alluding to what He did to Egypt in v.17-18?

A: It's encouragement that just as He intervened to save them from the Egyptians by providing a miracle crossing of the sea and destruction of the pursuing army, so God will again provide like protection and salvation of Israel returning out of Babylon to Israel. So it will also be in its final fulfillment in the Last Days.

Q: Of what are v.18-21 speaking? What does it describe?

A: It speaks of spiritual revival not just for Israel alone, but for the rest of the world as well. Just as Israel was once guided across the wilderness from Egypt to the Promised Land, so they will be guided in their return to same, but with an even greater outpouring of God's Spirit. The beasts represent the Gentiles who previously had no understanding of how to be reconciled to God.

This probably speaks of the spiritual revivals which accompanied Israel's historic returns to God after every major invasion/captivity, to the advent of Christ's First Coming, and to the spiritual revival that is repeatedly prophesied in conjunction with Christ's Second Coming.

Point: God's plan of salvation – while giving a primary role to Israel – is for all mankind.

Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!
Romans 11:12

²²“Yet you have not called on Me, O Jacob;
But you have become weary of Me, O Israel.
²³You have not brought to Me the sheep of your burnt offerings,
Nor have you honored Me with your sacrifices.
I have not burdened you with offerings,
Nor wearied you with incense.
²⁴You have bought Me not sweet cane with money,
Nor have you filled Me with the fat of your sacrifices;
Rather you have burdened Me with your sins,
You have wearied Me with your iniquities.

[Read v.22-24]

Q: Just as there is a repeated pattern of judgment and restoration, what other part of this repeating legacy is being described here?

A: Israel returns to God for a time, but then slips back into a sinful lifestyle. Rather than being obedient to the Law and fulfilling it from a right and loving heart, their sin pollutes and destroys their relationship with Him. Historically, they repeat this behavior, and this is how they will treat Christ at His First Coming as well.

“You also say, ‘My, how tiresome it is!’ And you disdainfully sniff at it,” says the LORD of hosts, “and you bring what was taken by robbery and what is lame or sick; so you bring the offering! Should I receive that from your hand?” says the LORD.

Malachi 1:13

Point: While there is a “one-time” component to initially coming to God, the biblical definition of salvation is adhering to and walking in God’s ways, forsaking the sin of the old life for obedience to the new. What was initiated has to be carried out each and every day going forward.

²⁵“I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake,
And I will not remember your sins.
²⁶Put Me in remembrance, let us argue our case together;
State your cause, that you may be proved right.
²⁷Your first forefather sinned,
And your spokesmen have transgressed against Me.
²⁸So I will pollute the princes of the sanctuary,
And I will consign Jacob to the ban and Israel to revilement.

[Read v.25-28]

Q: How does THIS legal proceeding or court case compare to the previous one in v.8-13?

A: This is exclusively limited to His people in regard to their personal behavior. If they would return to God, He would be their Advocate; but if they will not, they will be convicted for their sins.

Q: How has this come true historically? Where does this leave Israel today?

A: Historically they have been consigned “to the ban” at various times, both during Isaiah’s time and in repeated instances thereafter. Where it leaves Israel at today is in preparation for a final redemption. They have returned to the land, but have yet to return en masse to Christ. There is a final work of redemption yet to come both **TO** Israel and through them to the world as outlined in End Times Scripture.

Overall Application

- *How are you doing with your own salvation? Are you continuing to move away from the old life of sin or sometimes slipping back into it? Do you see God’s desire for you to maintain an obedient relationship with Him?*
- *How does the fact that God’s overall plan for all mankind is His salvation motivate your desire to share the Gospel? Do you see His will that it be shared with everyone at every opportunity?*
- *When it comes to understanding “the signs of the times”, do you see that Israel merely returning to the land is not the “event” itself? The greater sign is Israel’s spiritual revival, it’s final fulfillment in accepting Jesus as Messiah.*