

EXPOSITION OF ISAIAH

Message #61

Isaiah 43:1-13

Last time we saw God was angry with Israel and because of that He is the One responsible for all of the negative things that have hit her. In **chapter 43**, God changes His message, which starts with the contrasting conjunction “but now.” But now in contrast to the negatives, let Me tell you some wonderful positives. There is great future hope for Israel. What God says in these verses is this:

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS IN THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL SHE DOES NOT NEED TO FEAR BECAUSE SHE BELONGS TO GOD, AND ONE DAY HE WILL FULFILL EVERY PROMISE HE HAS MADE TO HER.

There are some wonderful things for us to see in this text, but let us not ever forget this is about Israel. In fact, thirteen times in Isaiah 40-49, God uses the double titles “Jacob” and “Israel” to make this very point. It is absolutely true that what God does for Israel nationally is applicable to what God does for us individually. However, let us never forget the importance of Israel for God has not ever forgotten about her.

As a nation, Israel has a special relationship to God like no other nation. This is an encouraging text for Israel and there are six encouraging messages presented to her.

ENCOURAGEMENT #1 – God has created Israel. **43:1**

In the context of this theme, there are six wonderful blessings God spells out for Israel:

Wonderful Blessing #1 - God has created Israel. **43:1a**

The Hebrew word is “bara” (Genesis 1:1) which means God has made something from nothing.

Wonderful Blessing #2 - God has formed Israel. **43:1b**

The Hebrew is “yatsar” which means God has predestined, planned, formed, designed, and made Israel.

Wonderful Blessing #3 - God has redeemed Israel. **43:1c**

The Hebrew is “gaal” which means God has taken a sin-stained nation and paid the legal price for her so she is perfectly clean. This would remind Israel how God delivered her from the Egyptians when she put the blood of the lamb on the doorpost. It will be the Lamb of God who will redeem Israel.

Wonderful Blessing #4 - God has called Israel. **43:1d**

The Hebrew word is “qara” and has to do with God calling Israel as His nation and calling them into a special relationship with Him.

Wonderful Blessing #5 - God has named Israel. **43:1e**

God took a sad specimen of an individual whose name was Jacob, which means “crooked,” and He made a nation out of him and called him “Israel.”

Wonderful Blessing #6 - God possesses Israel. **43:1f**

Here is one of the great blessings of God for Israel - “you are Mine.” All nations of the world had better take note of this. Israel belongs to God. Any who demean her or hurt her or attempt to destroy her will discover God will curse them and ultimately destroy them.

ENCOURAGEMENT #2 – God will protect Israel. **43:2**

Let us hear someone explain how it is that Israel continues to exist when so many powers have tried to destroy her. There is only one answer - **God has protected her**. There are two main protective promises given by God to Israel:

Promise #1 - When Israel passes through waters God will protect her. **43:2a**

This literally was true when God parted the Red Sea to get His nation out of Egypt, and when God parted the Jordan River to get His nation into their promised land. God does not do this for any other nation.

Here is a great truth given by God to His people; when you get into deep, deep waters, when you think you are going to drown, you will discover God will be with His people and will protect them.

Promise #2 - When Israel passes through fire God will protect her. **43:2b**

One of the great illustrations of the literalness of this is Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They literally were thrown into a blazing furnace of fire by Nebuchadnezzar and weren't even singed and didn't even smell like smoke (Daniel 3:19-30). God says I have protected my nation all of these years.

The combination of the “water” and “fire” imagery picture is one that incorporates every kind of danger one could ever face in the world, including literal water and fire (Psalms 32:6; 42:7; 124:4). What God is saying is that I will always protect My nation no matter what sorrows or afflictions they may face.

No power will ever be able to eliminate Israel.

ENCOURAGEMENT #3 – God is the God of Israel. 43:3-4

In Hebrew, the personal pronoun “I” appears 36 times in this chapter of only 28 verses. This is a chapter in which God exalts Himself. In fact, Harry Bultema said this chapter could fittingly be called the “I Chapter” in which God glorifies Himself (*Commentary On Isaiah*, p. 413). **Israel’s past, present and future history is dominated by God.**

There are six wonderful relationships that God has with Israel, which are clearly spelled out in these verses:

Relationship #1 - God is Israel’s God. 43:3a

Notice the names of God that clearly connect to Israel, “I am the LORD” (Jehovah) and “God” (Elohim). God is the all powerful, self-existing covenant God of Israel, who can do whatever He wants (“I am LORD”). He is also the all powerful plural God comprised of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (“God”). Now what this specifically means is that the entire Godhead with all of its power is “Israel’s God.”

Relationship #2 - God is Israel’s Holy One. 43:3b

The Holy One of Israel is Jesus Christ.

Relationship #3 - God is Israel’s Savior. 43:3c

The Savior of Israel is Jesus Christ.

Relationship #4 - God considers Israel to be precious. 43:4a

The word “precious” (yaqar) means that God views Israel as His most highly esteemed, honored, magnificent nation who is valued by Him at the highest and heaviest level (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 363).

Relationship #5 - God honors Israel. 43:4b

The word “honor” (kabad) is in the niphil stem which means God will cause Israel in and of itself to be seen as the most honored and majestic and abundant nation in the world. The niphil stem means that she will be involved in the action and in the results of the action. Israel will see this, she will participate in this, and so will the whole world.

Relationship #6 - God loves Israel. 43:4c

The word “love” (ahab) is one that means God desires and breathes after Israel (*Ibid.*, p. 15-16). He loves this nation as no other nation. J. Vernon McGee said we cannot even “imagine how much God loves Israel” (*Isaiah*, Vol. 3, p. 292).

ENCOURAGEMENT #4 – God will eliminate Israel’s enemies. **43:3-4**

God says three specific Arab countries are Israel’s “ransom.” Now this has to do with what God is going to do in the future. First of all, God did literally give these three countries to Cyrus’ son as a reward for freeing His people. But second, when Jesus Christ returns, He is going to destroy many nations to make a place for His people in their land.

It is more than just a coincidence that many of Israel’s enemies are Arabs. Right here we learn something important. The reason why God has permitted the Arab world to be such a nuisance to Israel is to get her into a right relationship with Him; and when He has done that He will wipe them out and she will be in her land.

God sometimes will permit enemies to cross our paths in order to help us draw closer to Him. But you may know this if you are God’s property; eventually those enemies that did you harm will be dealt with severely.

ENCOURAGEMENT #5 – God will regather Israel. **43:5-7**

The restoration that God is predicting here is wider than just a restoration of the Babylonian captivity. God is predicting a time when He will regather Israel from all corners of the world.

One of the major O.T. themes that shows up over and over again is the fact that one day God will regather Israel and take her into her Promised Land (Jeremiah 31:10; Ezekiel 34:11-14). You cannot avoid this point if you are honest with the Bible.

When Jesus Christ was here, He said that when He comes the second time, He will regather Israel from all around the world (Matthew 24:29-31).

J. Vernon McGee said you better hear the Word of the Lord, you liberals and you amillennialists and you postmillennialists and even some premillennialists who are starting to question whether or not God is done with Israel. He is not. You have His word on it. I guarantee you He will regather Israel and give her every inch of the Promised Land.

ENCOURAGEMENT #6 – God will honor Israel. **43:8-13**

Notice in **verse 7** God again stresses that He created, and formed, and made Israel and then in **verse 8** He calls Israel a nation that has been “blind” and “deaf.” Dr. Delitsch really captured this when he said the reason God does this for Israel is to help them realize the “riches of grace” (Keil-Delitsch, *Isaiah*, Vol. 7, p. 192).

Israel will eventually be God’s witness to the entire world. God in His grace will grab hold of His blind and deaf nation and show her to be His prized nation. He will call all world powers to call their witnesses into His courtroom to display their saving power and they won’t be able to do it. God will call one witness, Israel.

Can you imagine the day when God calls the Arab world to present their evidence that Mohammed and Allah could justify them? Can you imagine the day when God calls China and Japan to present their case of their religion's ability to justify? God will call one witness - Israel. He will use Israel as a statement that He is the only God who can give justification.

God will take a nation that was blinded and deaf to the things of God and bring her before all the nations of the world, and they will stand in total awe of the fact that what God promised to do for Israel, He did do (**43:8-9**). She will be a witness to the whole world. Every nation will admit "it was all true" what God promised He would do for Israel, He did do.

Israel will be seen as God's witnesses and as His chosen servant (**43:10a**). The entire nation will finally realize and understand that He is her God and He is her Savior (**43:10b-11**). He was the God who preserved her and protected her. This whole nation will be worshipping Jesus Christ. She will finally get it and she will finally realize Jesus Christ was her Savior and there is no other.

God started a plan with Abraham from eternity past and He will bring it all to pass. What He declared for Israel will be, and there is no one who can reverse His plan (**43:12-13**).

There is only one true God who created you, formed you, and called you. There is only one true God who can redeem you. This God has protected you all of these years whether or not you have even recognized this. This God is a God who will one day make a statement with His elect. If you have never believed on Jesus Christ, do it today because once you have believed, you are guaranteed justification.