

Isaiah 44-45

Bible Study

Review

Chapter 42—Continues to focus on the future—well beyond Isaiah's day
Focus begins on the Messiah/Deliverer: some verses describe His 1st coming, some His 2nd coming

Two 'My Servants' in chapter 42:

- 1) Christ who fulfilled the will of the Father completely
- 2) Israel who did not fulfill the will of the Father

Chapter ends with a call for Israel to listen
Because of refusing to obey—will go through a time of trouble

Chapter 43—God is Israel's redeemer (Primarily end time)
Even though Israel disobeyed so long, after going through a time of trouble He will help them
They will be gathered from the lands where they are scattered

Ends with a description of Israel's disobedience through the ages
Will go through a time of judgment because of their sins

Review
continued

22 “But you have not called upon Me, O Jacob; And you have been weary of Me, O Israel.

24 You have bought Me no sweet cane with money, Nor have you satisfied Me with the fat of your sacrifices; But you have burdened Me with your sins, You have wearied Me with your iniquities

28 Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary; I will give Jacob to the curse, And Israel to reproaches

“I will give Jacob to the curse”—the nation given over to punishment for their disobedience
(Jacob’s trouble)

Chapter 44 begins with God’s mercy and forgiveness after Israel turns to him in repentance...after the time of trouble



Chapter 44

Theme: Israel's redeemer
Continued from Ch.43—Ch. 44: 5

1 “Yet hear me now, O Jacob My servant, And Israel whom I have chosen.

2 Thus says the Lord who made you And formed you from the womb, who will help you: ‘Fear not, O Jacob My servant; And you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.

v. 1 “My servant” (Jacob/Israel)

- Israel the servant nation—God had chosen to be the right example to the other nations
 - It will be fulfilled in the future (after time of trouble)

v. 2 “fear not”—God is in control of events

v. 2 “Jeshurun”—means ‘upright one’: a synonym for Israel (Deut. 32: 15; 33: 5, 26)

- Symbolizes a cleansed, a purified people (future)

Israel will be revived spiritually in the kingdom

3 For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;

4 They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the watercourses.'

5 One will say, 'I am the Lord's'; Another will call himself by the name of Jacob; Another will write with his hand, 'The Lord's,' And name himself by the name of Israel.

v. 3 God will pour His Spirit on those who have turned back to Him in repentance
"who is thirsty"—those who seek forgiveness

v. 4 willow trees required much water—symbol: God will supply a steady stream of His spirit

v. 5 Description of bearing proudly God's name and the name of Israel, and will want to be known as God's people

v. 6--23 True God compared to idolatry

6 “Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.

7 And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, Let them show these to them.

8 Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.’ ”

v.6 Description of God & Christ: King of Israel/ his Redeemer/ Lord of hosts/ the First and the Last
Rev. 1: 17 **“Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last”**

v. 6 “Besides Me there is no God”

“God”= Elohim (plurality)—God family

➤ Apart from the God family there is no other god

v. 7 “who can proclaim as I do?”(Point)

- God’s past and future predictions come true—leads to prophecy of Cyrus

“Rock”=Christ (Deut. 32:8; I Cor. 10:4)

- The point of these scriptures—apart from the God family, there are no other gods

v. 9-20 The uselessness of idolatry

9 Those who make an image, all of them are useless, And their precious things shall not profit; They are their own witnesses; They neither see nor know, that they may be ashamed.

10 Who would form a god or mold an image That profits him nothing?

v. 9 Describes the idol-maker and idol—are useless= makes no sense
“useless” (KJV)--‘vanity’ (Heb. *tohu*)= confusion
“They neither see nor know”— ‘They’= makers **and** worshippers of the idols

v. 10 It is human beings that form the idol—it is worthless
(Tyndale) “The idolater plans the spiritual and achieves the material”

(Zondervan Bible Backgrounds Commentary)
“Sargon II describes taking Samaria in 721 BC: I counted as spoil 27, 800 people,
together with their chariots, and gods in which they trusted”

11 Surely all his companions would be ashamed; And the workmen, they are mere men. Let them all be gathered together, Let them stand up; Yet they shall fear, They shall be ashamed together.

12 The blacksmith with the tongs works one in the coals, Fashions it with hammers, And works it with the strength of his arms. Even so, he is hungry, and his strength fails; He drinks no water and is faint.

v. 11 [1st part] (KJV) “Behold, all his fellows **shall be** ashamed” —future tense

[last part] “Yet they shall fear, They shall be ashamed together” —when they understand who the true God is

v. 12 “the blacksmith with the tongs”

(Companion Bible) “The smith was more or less a sacred person and the iron foundry was an annex of heathen temples”

The folly of idolatry

13 The craftsman stretches out his rule, He marks one out with chalk; He fashions it with a plane, He marks it out with the compass, And makes it like the figure of a man, According to the beauty of a man, that it may remain in the house.

14 He cuts down cedars for himself, And takes the cypress and the oak; He secures it for himself among the trees of the forest. He plants a pine, and the rain nourishes it.

- v. 13 [mid. Part] “makes it like the figure of a man”—in the image of a man
- They are men who construct an idol and fashion it in the form of a man

Romans 1: 22-23

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

15 Then it shall be for a man to burn, For he will take some of it and warm himself; Yes, he kindles it and bakes bread; Indeed he makes a god and worships it; He makes it a carved image, and falls down to it.

16 He burns half of it in the fire; With this half he eats meat; He roasts a roast, and is satisfied. He even warms himself and says, "Ah! I am warm, I have seen the fire."

17 And the rest of it he makes into a god, His carved image. He falls down before it and worships it, Prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god!"

v. 15-17 The idol maker uses part of the tree to cook with and warm himself...while using the other part of the tree to make into a god and worship

v. 17 The craftsman who made the idol even asks it for deliverance

18 They do not know nor understand; For He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, And their hearts, so that they cannot understand.

19 And no one considers in his heart, Nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say, “I have burned half of it in the fire, Yes, I have also baked bread on its coals; I have roasted meat and eaten it; And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?”

20 He feeds on ashes; A deceived heart has turned him aside; And he cannot deliver his soul, Nor say, “Is there not a lie in my right hand?”

- v. 18 “They do not know or understand”—both the idols...and the people who worship them
 - Spiritual blindness complete for those who worship idols

- v. 20 “A deceived **heart** has turned him aside”—deception of heart
 - Deceived by the master deceiver

v. 20 [last part] “a lie” (Companion Bible) ‘the maker’s vain fancy’

Israel is not forgotten—looking to the future

21 “Remember these, O Jacob, And Israel, for you are My servant; I have formed you, you are My servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me!

22 I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”

23 Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done it! Shout, you lower parts of the earth; Break forth into singing, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, And glorified Himself in Israel.

v. 21 “Remember these”—the previous examples of the foolishness of idolatry

v. 22 God will forgive their sins, they will be redeemed in the future...on their way to a restored relationship with God

v. 23 It will be a time of great rejoicing

New chapter? (Ch. 44:24—45:13) Prophecy regarding Cyrus of Persia (accurate prophecy)
Past events...and looks to the future—Judah & Jerusalem will be restored

24 Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: “I am the Lord, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself;

25 Who frustrates the signs of the babblers, And drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, And makes their knowledge foolishness;

v. 24 Addressed to Israel: “your Redeemer” —God is in control of events

“He who formed **you** from the womb” --Cyrus

- Connects with verse 28— “Who says of **Cyrus**...He shall perform all My pleasure”

Cyrus king of Persia worshipped pagan gods...but God would use him to fulfill his will and plan to release the Jewish prisoners in Babylon

v. 25 [1st part] “Who frustrates the signs of the babblers”

‘signs’ (KJV) ‘tokens’= a pledge

“babblers (KJV) ‘liars’= the false prophets of the pagans

(TEV) “I make fools of fortune tellers and frustrate the predictions of astrologers”

26 Who confirms the word of His servant, And performs the counsel of His messengers; Who says to Jerusalem, 'You shall be inhabited,' To the cities of Judah, 'You shall be built,' And I will raise up her waste places;

27 Who says to the deep, 'Be dry! And I will dry up your rivers';

28 Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built," And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid." '

v.26, 28 "Who says of Cyrus...Saying to Jerusalem, 'You shall be built'

- Literally fulfilled by Cyrus of Persia (539 BC) II Chron. 36: 22-23; Ezra 1: 1-4

Isaiah's prophecy of Cyrus' decree (539 BC) to let the Jews return from captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem, and to be rebuilt

- This prophecy (approx. 700--686 BC) was given more than 150 before it happened

585 BC—Jerusalem and the temple destroyed by the Babylonians

539 BC—Cyrus king of Persia conquered Babylon and issued a decree for the Jews to return (the very next year)

¹ “Thus says the Lord to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held— To subdue nations before him And loose the armor of kings, To open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut:

² ‘I will go before you And make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze And cut the bars of iron.

- v. 1 “to His anointed, to Cyrus” —Cyrus a type of Christ (Israel’s redeemer)
- Cyrus conquered ancient Babylon...Christ will conquer future Babylon

- v. 1 “To open before him the double doors” —into Babylon
- The Euphrates River flowed into Babylon, through and secured by massive gates
 - Cyrus diverted the water flow so that his army could enter under the gates/doors of Babylon

Rev. 16: 12

Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

3 I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden riches of secret places, That you may know that I, the Lord,
Who call you by your name, Am the God of Israel.

4 For Jacob My servant's sake, And Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though
you have not known Me.

v. 3 “call you by your name” —God called out Cyrus by name to fulfill His will

v. 4 [last part] “though you have not known Me” —God used Cyrus to fulfill his plan even though Cyrus
worshipped pagan gods

“though you have not known Me” —describes Israel and the world...have not really known God

- That will change in the future



God confronts Israel about its corrupt idolatry...

- in the future they and the world will be taught who the true God is

5 I am the Lord, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me,

6 That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting That there is none besides Me. I am the Lord, and there is no other;

(KJV) “evil” —calamity is a better translation

7 I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create **calamity**; I, the Lord, do all these things.’

v. 5 ‘There is no God besides me’ —ancient Israel did not learn this

- Modern descendants of Israel will learn who God is

Israel and the whole world should recognize there is no other God

- In the future all the world will know who the true God really is...they will be taught

v. 7 “create calamity”

‘create’ (Heb. *bara*) (Companion Bible) “*Heb.* the Poel Participle of the verb ‘bara’ which, with ‘evil’ requires the rendering ‘bring about’.

- Bring about calamity upon the wicked for their sinful ways

In that day

8 “Rain down, you heavens, from above, And let the skies pour down righteousness; Let the earth open, let them bring forth salvation, And let righteousness spring up together. I, the Lord, have created it.

Righteousness pictured as rain coming from above (The commandments below the skies)

“Let the earth open”: The earth opens up with rivers of living waters... “bring forth salvation”

- A figure of salvation being offered to all

Psalm 85: 10-11

10 Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed.

11 Truth shall spring out of the earth, And righteousness shall look down from heaven.

9 “Woe to him who strives with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth! Shall the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’ Or shall your handiwork say, ‘He has no hands’?”

10 Woe to him who says to his father, ‘What are you begetting?’ Or to the woman, ‘What have you brought forth?’”

v. 9 God does according to His will with creation

- He is pictured as a potter working with the clay

“Woe” to those who would strive with the maker of all

11 Thus says the Lord, The Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: “Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons; And concerning the work of My hands, you command Me.

12 I have made the earth, And created man on it. I—My hands—stretched out the heavens, And all their host I have commanded.

13 I have raised him up in righteousness, And I will direct all his ways; He shall build My city And let My exiles go free, Not for price nor reward,” Says the Lord of hosts.

v. 11-12 Unlike useless idols, God controls everything and the events of mankind

v. 12 “And created man on it”
“created”(Heb. *bara*) (TWOT) “This has implications...for the unfolding of God’s purposes in history”



v. 13 “Raised him up”—Cyrus used for the release of the exiles to restore Jerusalem
▪ Cyrus a type of Christ (In righteousness)

Section 45:14--46: 13—True God vs. idols

v. 14-17 Future prophecy of deliverance

14 Thus says the Lord: “The labor of Egypt and merchandise of Cush And of the Sabeans, men of stature, Shall come over to you, and they shall be yours; They shall walk behind you, They shall come over in chains; And they shall bow down to you. They will make supplication to you, saying, ‘Surely God is in you, And there is no other; There is no other God.’ ”

15 Truly You are God, who hide Yourself, O God of Israel, the Savior!

Egypt and people south of Egypt will be delivered from their spiritual oppression at Christ’s return

- Anciently they were under oppression below Cyrus’ cruel son

They will be delivered to converted Israelites who will recognize God is with them, and they will be taught who the true God is

Isaiah 19:21

Then the LORD will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day, and will make sacrifice and offering; yes they will make a vow to the LORD and perform it

16 They shall be ashamed And also disgraced, all of them; They shall go in confusion together, Who are makers of idols.

17 But Israel shall be saved by the Lord With an everlasting salvation; You shall not be ashamed or disgraced Forever and ever.

- v. 16 The peoples who previously worshipped the established religions will learn who God is
 - The idol worshippers will fade away and perish

v. 17 [last part] (NIV) 'you will never be put to shame or disgraced'

Israelites who are faithful will never be ashamed because they will enjoy God's salvation forever

18 For thus says the Lord, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: “I am the Lord, and there is no other.

19 I have not spoken in secret, In a dark place of the earth; I did not say to the seed of Jacob, ‘Seek Me in vain’; I, the Lord, speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

v.18 God declares that He created the heavens and the earth
God’s original creation of the earth was not in vain...He formed it to be inhabited

v. 19 The ancient pagan priests gave their messages in secret dark places...God declares His truth
openly and in righteousness

(Parallel) “The purpose of God’s creation is clearly stated to be the habitation of the earth and
the salvation of mankind”

God's call to His people

20 “Assemble yourselves and come; Draw near together, You who have escaped from the nations. They have no knowledge, Who carry the wood of their carved image, And pray to a god that cannot save.

21 Tell and bring forth your case; Yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, A just God and a Savior; There is none besides Me.

v. 20 God calls His people who have escaped from the nations to understand:

Those who pray to a god that they have to carry around—it cannot save or intervene

v. 21 Only God can predict the future in prophecy, precisely and accurately
He is just and a savior to those who will turn to Him

The future call to the nations

22 Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.

23 I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath.

v. 22 All the nations will understand that God is the only God

Psalm 22: 27

All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before you

v. 23 “That to Me every knee shall bow”—in worship to the true God

➤ This prophecy will be fulfilled when Christ returns and is ruling over the earth

Those that take an oath to God in worship will say:

24 He shall say, 'Surely in the Lord I have righteousness and strength. To Him men shall come, And all shall be ashamed Who are incensed against Him.

25 In the Lord all the descendants of Israel Shall be justified, and shall glory.' "

v. 24 (NIV) "They will say of me, In the LORD alone are righteousness and strength. All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame"

v. 25 The descendants of Israel will be justified (to be found righteous) for following God, and will rejoice

Lessons

In the kingdom God will forgive those who turn to Him in repentance



We are examples of that today

- God will forgive us when we turn to Him in repentance

A future call to the nations—they will be taught who the true God is



We are training today—to be teachers, helpers and to serve in that day