

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 65

Isaiah Chapter 43:22-44:23

This section of Isaiah treats Israel's sin and redemption.
Isaiah addresses four topics under the heading of **sin dealt with by redemption**.

He begins by describing the sin of the nation. **Isaiah 43:22-24**.

Next, He describes how the Lord will meet their need. **Isaiah 43:25-44:5**.

Then he will contrast the Lord, their Redeemer, the only God with idols. **Isaiah 44:6-20**.

Finally, he will describe redemption from sin. **Isaiah 44:21-23**.

Verses 22-24 diagnose the problem. Ritual without spiritual meaning is a burden to the Lord.

Verses **43:25-44:5** describe the **remedy** that the Lord provides for their sin.

In **verse 25**, the Lord breaks in to announce His gracious plan for Israel. "I am the One who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake". He acts purely on the basis of His grace and love.

This is where we continue this evening.

In verses **26 – 27**, the Lord completes His indictment of the present nation. His chief complaint is directed at the leaders of the people, the false prophets and the wicked priests.

Their case is hopeless. Their first father is Jacob, the father of the 12 tribes. Jacob refused to honor the Lord for many years.

In **verse 28**, he pronounces the sentence: they will go into exile in Babylon for 70 years.

The rebellion centered on their neglect of the Law concerning worship in the Temple. They went through the motions, but they were dead inside: no joy, no authentic worship.

Therefore, the Lord will “pollute the princes of the sanctuary”. These are the Levites and priests who were responsible to perform the sacrifices and lead the people in worship.

Finally, He will discipline His people. He will banish them to Babylon and make them the object of revilement.

As chapter 44 begins, it seems that the blessing of forgiveness in 43:25 has been superseded by the curse of banishment in 43:26-28.

But the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Look at **Romans 11:28-36**.

In **chapter 44:1-5**, Isaiah now returns to the far prophecy of the end times.

The LORD is speaking. He picks up where He left off in **43:18-21**. He now describes the **new thing** that He is going to accomplish for His people.

The Lord tells the nation that He will pour out **His Spirit** and His blessings upon their descendants. This will occur in the end times when the Messiah redeems the remnant of Israel. Never again will they rebel against Him.

The Spirit will do for their offspring – the remnant of Israel in the last days – what the nation could never do for themselves: renew their hearts to enable them to love the LORD God and gladly do His will.

Let's compare this to what the Spirit is doing for us - the body of Christ – now! **Romans 8:1-27**.

Finally, make note of 44:2. The Lord emphasizes that He made Israel and formed her “in the womb”.

This forms a dramatic contrast to verses 9-20. There, the idol worshipper tries to turn this upside down – a man makes and forms his own “god”.

Next, Isaiah contrasts the Lord, their Redeemer, the only God, with idols. **Isaiah 44:6-20**.

In **44:6-8**, the LORD once again proclaims that He is the one and only God. He also identifies Himself as Israel's King and Redeemer.

It's remarkable: God identifying Himself with one fallen and rebellious people. Yet He had done this before also. See **Exodus 3:6**.

He chose to display His matchless power and omniscience in His dealings with His chosen people.

In **44:9-20**, the idol-worshipper is a blind fool, and the idol-maker is nothing but a deceived and delusional man.

The Lord's words are condemning, definitely; but they are also memorable, sarcastic, and, at times, hysterical.

He describes the work of making an idol. But he does so in reverse order: the last step comes first, and the first step comes last. It is an expose, revealing the hollow core of an idol.

Verse 18 is masterful. Is he describing the idol-worshippers, or the idol?

What about us?

44:9-11 speak directly to the present day, to people and to their idols: the natural or man-made things that men worship as their gods today.

What is an unbeliever's god? It is that which is dearest to his heart; the thing he guards most ferociously, that which is untouchable, that final line in the sand of their life that no one dare cross without violence ensuing. See **Acts 19:23-29**.

What does **Romans 1:18-32** teach us about idolatry? How about **Colossians 3:5**?