

Title:            **CHEERING PROMISES FOR**  
                          **ZION'S PILGRIMS**

Text:            Isaiah 42:16

Subject:        *Comfort in Trouble and Light in Darkness*

Date:            Sunday Evening — May 23, 2010

Tape #            Z-87b

Readings:      *Isaiah 43:1-7, 14-26; 44:1-6, 21-23; 45:14-17*  
                          *Curtis Hall and Frank Hall*

**SCRIPTURE READING**

(Isaiah 43:1-7) “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. (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. (3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. (4) Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. (5) Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; (6) I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my

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daughters from the ends of the earth; (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.”

(Isaiah 43:14-26) “Thus saith the LORD, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry *is* in the ships. (15) *I am* the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King. (16) Thus saith the LORD, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; (17) Which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow. (18) Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. (19) Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert. (20) The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. (21) This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise. (22) But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. (23) Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy

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burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. (24) Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. (25) I, *even I, am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. (26) Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.”

(Isaiah 44:1-6) “Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: (2) Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, *which* will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. (3) For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: (4) And they shall spring up *as* among the grass, as willows by the water courses. (5) One shall say, I *am* the Lord’s; and another shall call *himself* by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe *with* his hand unto the LORD, and surname *himself* by the name of Israel. (6) Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and

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his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God.”

(Isaiah 44:21-23) “Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou *art* my servant: I have formed thee; thou *art* my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. (22) I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. (23) Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done *it*: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.”

(Isaiah 45:14-17) “Thus saith the LORD, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, *saying*, Surely God *is* in thee; and *there is* none else, *there is* no God. (15) Verily thou *art* a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour. (16) They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together *that are* makers of idols. (17) *But* Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an

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everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.”

### **INTRODUCTION**

When Christian and Hopeful were imprisoned in the darkness of the dungeon of Doubting Castle, when it appeared that Giant Despair was sure to destroy them, Christian remembered that he had a Key in his pocket by which they picked the lock of their prison door, escaped the darkness, and overcame Giant Despair. The Key was called “Promise.” How often I have needed and used that golden key!

### **Illustration: *Tried and Proved***

Turn with me to Isaiah 42. I believe the Lord has given me a message for you. The Title of my message is — **CHEERING PROMISES FOR ZION'S PILGRIMS.**

### **CHRIST**

**In this chapter Isaiah is describing the Lord Jesus Christ.** He is telling us who Christ is and what he came here to do (vv. 1-4).

(Isaiah 42:1-4) “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my

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spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. (2) He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. (3) A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. (4) He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.”

**Are you waiting for his law, his word?** If you are, you shall not be disappointed. Look at verse 16. This is the text that got my attention. This is God’s promise to you and me, one of those promises of God that is ours in Christ Jesus, and in him is yea and amen.

(Isaiah 42:16) And I will bring the blind by a way *that* they knew not; I will lead them in paths *that* they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

- **Without question, this is talking about the revelation of God’s grace in Christ, our Substitute**, whom Isaiah describes as One who would save his people by magnifying God’s holy law and making it honorable (v. 21).

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(Isaiah 42:21 AV) “The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the law, and make *it* honourable.”

- But the promise reaches even beyond redemption. **This is God’s promise to his people in this dark, dark world.**

**We were blind, but now we see** because he has given us eyes to see the kingdom of God. He has led us in paths of grace, righteousness, and faith that we knew not before. Then, the promise reaches us in our present circumstance. The Lord our God declares to you and me, — “*I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.*”

After reading that, mulling it over, and reading it and mulling it over some more, I read the next chapter, and the next, and the next, and the Lord began to make the darkness light before me, and crooked things were made straight.

I want you to hold your Bibles open on your laps. I am not going to preach to you. Rather, I want to pull up a chair beside you and show you what the Lord showed me in these next three chapters. I want to just point out some of God’s cheering promises for his troubled saints,

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Here is a handkerchief to wipe your weeping eyes.

#### JACOB—ISRAEL

Isaiah 43 begins by calling us both Jacob and Israel. — “*But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel.*” **Jacob** is the name used to describe us in our fallen nature, as sinners saved by grace. **Israel** describes us as princes with God, men and women made new creatures in Christ. The Lord graciously addresses us both as Jacob and Israel to remind us both of what we are by nature and what he has done for us by his grace, and to remind us that he remembers our frames and knows that we are but dust.

The Lord’s first word to us in this chapter is “***Fear not.***” He uses this word three times in these chapters, because he would quieten our hearts in the anticipation of trouble and in the midst of heartache. Then, he gives us a whole slew of promises with which he would silence our fears. We will just skip through these chapters together like children in a candy store, tasting the sweets found in these promises. Here’s the first one...

1. “***I have redeemed thee!***” — Christ has redeemed you, my brother, my sister by the price of his blood and the

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power of his grace. If he has redeemed you, nothing and no one can harm you. He has bought us at such a great price that he cannot afford to lose us.

(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.

“There’s been no bad news since I got the good news.”  
—Pastor Scott Richardson

2. “**I have called thee by thy name!**” — All whom he has redeemed are called, called with an effectual, irresistible, personal call. This is efficacious grace!

Sweet promise this is. He says, “Don’t forget. I bought you. I sought you out. I called you to me, and graciously forced you to come, when you were terrified; and when you came, I received you graciously. I called you personally. I called you because I wanted you. I called you when you needed me. Nothing has changed. Now, look at the last line of verse 1.

3. “**Thou art mine!**” — What a blessed word of grace! You belong to God as his peculiar possession, his new creation, the very apple of his eye. That means you are

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under his protection and provision. The Lord himself is my Shepherd. That means “*goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.*” Read verse 2.

(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.

Oh, yes, you must pass through deep waters of trouble, rivers of woe, and fiery furnace of affliction; but you will pass through them, and they will do you no harm, but only good, because your God, your Redeemer, who calls you by name to go through them promises...

4. “**I will be with thee!**” — Wherever God by his providence puts you, he will be with you in sympathy and in power to take care of you. That means...

- The rivers shall not overflow you.
- The fire shall not burn you.
- The flame shall not kindle upon you.

Let's move on to verse 3.

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(Isaiah 43:3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

5. “**I am the LORD thy God, One of Israel!**” — The Lord — Jehovah, the almighty God — Elhohim — The omnipotent triune Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Holy One of Israel, who is always faithful and true, is your God. He is as much your property as you are his property, because he has given himself to you. This great, three-in-one God declares...

6. “**I am thy Savior!**” — When he says, “*I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee,*” our Lord is saying, “There is nothing I will not do for you, no sacrifice I will not make for you.” — Here is heavenly logic, “*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, How shall he not with him freely give us all things?*” (Romans 8:32). Look at verse 4...

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

7. “**Since thou wast precious in my sight!**” — The word “*precious*” means, highly valued, very costly, cherished,

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highly esteemed. You are God's treasure, his jewel. Though despised by men, if you are a believer, you are precious to God, a royal diadem in the crown of his glory!

8. "**Thou hast been honorable!**" — Because you are precious and dear to him he made you honorable, not the other way around. We are not honorable by nature. We could never make ourselves honorable. But our great, gracious God by his grace has made us honorable. He has washed away our sin by the blood of Christ and robed you with his perfect righteousness. Just as Christ was made sin for you, you have been made the righteousness of God in him. As he, the pure One, was made your defilement, so you are made his purity! So pure are God's elect in Christ, so holy, that they are called "virgins" and the Lord God himself declares they are "perfect," a people in whom he sees no sin, beholds no transgression, finds no iniquity, and in whom he declares there is no perversity!

9. "**I have loved thee!**" — Let men talk all they please about a useless, universal love. This is special love! God so loves his own elect that he will sacrifice men and nations for them! His message here is this. — "That's how much you mean to me! That's how much I love you! I will sacrifice the whole world for, trade all creation for you." — Now, read verses 5-7...

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(Isaiah 43:5-7) **Fear not**: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west. (6) 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. (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.

10. “**I am with thee!**” — In verse 2 he said, “*I will be with thee.*” Here he says, “*I am with thee.*” He is with you right now, in all the fulness of his goodness, grace, wisdom, and power! — “*Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. (5) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand*” (Philippians 4:4-5).

11. “**I have created (you) for my glory!**” — The very glory of the triune God is wrapped up in the salvation of his people. He will either save everyone of the chosen seed, all who are called by his name, and save them from all evil, or he will lose his glory; and that cannot be! Look at verse 13...

(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?

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12. “**There is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?**” — When he created heaven and earth, there was no opposition to it. None hindered him. So it is in providence. All things are done as he pleases. So it is with all his purposes and decrees. They are all accomplished exactly according to his pleasure. None can resist his will. The work of redemption is finished precisely as he purposed it from eternity. And when he works upon the heart of a sinner in conversion, whatever obstructions and difficulties may appear to be in the way he removes them and the work is begun, carried on, and performed, until the day of Christ.

He gave us eternal life, and declared, “*They shall never perish,*” because none can deliver out of, or tear us from, his omnipotent hand. **We are safe in his grip!** He declares this fact powerfully in verse 15. — “*I am the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King.*”

Move on to verse 19...

(Isaiah 43:19) Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert.

13. “**I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.**” — It may appear to you, as it did to Israel of

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old, that you are wandering aimlessly through an empty desert, but that is not the case. **The Lord God has made a way in this wilderness for you; and it is the best and most direct way for you to reach Canaan's fair and happy land. And while you are traveling through this desert, he has made a river of grace to constantly refresh you soul, a river flowing from beneath his very throne.** That River is Christ. Drink, O my soul, drink of the River!

Now, watch **verse 21**, and learn why God made us, and what he has sworn he will do with us by his grace.

14. “**This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.**” — Let us praise him in our hearts and with our lips as we walk in his way and drink from his River. And when we have reached the end of our way, we shall be for his praise forever (Ephesians 2:7; Revelation 5:9-14).

What reason we have to praise him! Read **verse 25**, and remember his sure promise. Our God declares...

15. “**I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.**” — He blotteth out our transgressions continually. He does it for his own sake. And he will not remember our sins!

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I have to hurry. There's a lot more candy in the store. I don't want to miss a single piece. Skip down to **chapter 44, verses 21 and 22.**

(Isaiah 44:21-) Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou *art* my servant: I have formed thee; thou *art* my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. (22) I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

16. **“Thou shalt not be forgotten of me...for I have redeemed thee!”** — *“When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up”* (Psalm 27:10). — *“Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever”* (Psalm 73:25-26) — *“Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel”* (Isaiah 44:23).

There are four more pieces of candy in the store. Move on to **chapter 45, verse 2.** Here the Lord shows us that the

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promise back in Isaiah 42:16 is, as I said, a promise that extends to the totality of our life experience in this world.

(Isaiah 45:2) I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

17. “**I will go before thee.**” — Our Savior always walks in front. He here promises, “I will go ahead of you, clearing the road and paving it with grace. I will break down the gates of hell before you, smash the locks and kick down the bars of your prison.”

Now, look at verse 3.

(Isaiah 45:3) And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call *thee* by thy name, *am* the God of Israel.

18. **You may in darkness now, if so you will fetch treasures from the darkness that surrounds you.** I am told that from the bottom of a deep well a man can look up and see stars that are not visible to the naked eye anywhere else. Look up, my brother, look up, my sister, look up, O my soul, and behold the treasures of darkness and the riches of God's secret things!!

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You will find the last two sweets in verse 17...

(Isaiah 45:17) *But* Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

19. “**Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation.**” — God shall save his elect. This is a matter of absolute certainty. This is what he is doing. This is the explanation of all the past. And this is what he shall do. That is the explanation of all the future.

- Israel shall be saved.
- Israel shall be saved in the Lord, in Christ (1 Cor. 1:30-31).
- Israel shall be saved by blood.
- Israel shall be saved by grace.
- Israel shall be saved in the Lord forever, with everlasting salvation.

20. One more sweet, sweet morsel is added. — “**Ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.**” — There are a lot of loose ends here, tons of confusing things in our experience here, and much that makes us blush with shame now. But soon, things will be different, gloriously different.

- You shall not be ashamed of anything.

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- You shall not be confused, confounded, put to confusion, or even shaken by anyone or anything.
- You shall not be ashamed or confounded “*world without end,*” unto the endless ages of eternity!

In heaven's clearer light you'll see,  
All things worked out for good!

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Farther along we'll know all about it,  
Farther along we'll understand why;  
Cheer up my brother, live in the sunshine,  
We'll understand it all by and by.

Faithful til death, said our loving Master  
A few more days to labor and wait,  
Theses troubles and sorrows will then seem as nothing  
As we sweep through the beautiful gate.

When we see Jesus, coming in glory,  
When He comes from His home in the sky,  
Then we shall meet Him in that bright mansion,  
We'll understand it all by and by.

Soon we will see our dear, loving Savior,  
Hear the last trumpet sound through the sky;  
Then we will meet those gone on before us,

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Then we shall know and understand why.

Farther along we'll know all about it,  
Farther along we'll understand why;  
Cheer up my brother, live in the sunshine,  
We'll understand it all by and by.

Amen.