

## A Trek Through Isaiah 46: 38.1 - 44.23 Overview

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May 21, 2017

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For this week: 38:1 - 44:23 Overview

Context in the book

- Starting the book of the Servant: How will God's people be redeemed from captivity?

Historical context

- Hezekiah is king of Judah.
- Assyrian power waning. Babylon rising.
- Chronology

Structure of the section

- Hezekiah's Test of Faith (38 - 39)
- Universal Consolation (40:1 - 42:7)
  - Consolation for the LORD's people 40:1 - 41:20
  - Hope for the Gentiles 41:21 - 42:17
- The LORD's Plan Unfolded (42:18 - 44:23)
  - Israel's bondage and liberation 42:18 - 43:21
  - Israel's sin and redemption 43:22 - 44:23

## Hezekiah and the way of faith

Hezekiah's sickness and recovery 38:1-22

Here is background for the upcoming test of faith. These events happened prior to the Assyrian assault on Jerusalem.

- The events 38:1-8

Hezekiah becomes sick, prays to the LORD, and is given healing and assurance that Assyria will not conquer Jerusalem.

- V1 Hezekiah becomes sick
  - In those days. Prior to the Assyrian defeat.
  - Thus says the LORD. Death confirmed by the LORD.
- V2-3 Hezekiah's prayer
- V4-8 The LORD's reply
  - 15y added to Hezekiah's life
  - Jerusalem would be defended.
  - A sign promised: shadow going back.
  - The sign given

- Hezekiah's witness 38:9-20

Hezekiah acknowledges the blessing given to him and expresses his trust in the LORD.

- V10-13 Lament
- V14-15 Acknowledgment of the LORD's hand
- V16 Plea
- V17-19 Thanksgiving
- V20 Trust

- Epilogue 38:21-22

Summary of the events: a proved answer to faith.

- V21 Isaiah's direction for healing
- V22 Hezekiah's request for a sign

The test of faith 39:1-8

Using concern and flattery, Merodach-Baladan sought alliance with Hezekiah against Assyria. Hezekiah received his embassy, forgetting his God. Isaiah therefore said that all he had would go to Babylon.

- Visit of the Babylonian envoys 39:1
  - Flattery
  
- Hezekiah's response 38:2
  - Glad welcome.
  - Showed them everything.
  
- Isaiah's inquiry 39:3-4
  - Establishing the facts
  
- The word of the LORD 39:5-7
  - All goods to go to Babylon.
  - Royal house to be ended.
  
- Hezekiah's response 39:8
  - Self-centered
  - No repentance.

## **Universal consolation 40:1 - 42:17**

### Consolation for the LORD's people 40:1 - 41:20

Judgment is not the end for God's people. Comfort would come.

### Messages of **comfort** 40:1-11

A message of comfort followed by three voices crying out.

- Comfort for Jerusalem 40:1-2
- Voice 1: The way of the LORD 40:3-5
- Voice 2: The word of the LORD 40:6-8
- Voice 3: The coming of God 40:9-11

### God the **Creator**, guarantor of His promises 40:12-31

God is the Creator of all things. Before Him the nations are as nothing, idols are as nothing, the people's are as nothing. He is faithful to strengthen His people.

- He measures the heavens and the earth. 40:12
- He has all understanding 40:13-14
- The nations are as nothing before Him. 40:15-17
- Idols are as nothing. 40:18-20
- The inhabitants of the world are as nothing. 40:21-24
- He brings out the host of heaven. 40:25-26
- He is faithful to strengthen His people. 40:27-31

### God the Lord of **history**, guarantor of His promises 41:1-7

God is the Lord of history. He brings one from the east to accomplish His purpose. The nations respond with trembling, self-help, and idolatry.

- Call to hear. 41:1
- God is the Lord of history. 41:2-4
- Response of the nations. 41:5-7

### Guaranteed **consolation** 41:8-20

Israel is the LORD's chosen. He promises strength, deliverance, victory, a land restored.

- Israel is the LORD's chosen. 41:8-9
- Promise of strength. 41:10
- Promise of deliverance 41:11-13
- Promise of victory over enemies 41:14-16
- Promise of a land restored 41:17-20

### Gentile hope 41:21 - 42:17

Isaiah has been focusing on Israel. Now he turns to the Gentiles and how God will bring them hope.

#### Gentiles summoned before the court 41:21-29

Here the plight of the Gentiles is exposed. Their gods are nothing and empty wind.

- Court convened. 41:21
- The challenge: tell what is to come. 41:22-23
- The false gods exposed 41:24
- The true God in action and prediction 41:25-27
- The plight of the Gentiles: their gods are nothing. 41:28-29

#### The **Servant**: the great solution 42:1-9

Here the Servant is introduced and commissioned.

- The Servant presented 42:1-4
  - V1 Introduction
  - V1 His possession of the Holy Spirit
  - V1,3 His justice
  - V2,3 His gentleness
  - V4 His victory
- The Servant commissioned 42:5-9
  - V5 God's the Creator
  - V6-7 The Servant called
  - V8 God the only One
  - V9 New things replacing the old

#### Response to the LORD's solution

All the earth will sing for joy and give glory to the LORD. The LORD has waited but will now bring birth to a new thing. The old world will pass away, but those who trust in Him will be delivered. Those who trust in idols will be put to shame.

- The world sings 42:10-13
  - V10-12 The nations sing and praise God
  - V13 The LORD has the victory.
- The LORD speaks 42:14-17
  - V14 I will give birth to a new thing
  - V15 I will transform the world
  - V16 I will transform the people
  - V17 Those who trust in idols will be put to shame.

### **The LORD's plan for His people 42:18 - 44:23**

The blind Gentiles need someone to lead them to the light. But God's servant of 41:8 (the nation Israel) is as blind as they! Another Servant is needed to carry out God's plan of redemption for the world.

Twin themes

- Captivity and liberation
- Sin and redemption

### Israel's captivity and liberation 42:18 - 43:21

The first theme: God's delivery of His people from bondage in Babylon.

The **blind** servant nation 42:18-25

Here is the present nation Israel: blind, in prison, plundered, under punishment for sin, without understanding.

- The servant's blindness 42:18-20
- The LORD's grace in revelation 42:21
- The servant's helplessness 42:22
- The LORD's judgment on His people. 42:23-24
- The servant's ignorance. 42:25

Unchanged divine care 43:1-7

But now the LORD will not abandon His people whom He loves. Rather He will gather them from the ends of the earth.

- The LORD redeems His people. 43:1-2
- The reason for His care 43:3-4
- The LORD delivers His people. 43:5-7

No other **Savior** 43:8-13

The nations are assembled in court, witnesses are called, the verdict is given. There is no other Savior than God, and none can stay His hand.

- Call to assemble. 43:8-9a
- The issue at hand: who can declare the things to come?. 43:9b
- Witnesses called. 43:10a
- Verdict. 43:10b-13

Liberation and exodus 43:14-21

Babylon will be defeated. God's people will come forth and a way will be made for them in the wilderness.

- Babylon defeated. 43:14-15
- A way in the wilderness. 43:16-21

## Israel's sin and redemption 43:22 - 44:23

The second theme: God's redemption of His people from their sins.

### Diagnosis 43:22-24

Israel lost in sin.

- Did not call upon God
  - V22a you did not call upon Me.
    - Much religion but no true seeking after God.
- Burdened
  - V23 I have not burdened you
    - They forgot that they were released from bondage by the law.
  - V24 you have burdened Me
    - They sought to manipulate God for their own purposes.
- Wearied
  - V22 you have become weary of Me.
    - Their religion had become meaningless ritual.
  - V23 (I have not) wearied you with frankincense
    - Used rightly, the law brought joy, not a burden.
  - V24 you have wearied Me with your iniquities
    - Demonstrating continually that in their heart they rejected God.

### Remedy 43:25 - 44:5

Justice demands condemnation. But instead there is grace.

- Forgiveness. 43:25
- Justice: trial, verdict, rejection. 43:26-28
- Grace: restoration 44:1-5

### The one true God 44:6-20

The LORD is the only true God, who can declare the end from the beginning. There is no other. Idols are empty and bring blindness.

- The one true God 44:6-8
  - V6 The LORD the only God
  - V7 The God who declares what is to come.
  - V8 Fear not
- The false idols 44:9-20
  - V9-11 Shame for idolaters
  - V12-17 The folly of idolatry
  - V 18-20 The effect of idolatry

### Israel redeemed 44:21-23

- The LORD speaks 44:21-22
- Creation rejoices 44:23

## **Discussion**

We will break into three groups for discussion. All groups have the same question:

**In the coming section (38:1 - 44:23) what are you looking forward to seeing about God?**

**For each answer please include at least one reference in the chapters.**

For next week:

- Hezekiah's sickness and recovery 38:1-22
- Hezekiah's test of faith 39:1-8

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