**“Insights into Isaiah”—Chapters 44-45**

**Chapter 44—God Loves Israel**

**Though Isaiah 43 ended with a warning of judgment, it does not mean God takes back His promise of hope and restoration. Israel can still know the goodness of the Lord, if they will only turn back to Him. This is one section has some of the most colorful language. This chapter continues where chapter 43 ends.**

1. **Discuss in verse 1 why Jacob is called, “My Servant,” and Israel, “My Chosen.”**
   1. **Why does God use both “Jacob” and “Israel?”** Here these two names are used together, two sides of the same people.
   2. **Note, when names are changed, like Saul and Paul, Abraham and Abram, they usually stay changed.**
2. **In verse 2, what does the name, “Jeshurun,” mean?** It means “upright,” another name for Israel.
   1. **See references in Deuteronomy 32:15, 33:5, and 26.** “The name *Jeshurun* appears only three more times in the Old Testament: Deuteronomy 32:15, 33:5, 26; and in all cases it is used of Israel . . . this word bespeaks a wonder of grace, for He calls His deeply sinful people His beloved, His upright one.” The name **Jeshurun** means “the upright one.” It is used here as a contrast to the name **Jacob**, even as *Israel* is sometimes used as a contrast to **Jacob**. Jeshurun—A diminutive term of endearment applied to Israel. The full title of affection was Israelun; contracted it became Jeshurun, with an allusion to the Hebrew root, jashar, "upright," "perfect" (see Isa 42:19.)
3. **Verse 2, refers back to God as the “Creator.” Elaborate.**
4. **God promises to “pour out His spirit,” verse 3-5. Parallel this allusion to Joel 2:28-29.**

**How do we know from verse 3 that God is not finished with Israel? 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; they will spring up among the grass like willows by the watercourses.”**

* 1. **Compare this with the New Testament reference in Ephesians 1:13.**
  2. **The physical blessings in this section seem to echo the Millennium. Explain.**
  3. **“I am the Lord’s,” verse 5, can be compared to Jeremiah 50:5, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, and 2 Corinthians 8:5.**

1. **In verse 6, define how you see both God and Jesus.** “The Lord,” “The King of Israel,” and “His Redeemer.”
   1. **Also review “the first and the last” inference. See Isaiah 41:4, Revelation 1:17, 2:8, and 22:13.** Jesus takes the same title of *the First and the Last* in Revelation 1:17 and 22:13. If the **Lord** is **the First** and **the Last** according to Isaiah 44:6, and if Jesus is *the First and the Last* according to Revelation 1:17 and 22:13, since there cannot be *two firsts* or *two lasts*, Jesus must be the **Lord** God!
   2. **God argues against the idols of mankind. Compare with Isaiah 41:4, 43:1, and 10-12.**
   3. **In verse 7, God speaks about “ancient people” and prophecy. Who is this?** since … ancient people—I have given the Jews predictions of the future ever since I appointed them as My people in ancient times; therefore they were qualified to be His witnesses (Isa 44:8). As to their being God's "ancient (everlasting) people," see De 32:7-9; Jeremiah 31:3; the type of the redeemed Church (Eph 1:4).
      1. **Refer to Deuteronomy 32:7-9, Jeremiah 31:3, and Ephesians 1:4.**
2. **Verse 8, “witness,” seems to parallel with Isaiah 43:10. Analyze.**
   1. **“The rock” in this verse compares with Deuteronomy 32:4. Talk about it.**
   2. **See also Psalm 115:4-8.**
3. **“The Folly of Making Idols” could be the title for this portion of Isaiah. (verses 9-20) Discuss.**
   1. **See Romans 1:18-32, as a N. T. reference.**
   2. **Examine Isaiah 40:18, 20, 41:29 and Habakkuk 2:18.**
   3. **“Who?” in verse 10; see the link in I Corinthians 8:4.**
   4. **In verse 14, why is there a mention of trees? Refer to Jeremiah 14:22.**
   5. **Discuss the imagery of how a tree can be used in verse 15.**
   6. **“Eyes shut” is seen Isaiah 6:9-10; elaborate.**
   7. **Another name for an idol is “abomination.” Examine 1 Kings 11: 5, 7.**
4. **“Ashes and wind” in verse 20 point back to trees. See also Proverbs 15:14 and Hosea 12:1, and Isaiah 44:15-17.**
   1. **Why is the heart deceived? Use Romans 1:28 and Ephesians 4:18.**
5. **We have seen “servant” used by Isaiah before. List.** Isaiah 44:1-2, 42:19.
6. **God has “blotted out” our sins, verse 22. Parallel to Exodus 32:32-33 and Revelation 20:12.**
7. **What is the “cloud?” See also Psalm 103:12, 19:12-13, I John 1:7-9.**
8. **Compare redemption and repentance, verse 22, to Zechariah 12:10, Luke 7:43-47, 24:47, Acts 3:18-19.**
9. **Describe the song we see described in verse 23. Refer to Romans 8:20-21.**
   1. **Talk about the phrase, “For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel.”** **Does Romans 8:19-22 echo the same theme?** Creation rejoices when God saves and glorifies Himself in His people. Paul developed this theme in Romans 8:19-22.
10. **Creationism once again surfaces in verse 24. Explain.**
    1. **See also Hosea 8:4 and John 5:30.**
11. **Verse 25 refers to the “wise men/diviners” who, when Babylon was attacked by Cyrus, predicted his defeat. See also Isaiah 36:9, I Kings 2:15.**
    1. **Explain Cyrus’ instructions to the captive Jews.** Verse 26.
12. **The messengers, prophets, foretold the return from Babylon, and, in a sense, pointed to the Messiah who was the embodiment of all prophets. See also Malachi 3:1, Matthew 21:34, 36, 37, and John 10:36 in comparison.**
13. **Explain the “deep,” the reference to Cyrus drying up the Euphrates as pointed to in verse 27. Look also in Jeremiah 51:32, 36.**
14. **Why is Cyrus referred to as “a shepherd?” Examine Isaiah 40:11, Psalm 23:1, 77:20, and Ezekiel 34:23.** This is the first time Cyrus is named expressly; and that, a hundred fifty years before the time when in 550 B.C. he began his reign. The name comes from the Persian khorschid, "the sun"; kings often taking their names from the gods; the sun was worshipped as a god in Persia. Cyrus, according to Josephus, heard of this prophecy of Isaiah delivered so long before; hence he was induced to do that which was so contrary to Oriental policy, to aid in restoring the captive Jews and rebuilding their temple and city. “Josephus in his *Antiquities* relates that when Cyrus came across his name mentioned in this place in Isaiah 220 years before he lived, he was seized by a holy desire to fulfill what was written of him.”
    1. **See also Isaiah 41:2, 1 Kings 13:2 with 2 Kings 23:15-17, and Acts 9:12.**
    2. **Cyrus was used by God as an instrument. Go to Ezra 1:2, 3:10-13, 5:16 and 2 Chronicles 36:23.**
15. **Often we see “shepherd” mentioned in the Bible. Look up Isaiah 56:11, 2 Samuel 24:17, I Kings 22:17, and Jeremiah 2:8.** Kings were called ‘shepherds’ as being guardians and carers of their people (56:11; 2 Samuel 24:17; 1 Kings 22:17; Jeremiah 2:8). The title here signifies that the coming conqueror is the Lord’s appointed carer - even, as a shepherd would, to lead them into their proper pastures.
16. **With such amazingly specific claims coming to complete fruition, God proves His predictive accuracy and the authenticity of His prophecy. See 2 Peter 1:19-21 and discuss.** .”*And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.* “(2 Peter 1:19-21)

**Chapter 45—Cyrus, God’s Instrument**

1. **Why does God call Cyrus His anointed? Gods calling and mission for Cyrus? Thus says the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus**: Isaiah carries on this remarkable prophecy from the previous chapter. In it, God announces - *by name* - the deliverer for His people from a coming captivity, and He does it 200 years before the man **Cyrus** is born. **His anointed** means that Cyrus had a particular anointing from God for his work. God poured out His Spirit on a pagan king, because God wanted to use that man to bless and deliver His people.
   1. **Is there a precedent for the divine anointing of a non-Israelite king? See I Kings 19:15-16 and Daniel 4.**
   2. **What other nations has Cyrus subdued?** To his appointed and enabled one, to subdue many nations. Xenophon, in his first book . . . gives us a list of them. Cyrus subdued, saith he, the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappodcians, Phrygians, the Lydians, Carians, Phoenicians, Babylonians, the Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, Sacians, Paphloagonians, Maryandines, and many other nations. He also had a dominion over the Asiatic, Greeks, Cyprians, Egyptians . . . He vanquished, saith Herodotus, whatever country so ever he invaded. Subdue nations—namely, the Cilicians, Syrians, Babylonians, Lydians, Bactrians, &c.; his empire extended from Egypt and the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, and from Ethiopia to the Euxine Sea.
   3. **Verse 1 has a veiled reference to Cyrus’ captivity of the Babylonian Empire. Review. To open before him the double doors, so that the gates will not be shut . . . I will break in pieces the gates of bronze**: The armies of the Medes and Persians, under Cyrus, conquered the city of Babylon in a remarkable raid described in Daniel 5. According to the ancient historian Herodotus, while King Belshazzar of Babylon held a reckless party, Cyrus conquered the city by diverting the flow of the Euphrates into a nearby swamp; thus lowering the level of the river so his troops could march through the water and under the river-gates. But they still would not have been able to enter, had not the bronze gates of the inner walls been left inexplicably unlocked. *God opened the gates of the city of Babylon for Cyrus* and put it in writing 200 years before it happened! In October 539 bc, Cyrus advanced into lower Mesopotamia and, leaving Babylon till last, conquered and occupied the surrounding territory. Seeing which way the wind was blowing, Nabonidus of Babylon deserted his city, leaving it in the charge of his son Belshazzar . . . the taking of Babylon was as bloodless and effortless as Daniel 6 implies.
      1. **See Daniel 5 and 6.**
   4. **“The gates of bronze” and “the bars of iron” refer to the massive structures surrounding Babylon. Review how Cyrus’ army was able to breach such impregnable securities.** Gates of brass—(Ps 107:16). Herodotus (1.179) says, Babylon had a hundred massive gates, twenty-five on each of the four sides of the city, all, as well as their posts, of brass.
2. **Verse 3 says, “Secret and hidden treasures.” What does this refer to?** 3. Treasures of darkness—that is, hidden in subterranean places; a common Oriental practice. Sorcerers pretended to be able to show where such treasures were to be found; in opposition to their pretensions, God says,
   1. **Examine Jeremiah 50:37, 51:13.** He will really give hidden treasures to Cyrus (Jeremiah 50:37; 51:13). Pliny (Natural History, 33:3) says that Cyrus obtained from the conquest of Asia thirty-four thousand pounds weight of gold, besides golden vases, and five hundred thousand talents of silver, and the goblet of Semiramis, weighing fifteen talents.
3. **Review Ezra 1:1, 2 and 2 Chronicles 36:23.**  Shows that the correspondence of the event with the prediction had the desired effect on Cyrus.
4. **What is the purpose behind God’s calling and mission for Cyrus?**  **For Jacob My servant’s sake**: Cyrus would like to think that God picked him because he was the smartest or most talented or strongest man available. Really, Gods focus was on His people. It wasn’t Cyrus that moved God to act, but the condition and cry of His people. It was for their **sake**. **I have named you, though you have not known Me . . . I will gird you, though you have not known Me**: Cyrus didn’t even know the Lord, yet God could anoint him, guide him, bless him, and use him. How much more should God be able to do through those who have at least a mustard seeds worth of faith in Him!
   1. **Examine Proverbs 21:2, “***The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.* God can work in and through others in very unexpected ways.
   2. **See also** [**Ezra 1:1-3**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ezra+1:1-3&t1=en_nas)**.** That passage shows how when Cyrus made his proclamation allowing the people of God to return to the Promised Land, that he acknowledged to the whole world the greatness and uniqueness of the Lord God of Israel.
5. **Verse 5 talks about God’s sovereignty.** *Is* the LORD, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known. Review Isaiah 42:8; 43:3, 11; 44:8; and 46:9.
6. **“I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the Lord, do all these things**,” verse 7, points to opposites. Refer to Ephesians 3:8-11, and 1:9-19.
   1. **Reference Genesis 1:1-3.**
7. **The creation theme in verses 9-13 seems to recur over and over. Why?**
   1. **Parallel with Romans 8:29.**
8. **Cyrus appears in verses 11-13. Discuss his importance in God’s plan. (Ezra 1:1-3)**
   1. **In verse 11, God tells the reader to ask about His children, Israel. Comment.**
   2. **Look up Mark 11:24; John 16:23, 1 John 3:22, Isaiah 54:13 and Galatians 3:26.**
9. **Does God hide Himself from Israel during the times of the Gentiles? Refer to Isaiah18:4, 40:27, 40:14 and Hosea 3:3-5. (verse 17)**
10. **Is the repetition about creation in verse 18 a replay of His earlier dissertations?**
    1. **Why do you suppose He keeps “hammering it home?” For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens**: By sheer repetition, Isaiah virtually *pounds* it into our awareness - that God is our Creator, and we have obligations to Him as our Creator.
11. **How does “not create in vain” make the scriptural basis for the “Gap Theory?” Compare Isaiah 45:18 and Genesis 1:2.** The Gap Theory is based on a comparison between [Isaiah 45:18](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+45:18&t1=en_nas) and [Genesis 1:2](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+1:2&t1=en_nas), which they translate as *the earth became without form and void*. Here in [Isaiah 45:18](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+45:18&t1=en_nas), God says that He did not **create it in vain**, and **vain** is the same Hebrew word for *void* found in [Genesis 1:2](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+1:2&t1=en_nas). The idea is that God **did not create it in vain** (*void*), but that it *became without form and void* through Satanic attack and ages of desolation, which explain the vast geological ages and fossil remains which seem to date far beyond the history of the Bible. According to the Gap Theory, [Genesis 1:3](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+1:3&t1=en_nas) and following is the *re-creation* of a world that was made *void* by Satan. This first thing to be said against the Gap Theory is that while to translate [Genesis 1:2](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+1:2&t1=en_nas) (*The earth was without form, and void*) as *the earth became without form and void* doesn’t follow the most plain understanding of the Hebrew grammar here. It is permissible, but a bit of a stretch. The most natural way to translate the passage is to say the *earth was without form and void* instead of the *earth became without form and void.* The other thing to be said against the Gap Theory is how it has been used as an answer to how some have interpreted the fossil record. Those who believe in the Gap Theory assign old and extinct fossils to this long and indefinite Gap between [Genesis 1:1](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+1:1&t1=en_nas) and 1:2. But whatever merit the Gap Theory may have, it cannot explain the extinction and fossilization of ancient animals. The Bible says plainly death came by Adam ([Romans 5:12](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+5:12&t1=en_nas)), and since fossils are the result of death, they could not have happened before Adams time.
    1. **Compare Romans 5:12.**
12. **Explain verse 19, “I did not say to the seed of Jacob, Seek Me in vain.” Explain.**
    1. **See Jeremiah 29:13 and Hebrews 11:6.** It is a wicked thing to think God ever says to His people, **seek Me in vain.** When we seek for God with all of our heart, we will find Him. [Jeremiah 29:13](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+29:13&t1=en_nas) says, *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.* [Hebrews 11:6](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hebrews+11:6&t1=en_nas) says, *he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him*.
    2. **Discuss Romans 3:26.**
13. **Verse 22 offers the salvation message in concise form. Re-state.** 22-25. Looking to the Lord and finding salvation in surrender. Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! This simple but powerful statement shows the plan of salvation.
    1. **Review Numbers 21.** Look to Me: In Numbers 21, the people of Israel were stricken by deadly snake bites, and Moses lifted up the image of a bronze serpent, raised on a pole, and the people who looked to it lived. The people were saved not by *doing* anything, but by simply *looking* to the bronze serpent. They had to trust that something as seemingly foolish as looking at such a thing would be sufficient to save them, and surely, some perished because they thought it too foolish to do such a thing!
    2. **Discuss the oath which God confirms in verse 23. See also Hebrews 6:13.** It says, *For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself*.
       1. **Parallel the phrase, “That to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall take an oath,” with** [**Philippians 2:10-11**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Philippians+2:10-11&t1=en_nas)**.** Paul’s quotation of [Isaiah 45:23](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+45:23&t1=en_nas) in [Philippians 2:10-11](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Philippians+2:10-11&t1=en_nas) is an overwhelming evidence of the deity of Jesus Christ. Clearly, in [Isaiah 45:23](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+45:23&t1=en_nas) it is the Lord God speaking (*I, the Lord, speak*, [Isaiah 45:19](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+45:19&t1=en_nas)). Now, Paul clearly puts these high words and this high praise towards Jesus: *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Additionally, the confession is made that *Jesus Christ is Lord* - and the word *Lord* is the same word used in Paul’s ancient Bible for Lord.
14. **Verses 24**-**25 sum-up Chapter 45. Re-state.**
    1. **What are the implications of this section for modern-day America?**
    2. **Who are all the descendants of Israel, and what does Isaiah say their outcome will be?**
       1. **See Romans 2:29 and 11:25-27.**

**And, here are “The Promises”……**

**John 6: 66-69,** “From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.67Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?68Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? **Thou hast the words of eternal life.**69And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”

**John 17**:1-24, “Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He shouldgive eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

### (Jesus Prays for His Disciples--)6“I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. 7Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. 8For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received *them,* and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. 9“I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. 10And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. 11Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17&version=NKJV" \l "fen-NKJV-26771b" \o "See footnote b)] that they may be one as We *are.* 12While I was with them in the world,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17&version=NKJV" \l "fen-NKJV-26772c" \o "See footnote c)] I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept;[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17&version=NKJV" \l "fen-NKJV-26772d" \o "See footnote d)] and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. 14I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

### (Jesus Prays for All Believers--)20“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-26780e)] believe in Me through their word; 21that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

24“Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. 26And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare *it,* that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”