

Isaiah Chapter 44

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 112 (1st floor, backside of the High School, facing Mac Arthur, near the east corner, adjacent to the High School office), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – [Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com); email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

ROCK OF AGES – Augustus Toplady, sung by Ernie Ford

***1. Rock of Ages, cleft for me. Let me hide myself in Thee; Let the water and the blood
From Thy wounded side which flowed, Be of sin the double cure; Save from wrath and make me pure.***

***2. Could my tears forever flow, Could my zeal no languor know, These for sin could not atone; Thou must
save, and Thou alone. In my hand no price I bring; Simply to Thy cross I cling***

***3. While I draw this fleeting breath When my eyelids close in death. When I rise to worlds unknown, and
behold Thee on Thy Throne. Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee. Let me hide myself in
Thee.***

GENERAL OUTLINE OF ISAIAH: Referred to as the “Fifth Gospel” since the third century!

***Possible date of kings reign” - Uzziah, - 792-740; Jotham, - 750-736; Ahaz, - 735-720 Northern Kingdom
of Israel falls to Assyria in 722BC; Hezekiah, - 715-699/686; Manasseh – 687-642***

Isaiah’s time of prophecy - About a minimum of 40 years and possibly more than 60 years!

In the tenth year of Nabopolassar (616 BC) the Babylonians defeated the Assyrian army.

Cyrus takes Babylon. In October (539 BC), the Persian king Cyrus took Babylon.

ISAIAH 40:1-66:24

***The prophecies of chapters 1-39 addressed Judah in her situation during Isaiah's ministry (739 B.C. until
c. 686 B.C.). The prophecies of chapters 40-66 address Judah as though the prophesied Babylonian
captivity (Isa 39:5-7) were already a present reality, though that captivity did not begin until 605-586 B.C.
The words "'There is no peace,' says the Lord, 'for the wicked'" (Isa 48:22; Isa 57:21) signal the divisions
of this section into three parts: chapters 40-48 (Comfort of Jehovah), chapters 49-57 (Salvation of
Jehovah) and chapters 58-66 (Glory of Jehovah).***

***Four Messianic Prophecies-Songs of the Suffering Servant: #1 Chapter 42:1-9 -Servant of Jehovah-Jesus;
#2 Chapter 49:1-13-Servant of God; Savior of the World; #3 Chapter 50:4-9-Jehovah Adonai-Humility of
Rejected Prophet; #4 Chapter 52:13-53:12-Suffering Servant-Jehovah’s Servant-Sin Bearer.***

ISAIAH 44:9-20 – IDOLATRY! The folly of idol makers.

***Adam Clarke writes of this passage: “The sacred writers are generally large and eloquent upon the subject
of idolatry; they treat it with great severity, and set forth the absurdity of it in the strongest light. But this
passage of Isaiah . . . far exceeds anything that ever was written upon the subject, in force of argument,
energy of expression, and elegance of composition.”***

Isaiah – Bible Timeline

| | | |
|--------|--|--|
| 739 BC | Isaiah Complains of Zion's Corruption | Isaiah 1 - 5 |
| 739 BC | Isaiah's Vision and Commission | Isaiah 6 |
| 735 BC | Isaiah's Prophecy of Immanuel | Isaiah 7 |
| 734 BC | Uriah/Zechariah Verification | Isaiah 8 |
| 730 BC | Isaiah Prophecies a Child Is Born | Isaiah 9 |
| 730 BC | Isaiah Prophecies Judgments Upon Israel | Isaiah 9:8 |
| 730 BC | Isaiah Prophecies Judgment on Assyria | Isaiah 10 |
| 730 BC | Isaiah Prophecies The Root of Jesse | Isaiah 11 |
| 730 BC | Isaiah's Joyful Thanksgiving | Isaiah 12 |
| 725 BC | Isaiah Prophecies against the Nations | Isaiah 13 - 22 |
| 725 BC | Isaiah's Valley of Vision | Isaiah 22 |
| 725 BC | Isaiah's Burden of Tyre | Isaiah 23 |
| 725 BC | Devastation on the Earth | Isaiah 24 |
| 725 BC | Isaiah's Songs of Praise | Isaiah 25 - 27 |
| 725 BC | Isaiah's Further Warnings | Isaiah 28 - 32 |
| 725 BC | Isaiah Prophecies a King Shall Reign | Isaiah 32 |
| 725 BC | Isaiah Declares God's Judgments | Isaiah 33, 34 |
| 725 BC | Isaiah Declares the Joyful Will Flourish in Zion | Isaiah 35 |
| 712 BC | Hezekiah's Illness and Healing | 2 Kings 20, Isaiah 38 |
| 711 BC | Hezekiah Shows Treasures | 2 Kings 20:12, Isaiah 39 |
| 711 BC | Isaiah Prophecies Captivity and Restoration | Isaiah 40 - 66 |
| 701 BC | Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem | 2 Kings 18, Isaiah 36, 2 Chron. 32 |
| 701 BC | Hezekiah's Prayer | 2 Kings 19, Isaiah 37 |

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Israel the Lord's Chosen

Isa 44:1 "Yet hear me now, O Jacob My servant, And Israel whom I have chosen.

Isa 44:2 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.

Isa 44:3 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;

Isa 44:4 They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the watercourses.'

Isa 44:5 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.

vs. 1-4 **Fear not**, knowing the promise of the outpoured Spirit. Though you have sinned as a people and though all these heavy judgments have come upon you, **yet you have no reason to fear that God will finally abandon and destroy you.** **Yet hear now:** 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.** **Thus says the LORD who made you:** This reminds us that God is still active in and responsible for creation. He didn't just create Adam and Eve and then let the whole thing go. There is a sense in which God has **made** each one of us, so we each have a personal obligation to Him as our Creator. 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*. The name *Jeshurun* appears only three more times in the Old Testament: *Deu. 32:15; 33:5,26*; and in all cases it is used of Israel speaking a wonder of grace. God calls His deeply sinful people His beloved, His upright one. **Fear not ... For I will pour water on him . . . I will pour My Spirit on your descendants:** This is a glorious promise to a humble, returning Israel. God will not simply give them His Spirit; He will **pour** out His Spirit on them as if **water** was poured over them. Who receives this gift? **I will pour water on him who is thirsty.** When we are thirsty for the outpouring of the Spirit, ask for it and receive it in faith, we can expect to be poured on. God is looking for **dry ground** to pour out **floods** upon! **And My blessing on your offspring:** God doesn't only want to pour His Spirit; He also wants to pour His blessing, on us and our **offspring.** **They will spring up among the grass like willows:** The effect of the poured-out Spirit is *life*. Life springs up and grows where the Spirit of God is poured out.

v. 5 The promise of belonging to the LORD. **One will say, “I am the Lord's”:** Another effect of the poured out Spirit is that He identifies us as belonging to the Lord. When the Holy Spirit is poured out on us, we know we belong to the Lord, and we aren't afraid to say it. The Holy Spirit is an identifying *seal* upon the believer (*Eph. 1:13*). **Another will write with his hand, “The Lord's,” and name himself by the name of Israel:** When the Holy Spirit is poured out on us, we *want* to take the name of the Lord. We want everyone to know we belong to Him, and He belongs to us. Spurgeon on **Another will write with his hand, “The Lord's”:** “The text may have another rendering, for, if you notice, the word ‘with’ in the text is in italics, to show that it was inserted by the translators. It might run thus: ‘Another shall subscribe his hand unto the Lord.’ This alludes to the custom which still exists, but which was more common in those days, of a servant being marked or tattooed in the hand with his master's name . . . Paul alludes to this when he says, ‘Henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus;’ as much as to say, ‘I am Christ's: I have had his name branded upon me.’ **vs. 4-7** **Since you were precious in My sight:** God de

vs. 1-4 **The LORD promises that He will pour water upon he who is thirsty and blessing upon his offspring. That's wonderful because we all need the Spirit to be poured upon us and upon our families! How we need to say, “LORD, I'm thirsty for more of You.” May that be a continual thing for us.**

v. 5 **In that day when Israel experiences revival in the Great Tribulation period, and the Spirit is poured out on Israel, not longer will her people be primarily agnostic, as they are today. They'll call themselves the LORD's, remembering their heritage and roots and take upon themselves the name of the true and living God. What a day that will be for all believers! We need to be ready, to watch, to work and to wait for His soon return!**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Besides Me There Is No God
Isa 44:6 "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.
Isa 44:7 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.
Isa 44:8 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.' "

The Folly of Idolatry
Isa 44:9 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.
Isa 44:10 Who would form a god or mold an image That profits him nothing?
Isa 44:11 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.

vs. 6-8 The LORD declares to witnesses that He alone is God. *I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God:* The LORD has already taken this unique title in [Isa 41:4](#), in the same context of proclaiming His glory against the feeble false gods. An idol can never be *the First*, because an idol needs someone to make him. An idol can never be *the Last*, because they wear out and break. But the Lord GOD of Israel is both *the First and the Last*; He is completely unique, and *besides* Him *there is no God*. As *first* He does not derive His being from any other, but is self-existing; as *last*, He remains supreme at the End. Jesus takes the same title of *the First and the Last* in [Rev 1:11, 17](#); [Rev 22:13](#). If the *LORD is the First and the Last* according to [Isa 44:6](#), and if Jesus is *the First and the Last* according to [Rev 1:11, 17; 22:13](#), since there cannot be *two firsts* or *two lasts*, Jesus must be the *LORD* God! *Who can proclaim as I do?* Because God is *the First and the Last*, He lives outside our time-domain, and can *proclaim* things before they happen. He can proclaim *the things that are coming and shall come*. This shows God really is who He says He is, watching and directing the parade of human and cosmic history as it makes its course down His appointed path. *Do not fear, nor be afraid:* Knowing these truths about God isn't only good for winning theological quiz games. When we really know who God is, and His great wisdom and authority over all things, it erases all *fear* in our lives. *You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me?* God says to His people, "You are all witnesses of these truths. Tell Me yourself - is there any *God besides Me*?" Because there is no other *God besides* the LORD, it means that God the Father is the LORD, God the Son is the LORD, and God the Holy Spirit is the LORD. *Yahweh* - the name translated by the small-caps LORD - is the Triune God, the One God in Three Persons. There are no "grades" or "degrees" to true deity. There are false gods, symbolic gods, and the true God - and the only true God is Yahweh, the LORD. *Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one:* Since God is the only God, He is the only *solid ground* to build our life upon.

vs. 9-10 *Those who make a graven image, all of them are useless:* Isaiah will brilliantly show the foolishness of idol makers. A simple look at how idols are made shows how silly it is to regard them as gods, so the idol makers themselves *are their own witnesses* against themselves.

Questions to those engaged in idolatry, though professing to be worshipping God: **The first question:** *Why worship something that is less than you?* Men who have eyes and can see and minds that can think, yet they were fashioning gods to worship that could not see or think! They had mouths that couldn't speak. God is saying, "think about it"! *They neither see nor know, that they may be ashamed.*

v. 11 *The workmen, they are mere men:* Isaiah looks at the people who make idols, and notices that they themselves are only weak, frail men. **God poses a second question** here. *Why worship something you can create?* The insanity of man making God! The reason this is insanity is that **the creator is always greater than that the creation!** Car, or bridge, whatever! The creator is always greater than his or her creation, by virtue of the creator has to **first have the idea of creating something**. And then having the intelligence to **then design the idea and third, to have the power or the strength to create the very thing that he or she has designed**. We are greater than anything that we can create! So God says it is folly to worship anything that we or mankind creates because we are worshipping something that is a result less than ourselves. God says it is folly to worship what He has created, because what He has created is less than Himself! **If it is less than God, why would we worship His creation rather than worshipping the greater, that is the God who has created all of this that has been created.** This is why the worship of creation is irrational! *Romans chapter 1*

vs. 6-8 Here, we see that God declares, "*I am the First and I am the Last; In Rev. 1:11, Jesus declares, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last". This either means there are two firsts and two lasts, or that Jesus is God! Which He is!*

vs. 9-10 We need to carefully consider the folly of idolatry in our own lives! Consider the following questions: **The first question:** *Why worship something that is less than you?* -They can't see, hear, think or speak!

v. 11 **The second question:** *Why worship something you can create?* It is irrational! The creation is always less than the creator. Do you want to worship something less than God, or even worse, something less than man?

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Isa 44:12 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.

Isa 44:13 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.

Isa 44:14 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.

Isa 44:15 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.

Isa 44:16 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."

Isa 44:17 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!"

44:18 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.

v. 12 The blacksmith becomes *hungry, and his strength fails* – After fashioning an idol out of metal, after some time he becomes tired and thirsty. He becomes hungry while he is making this idol. So he has to take a rest so that he can eat and can drink. **The third question** - Why worship something that can't strengthen or sustain you? Why would I worship a god that cannot impart strength and sustenance to me? I need to worship the God who restores, gives food and provide water to drink. I want to worship that God!

vs. 13-17 The craftsman works hard with wood, but it is only wood. Half of the tree is made into an object of worship and trust, and the other half is burned for a warm fire and cooking. **The fourth question** - Why worship something that can burn? The craftsman would ask why should I worship something that's been fashioned out of this log, when I could be worshipping the God who created the log to begin with? The mistake of the blacksmith and the craftsman has been multiplied by billions of people on a daily basis, all around the world. **People who unthinkingly, illogically, settle into a life of idolatry and they don't even realize that they have.** Never be satisfied with the worship of creation – God's creation or man's creation! We need to keep looking behind the creation and what is behind that and then what is behind that, until we come to One who has created everything – the God of the Bible! Then worship Him!

v. 18 The worst part about idolatry is not the fact that it is illogical, that's the least of our problems. God brings out in this **that the worst part about idolatry is the life that it leads a person into.** First, **idolatry leads us into an ignorant life** - *They do no know nor understand; for He has shut their eyes, so they cannot see:* How could the idol makers fail to see what is so obvious about the stupidity of idolatry? God has *shut their eyes*, and shut their *hearts*. Is this unjust of God? Is He condemning man for something that He is really responsible for? Not at all. They first loved the darkness and chose their blindness, then the LORD gave them what they wanted. Regardless of a person's intellect, to have **failed to discover Him, to know Him, to obey Him, to love Him, to serve Him, to experience Him,** is to have missed everything in life of ultimate importance! And to have lived a life in an astonishing and a heartbreaking ignorance. It is to live in darkness. It is to leave a great intellect and a great mind virtually unused and untapped.

v. 12 The third question - Why worship something that can't strengthen or sustain you? We don't need a god that needs us to take care of him. We need a God who can and will take care of us! That is a God that is worthy of our worship and that is the God of the Bible!

vs. 13-17 The fourth question - Why worship something that can burn? We don't need a god that can burn! Keep looking behind the creation and what is behind that and then what is behind that, until you come to One who has created everything – the God of the Bible! Then worship Him! The Creator, not the creation.

vs. 18-20 God brings out in this **that the worst part about idolatry is the life that it leads a person into.** First, **Idolatry leads us into an ignorant life** - *They do no know nor understand; for He has shut their eyes, so they cannot see* Not only is idolatry illogical and stupid, but there is tragedy also because of idolatry inability to deliver. Idols can't deliver you but they can and will de-humanize you in that a person becomes like what he worships. **Do you want to become more Christlike or like a dumb idol?**

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Isa 44:19 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?"

Isa 44:20 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?"

Isa 44:18b For He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, And their hearts, so that they cannot understand.

v. 19 no one considers in his heart, nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say . . . a deceived heart has turned him aside. Secondly here we're told that idolatry leads to an illogical life! It is to live a life like this, requires the suspending of logic everyday in our lives concerning the one thing that we ought to be the most discerning about, the most critical about, the most logical about in our thinking and that is who and what we worship and what we give our life to. And what we trust in for our eternity!

*v. 20 He feeds on ashes: The wooden idol from the craftsman's shop is just a warm fire away from being ashes. Worshipping and serving an idol - any false god - is as wise and as satisfying as eating ashes. We can only satisfy our soul in God. And he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" The one given over to a false god is so entranced in the lie that he is in bondage. He holds the idol in his *right hand* - the hand of power and authority - yet cannot see that it is a lie.*

v. 18b -For He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, And their hearts, so that they cannot understand. The fourth thing that idolatry leads to a dangerous life! Because if a person is determined to live a life worshipping the creation, as opposed to the Creator, then there can come a time in each of our lives when God simply stops trying to convict a person of the folly of their idolatry! Then He leaves them to it! The parallels between here and what Paul brings out in Romans 1:20-28 (and, the consequences to an idolatrous life - vs. 29-32) are very, very, strong! Idolatry results in a loss of conviction concerning sin. This loss of conviction is the loss of something that is priceless. There is still hope in a person's life who is engaged in idolatry as long as they have a softness in their heart and can listen to what God is trying to reason with them from the Scriptures. Then that person can say, that makes sense! I realize what I worship, what I make my idol in life, if I just scratch just below the surface, it is a worship of myself, my own likes, dislikes. To worship the creation is to stop short in a logical progression that should only stop with the answering of the question of who made this creation and is behind the creation? Who is the great Designer? As long as a person is willing to ponder that question that God poses to every idolater, there is still hope! All of us are idolaters before we come to know God. The danger is when a person settles into their idolatry and the warning and the logic of God and the warnings of God, no longer have an impact. That's a dangerous place to be! One day I will trust in it, but I'm not ready to now! I haven't had enough of my idols, my own way, my own purposes and desires, related to life. I'll always be able to hear that Gospel, It will always impact me. I'll always have the conviction that it is the truth. That will never leave me, but I don't want to do it today! I'll do it one day! BEWARE!

v. 19 Secondly here we're told that idolatry leads to an illogical life! Worshipping a portion, a left-over, of a piece of wood that has been burned for cooking and for warmth? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?

v. 20 The third thing that idolatry leads to in our life is to feed on ashes! - on emptiness! To attempt to live a life of spiritual meaning and purpose without the substance with which to do so, to engage in idolatry is always to starve to death spiritually, even if my idol is religion. It is still to starve to death, to be eating ashes, comparatively speaking, in comparison to knowing the true and the living God and being in relationship with Him.

v. 18b The fourth thing that idolatry leads to a dangerous life! Continually rejecting God's invitation to every human is dangerous beyond what we can imagine. To keep putting it off. Finally, one day there will no longer be conviction or any willingness to hear and to believe! It is the same way that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh (Exo 4:21). - God was giving Pharaoh over to his sin (Rom 1:18-32). Just like with Pharaoh, one day he went too far! May we be so aware of what idolatry can do in our own lives and in those around us!

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

The Lord Redeems Israel
Isa 44:21 "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!
Isa 44:22 I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."
Isa 44:23 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.

Isa 44:24 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;
Isa 44:25 Who frustrates the signs of the babblers, And drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, And makes their knowledge foolishness;

vs. 21 Remembering and praising the greatness and the glory of the true God. **Remember these, O Jacob: As Israel remembers the foolishness of making and worshipping idols, it should inspire greater trust and confidence in God.** When we think about the alternatives to following the LORD, it should make us follow Him all the more closely. As Peter said to Jesus, *Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (Joh 6:68)* If the foolishness of the alternative wasn't enough, God gives His people many more reasons to trust and love Him: **I have formed you . . . you are My servant . . . you will not be forgotten by Me . . .**

vs. 22-23 **I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions . . . I have redeemed you.** Any one of these would be reason enough, but combined, they are overwhelming.. **Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done it!** This is the only logical reaction to seeing who God is. And if God's people won't do it, then creation itself will (**Shout, you lower parts of the earth; break into singing, you mountains**). **For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel:** Creation rejoices when God saves and glorifies Himself in His people. Paul developed this theme in **Rom 8:19-22**.

vs. 24-28 The LORD demonstrates He is the true God by prophesying a future deliverer of Israel. The LORD makes remarkable claims through this whole passage, and in these verses. He claims to be their **Redeemer**, the Creator of each person (**who formed you from the womb**), the Creator of all things (**who makes all things**), wiser and greater than anyone (**who frustrates the signs of the babblers**), who upholds His own (**who confirms the word of His servants**), who resurrects dead cities (**who says to Jerusalem, "You shall be inhabited"**), and who has authority over all creation (**who says to the deep, "Be dry!"**). How can God back up such great claims? **Who says of Cyrus:** God proves He is who He claims to be by announcing the name of a deliverer for Israel's Babylonian exiles - and Isaiah wrote this more than 200 years before Cyrus fulfilled this prophecy - by name! The prophet alluded to the king who would bring about Israel's release from captivity in **Isa 41:2**, but in this passage, amazingly, he mentions him by name. "**Cyrus**, whom God here designed by his proper name **almost two hundred years before he was born**, that this might be an undeniable evidence of the certainty and exactness of God's foreknowledge, and a convincing argument, and so most fit to conclude this dispute between God and idols. Josephus 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. **He is My shepherd:** Cyrus was a **shepherd** in the sense that God used him to do something good and helpful for Israel. The lost sheep were to be rounded up and returned to their true fold in Judah by this foreigner. Here we have the first explicit reference in the Book of Isaiah to God's plans to rebuild the city."

v. 21 As Israel remembers the foolishness of making and worshipping idols, it **should inspire greater trust and confidence in God; to follow Him all the more closely.**

v. 22-23 **"I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."** Not "I will", but "I have"! The work is already done! I don't have to try to merit or earn it, instead, I can just rejoice in it!

vs. 24-28 With such amazingly specific claims, it is no wonder that God proves who He is through predicted and fulfilled prophecy. **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. (2Pe 1:19-21)**

Isaiah Chapter 44

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 112 (1st floor, backside of the High School, facing Mac Arthur, near the east corner, adjacent to the High School office), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

Isa 44:26 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;

Isa 44:27 Who says to the deep, 'Be dry! And I will dry up your rivers';

Isa 44:28 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." '

vs. 24-28 (continued) Cyrus was a special instrument in God's hand, for God's work. He would do the work of the LORD (*He shall perform all My pleasure*), and open the door for the work of rebuilding *Jerusalem* and the **temple** after the Babylonians destroyed them. The royal proclamations of Cyrus fulfilling this prophecy are found in Ezr 1:2 and 2Ch 36:23. The specific work commissioned by Cyrus is described in detail, including drying up the waters (*Who says to the deep, "Be dry!"*) and laying the foundation for the temple (*Your foundation shall be laid*). *Who says to the deep, "Be dry!"* "That will **put it into the heart of Cyrus to dry up the Euphrates, and so to take Babylon.**" *Foundations*: interestingly, as Ezra records (Ezr 3:11-12; Ezr 5:16), in the days of Cyrus the rebuilding of the temple did not progress beyond the laying of the foundations.

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