Session 15 The Forerunner Message in Isaiah 43-44

1. Introduction
	1. Isaiah 41-44 is considered by many commentators to be one long prophetic message.

*These four chapters, Isaiah 41-44, are really one long prophetic message. So of these four chapters we did two last week and are doing two this week. Really, you could put them all together in one setting.*

* 1. ***Review:*** Isaiah 41-42 highlight the Lord’s “Justice Masterplan”—it includes a great outpouring of the Spirit, great wrath poured out the Antichrist’s empire (Isa. 24; Rev. 6-19), and God’s discipline and demonic persecution of both the Church and Israel—which includes some being imprisoned or martyred. God’s “Justice Masterplan” will result in a purified Church (Dan. 11:33-35; 12:10), a great harvest of souls (Rev. 7:9), Israel’s national salvation and millennial glory (Isa. 60-62; Rom. 11:26), every sphere of society in every nation being filled with justice, love, and humility (Isa. 42:4; cf. Ps. 45:4), and the whole earth being filled with God’s glory forever (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14).

33And those of the people who understand [God’s end-time messengers] shall instruct many;
yet for many days they shall fall [be martyred] by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering… 35to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end… (Dan. 11:33-35)

*Last week we look at Isaiah 42, the justice masterplan of God. You know God has a justice masterplan. Isaiah 42 is the famous chapter on the justice that is going to fill the earth when the Lord returns. In this grand plan I want to highlight, first of all, a few things that show up regularly in these 150 chapters. There is a worldwide outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We say, “Yes!”*

*There is a worldwide judgment on the Antichrist empire. These judgments are terrifying. So we read in Isaiah 24-25 the terrifying judgments. We look at them, but the judgments are focused on the Antichrist empire which it is a global empire, and they are terrifying judgments.*

*The next thing you have to remember is God’s discipline on His Church and on Israel. He is disciplining the Church and Israel because He loves the Church and He wants to wake the Church up. So there is an element of discipline that shows up in these chapters. If you only read the discipline, you think, “Oh, no!”*

*The Lord would say, “No. It is because I want you involved, but I have to have you involved on my terms. I have to wake you so you are doing this wholeheartedly.”*

*Then there is a demonic persecution, which is very different from the divine discipline. It is the demonic persecution with great intensity against the Church in Israel. Now, between the divine discipline and demonic persecution, which are very different, but sometimes overlap, this results in people ending up being in very troublesome circumstances, even martyrdom and persecution, even prison camps. It is to me terrifying how many times the subject of people in prison camps at the end of the age comes up. It is a subject nobody really wants to address, but it keeps showing up in the prophets. So there is discipline, there is persecution, but in the masterplan, it results in a purified Church. For the first time in history the global Church will be purified. It results in a great harvest of souls. I mean, we are believing God for a billion. Can you imagine a purified Church and a billion new converts? It results in Israel’s national conversion, their national salvation, Israel filled as a nation with the glory of God. They have this millennial position of the glory of God in the Millennium. Then every sphere of society will be filled with love and justice and humility. That is the fruit of all of this. The glory of God fills the whole earth.*

*So this masterplan has some really difficult parts to it. Only Jesus would have the wisdom to see the persecution, the outpouring of the Spirit, the purifying of the Church, the divine discipline all mixed together in His brilliant mind. I do not mean it is mixed together, but He manages all of these different issues to produce a purified Church, a global harvest, the national salvation of Israel, the glory of God filling the earth, etc.*

*In Daniel 11, Daniel mentions—now this is the Church He is talking about—how they will be purified. How there will be martyrs. The martyrdom of the believers will result in many becoming purified in the Body of Christ.*

* 1. Outline for Isaiah 43-44

43:1-4 The Lord will be with Israel in the fire
43:5-7 The Lord will gather Israel from the nations
43:8-15 The Lord is raising up His messengers
43:16-21 The Lord’s power to deliver and transform
43:22-28 The Lord was wearied by Israel’s refusal to respond to Him
44:1-5 The Lord will pour out His Spirit
44:6-8 Who is like our God
44:9-20 The folly of trusting in idols
44:21-22 The call to remember and return to the Lord
44:23 A hymn of praise to God

44:24-45:13 Cyrus and the restoration of Jerusalem

* 1. Isaiah 43 declares God’s commitment to help Israel in her tragic situation described in 42:22-25. The Lord sent the military invasions as a divine discipline to “wake up” Israel to respond to God. Israel’s most destructive military invasions were by the Assyrians (721 BC, and 701 BC), the Babylonians (586 BC), Antiochus Epiphanes (167 BC), and the Romans (AD 70).

22But this is a people robbed and plundered; all of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prison houses…23Who among you will give ear to this? ...24Who gave Jacob for plunder, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not the Lord, He against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in His ways…25Therefore He has poured on him the fury of His anger…it has set him on fire all around, yet he did not know; and it burned him, yet he did not take it to heart.
(Isa. 42:22-25)

*If we are going to understand Isaiah 43, which we are looking at now, we have to start with the last phrases of Isaiah 42, because Isaiah 42 was in the conversation. There is a chapter break, but it is one conversation. Isaiah did not say, “Hey, put a chapter break in here, and let’s take a week off.” He is right in the middle of a conversation in Isaiah 43:1. So let’s backtrack and get into the conversation going here. That conversation is God’s discipline because of love. This is because of love for the nation of Israel. It is, again, discipline upon the Body of Christ as well. So in the verses right before Isaiah 43:22, Israel as a people are left robbed and plundered, snared in holes, hidden in prison houses.*

*Again this is a, “Wow! What an intense subject! Who wants to say these things?” Well, I assure you, Isaiah did not want to say these things. Some of you are aware that Isaiah was martyred because of the things he said. He was sawn in two by the religious and political leadership of Israel. They cut him in two and killed him because he said these things. So do not imagine that it is going to be received in any friendlier spirit. This is heavy stuff.*

*God would say, “I know what I am doing, I know what I am doing. The negative and the positive, I am overseeing the whole thing intentionally together.” Then he says in verse 23, “Who among you will even listen to this message?” Then Isaiah asks a question, verse 24, “Who gave Jacob,”—which is Israel, who gave Israel—“up for plunder? Who gave them up to the robbers?” Then this shocking answer. God boldly says—He does not apologize—“Was it not the Lord? I did it.”*

*“Wait! You let them go to prison houses?”*

*“Yes.”*

*“Lord, You cannot do that.”*

*He said, “It is because I wanted to wake them up. Because I need them in voluntary partnership. I am not going to make them obey Me. I am going to create an optimum environment with an outpouring of the Spirit, with trouble on one side and glory on the other side with promises and power. I am going to put the whole thing together to create the optimum environment for Israel and the Church and even the nations to say yes to the Lord, to say yes to come into the great harvest.”*

*Look at verse 25, “…and therefore God poured on Israel His anger and set him on fire.” He goes in later in the verse, “… and burned him.” Like what? Then in Isaiah 43:1—that is where we are starting in just a minute—Israel is in prison camps, on fire, being burned. Then Isaiah turns the chapter, so to speak. He would say, “I did not stop the conversation. Some guy did, the one who put the chapter breaks in.”*

*So above there is the outline. Let’s jump right into Isaiah 43 and continue the conversation. So when you are studying and teaching Isaiah 43, remember to lock it in with Isaiah 42. If you start in Isaiah 43:1, you will not understand the intensity of what He is saying in Isaiah 43.*

* 1. The Lord will pour out His Spirit on Israel and the Church as He disciplines both of them
	in the end times to wake them up to their glorious destiny as people in covenant with Him.
	2. ***Summary***: The prophetic message in Isaiah 43-44 included the Lord declaring His affection to Israel in context to her sin and being under divine discipline (43:1, 4), His promise to regather Jewish refugees (43:5-6), Israel’s calling to be God’s witnesses or messengers (43:10-12), His promise to transform Israel and nature (43:16-21), to forgive rebellious Israel (43:22-27), to discipline them by a military invasion (43:28), yet pour out His Spirit on them (44:1-3) establishing them in a new spiritual identity (44:5), a threefold revelation of God (44:6-9), and exposing the folly of idols (44:9-20).
1. The Lord will be with Israel in the fire (Isa. 43:1-4)
	1. The Lord is steadfast in His love and commitment to be with Israel in the fire of affliction (43:1-4). Isaiah declared God’s promises of deliverance which were fulfilled in part when Israel returned from Babylonian exile (538 BC), but have their ultimate fulfillment at the end of the age.

1But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel:
“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. 2When you
pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.
3For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. 4Since you were precious in My sight, you have been honored, and I have loved you; therefore I will give men for you, and people for your life.
(Isa. 43:1-4)

*Isaiah 43:1starts off, “But now.” The “but now” is an acknowledgement of them having fire—the judgment of God—burning them. It is happening via enemy nations. Whether Assyria or Babylonia, it is nations and military invasions burning their cities. “But now,” verse 1, points back to Isaiah 42, the verses we just looked at: “I want you to know who created you. It is I, the Lord. Yes, I know you are being disciplined, but I am the One who thought of you. I am the One who exerted power to form you. I am the One who is in covenant with you. So actually you are in good hands because you are in the hands of a God who thought of you and thought of the great plan to release My glory in you, and I am not backing away from that plan.” That is what He is saying.*

* 1. ***But now***:Isaiahacknowledged God’s desire to help Israel even while they were under divine discipline (42:25).

*You notice in verse 1, He says, “O Jacob” and “O Israel.” This is interesting because sixteen times in the next ten chapters “Jacob” and “Israel” are put together in nearly the same sentence. It is the two faces. Jacob is one of the fathers, “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” the one who had the twelve sons who became the twelve tribes of Israel. Jacob was a deceptive man. Jacob wrestled with God, and God transformed him and gave him a new name, Israel. So Jacob the deceiver wrestled with God and became Israel which means the prince with God. All through these chapters the Lord is playing on the tension of these two words. You deceiver who wrestles with Me, who becomes a prince with Me and is transformed. You deceiver who gets transformed. You transformed prince of God, but, oh, did you have to wrestle with Me! He is saying that every time He mentions Jacob and Israel these sixteen times in the next ten chapters.*

* + 1. The Lord assured Israel that He would be with them (43:2) if they will repent (43:22; 44:22).
		2. Jesus offered a similar grace to the church in Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-26). He warned those who did not repent that they would be disciplined by the Lord (2:22) and promised those who were overcomers that they would rule the nations with Him in the Millennium (2:26-27).

18And to…the church in Thyatira write…20“I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel…to teach…My servants to commit sexual immorality…21I gave
her time to repent…22I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23I will kill her children with death …26And he who overcomes…I will give power over the nations…27He shall rule them…” (Rev. 2:18-27)

* 1. ***The Lord who created Israel***: God’s promises and plan are based on the fact that He created, formed, redeemed, and named Israel (43:1). Thus, they may be confident that He will help them.
		1. The Lord as *creator* with power and *redeemer* with covenant relationship is the sovereign leader of history who disciplines Israel in 42:25 by allowing a military invasion (43:1).
		2. The Lord allows the ultimate Gentile “super power”—the Antichrist—to be raised up.
	2. ***O Jacob and O Israel***: Jacob was a deceiver who wrestled with God, which resulted in him being transformed and renamed Israel, which means “a prince with God” (Gen. 32:24-32).
		1. Jacob is the father of twelve sons from whom came the twelve tribes of Israel. Jacob was a deceptive man who was transformed in context to wrestling with God. The “Jacob character” of the nation will be transformed so that they might enjoy the promises made to “Israel.”
		2. Sixteen times in Isaiah 40-49, the Jewish people are referred to as both “Jacob” and “Israel” together (Isa. 41:8, 14; 42:24; 43:1, 22, 28; 44:1, 5, 21, 23; 45:4; 46:3; 48:1, 12; 49:5, 6).
	3. ***Fear not*** (43:1): Even though God disciplined Israel as a nation at various times due to their sin, they should not fear that their national calling was being revoked by God. In the midst of Israel’s most difficult times, the Lord always preserved a remnant to ensure it continued as a nation.

I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! … 2God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew…4But what does [God]…say to him [Elijah]? “I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men…” 5Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6And if by grace, then it is no longer of works… (Rom. 11:1-6)

*He says, “Fear not.”*

*“Now you would say, ‘fear not?’ Our cities are being burned!”*

*You don’t remember the verse before? Fear not? He said, “I am with you.” He said, “I am redeeming you. I am going to allow all of these negative things, then I am going to overrule them for good. I am actually going to take all the destruction and turn it around for your training and for your glory. I am going to magnify My grace in you. I have redeemed you. So it is not just that I forgave you, I am going to overturn, I am going to overrule all the negative you have gone through all through history. I am going to show you the glory of God in your nation. You will see My wisdom when it is all said and done.”*

*Then He speaks in this affectionate, tender language, particularly in verse 1 and 4. You will see it here in verse 1 and then again in verse 4. He says, “You are mine.” It is personal. He says, “You are my beloved. Yes, I know I am disciplining you, but I am not giving up on you. As a matter of fact, I am going to redeem it all. I am going to turn it all around. You are My beloved.”*

* + 1. The “super power” empires that existed in biblical times—Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome—do not exist anymore. So the fact that tiny Israel still exists speaks of God’s calling on them as a nation. The extinction of Israel as a nation has been a desire of various nations throughout history such as Assyria, Babylon, Philistia, Edom, and others.
		2. The Lord exhorted Israel to “fear not” seven times in this one message in Isaiah 41-44 (41:10, 13, 14; 43:1, 5; 44:2, 8).
		3. They were not to fear that their purpose in God was over either nationally or individually.
		They were fearful because of the divine discipline described in the previous verse (42:25).
		4. The exhortation to “fear not” was not a promise that their circumstances would always be comfortable and devoid of enemies in this age. It was a promise that their calling would not be revoked and would surely come to fullness in the age to come.
		5. Jesus exhorted His disciples not to fear those who kill the body (Mt. 10:28). His rationale was that His people should be far more concerned with answering to God in the age to come than in preserving their life and circumstances in this age. Jesus’ exhortation that they “not fear” was not a promise that all their circumstances in this age would be devoid of affliction.

22And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake...23When they persecute you in this city, flee to another…28And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.
But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell…31Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. (Mt. 10:22-31)

* + 1. Paul overcame fear—the fear of loss, suffering, persecution, and affliction—by having an eternal perspective (Rom. 8:17-18; 2 Cor. 4:17-18).

17… [we are] joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy
to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (Rom. 8:17-18)

17Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor. 4:17-18)

* 1. ***Waters and fires***: The promise is that the waters would not overflow Israel and the fire would not burn them (43:2). Fire and flooding water here speak of times of affliction. The promise here is that God will intervene supernaturally to deliver various individuals and to save a national remnant.

2When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you. (Isa. 43:2)

*Verse 2, “When you pass through the waters,” and this means the flood waters of affliction, “I am going to be with you. When you go through the rivers”—the flooding rivers, and here you are picturing Israel being chased by a military invasion and persecuted and trying to escape. There are rivers and waters and danger everywhere—“they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned.”*

*Now this is a promise that did not happen every time Israel had problems. I have no doubt there were moments and there were situations in every one of their episodes of terrible difficulties where some of these miracles happened. At the end of the age there are going to be tremendous miracles, because that is where this whole storyline culminates. In the generation the Lord returns, I think that verse 2 is going to happen. There are going to be miracles in the midst of the fires and the floods. I have read different testimonies of the Church in China and in the underground Church where they were in flooding rivers and burning houses and God appeared and did miraculous things. I thought, “Ah, that is a little bit of what is going to be happening more and more.” There is a symbolic or kind of a down payment of this through history. There are those miracles all through history, but this is going to be a mainstay in the generation the Lord returns.*

* + 1. Isaiah had just prophesied concerning Israel being burned with fire (42:25).

25…He has poured on him [Israel] the fury of His anger…it has set him on fire all around, yet he did not know; and it burned him, yet he did not take it to heart. (Isa. 42:22-25)

* + 1. Daniel’s three friends were supernaturally delivered from the fire while in Babylon.

23…Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into…the burning fiery furnace. 24Then King Nebuchadnezzar…25answered, “I see four men loose, walking in the midst of
the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.” …27The king’s counselors…saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them. (Dan. 3:23-27)

* + 1. There are many testimonies throughout history of Jewish individuals who testify of being delivered by God “in the fire” or in times of national affliction such as during the Maccabean revolt (167-160 BC) and many other times in history.
		2. The fullness of the promise to not be burned by the fire will be seen in the end times. The Lord’s messengers may comfort Jerusalem (40:1) by declaring this promise to them.
	1. The Lord communicated His affection to Israel during her time of sin and discipline (43:1, 4).

1…“I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine…3For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. 4Since you were precious in My sight, you have been honored, and I have loved you…” (Isa. 43:1, 3, 4)

*He says in verse 3, “For I am the Lord. I am the Holy God of Israel.” Now this is a strange passage, or at first it seems strange, He says, “I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. Since,” here is this affectionate language, “you are precious to Me.” Like, “Yes, I know I left you in the last chapter with your cities being burned in a military invasion, with My disciplining you, but it is not because I gave up on you. It is because you are dear to Me. You are honored in My sight, and I love you. I am sticking with the program. I am sticking with My commitment to bring you to glory. I am not going to back down from this. Therefore I gave men for you and people for your life.”*

* + 1. ***I have redeemed you*** (43:1): God did not give up on Israel, but has plans to use them for His purpose. Even in Israel’s end-time apostasy and crisis, it is still not too late to respond to God and receive grace.

*The Lord said, “I have redeemed you.” That is, “Israel, I have redeemed you.” This is a powerful declaration that God’s love is far greater than Israel’s sin. Now this is a message we comfort Israel with, and we comfort Jerusalem. Remember we are to comfort Jerusalem, Isaiah 40. We are to tell them that the passion of the God of Israel and His love for them are greater than their rebellion towards Him.*

*It does not end there. That is the message we can tell the Body of Christ about the Body of Christ. That is a message we know in our own lives. When we find ourselves in a situation that we are not at all pleased that we are in, and we are surprised by our failure and our stumble, the Lord would say, “I have not given up on you. My love for you is far greater. Read Isaiah 43. I told Israel experiencing a military invasion disciplining her as a nation that I am going to be with her. I am going to turn it for her good. I am going to overrule the negativity and even the sin against her, the persecution, the fire, and the discipline, and turn it out for her good.” God does not give up on His people, that is the message of Isaiah 43, even in Israel’s end-time apostasy.*

*I mean, spiritually Israel is doing badly right now. You look at Israel, and it is a nearly godless nation. The God of Israel would say, “Israel, I am going to meet you face to face and turn you around.” The greatest harvest in the history of Israel is coming, and it is not far away. There is going to be a fire that the nation will go through.*

*They think that the Islamic nations are going to bother them and trouble them. Israel thinks, “We are going to beat them anyway.” They do not really know what their prophets have said to them as a nation. That is why the Lord’s messengers must bring the message with clarity, to wake up people, so they are not offended, so they know that God is saying, “My love is greater than even your rebellion, and I am with you in it.”*

* + 1. ***I have called you by name*** (34:1): He speaks to Israel in relational ways.
		2. ***You are mine*** (34:1): The Lord’s affectionate, tender language is very personal.

*He said, “You are mine.” This is personal to Him, as in, “You are My beloved. Yes, I am allowing you to be disciplined, but you are Mine. You are the apple of My eye.”*

* + 1. ***You were precious in My sight***: Israel is dear to God’s heart and beloved (Jer. 12:7).

7“I have given the dearly beloved of My soul [Israel] into the hand of her enemies.”
(Jer. 12:7)

* + 1. ***You have been honored*** (34:4): By being chosen by God to rule the earth with Him.
		2. ***I have loved you*** (34:4): God’s love for His people is one of the premier prophetic themes in the generation the Lord returns. The first commandment will be restored to first place. God’s love is far greater than Israel’s great past sins and failures.
	1. Isaiah highlighted three names that show three aspects of God’s character to strengthen Israel in their trials (43:3).

3For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior… (Isa. 43:3)

* + 1. ***The Lord your God***: The God who established a covenant relationship with Israel

*Now Isaiah mentions three names here related to Israel being encouraged while under divine discipline. He mentions the fact that He is “the Lord your God.” That is the covenant name for God: the Lord, Yahweh, the covenant God, so there is personal relationship.*

* + 1. ***The Holy One of Israel***: The God of transcendent glory who is “wholly other than”

*Then He is the Holy One, who is the transcendent One, who is the Holy One of Israel who is the one that is holy “other than.” He is infinitely superior to everything. He is holy other than. He is transcendent. He has all power.*

* + 1. ***Your Savior***: The God who will save them from all their enemies—spiritual and physical

*He is a Savior. He is about confronting your enemies and liberating you and changing your circumstances. So number one, there is a personal relationship. Number two, there is a powerful God. Number three, there is a Savior who has a plan to remove the negative and to shift your circumstances and save you from it.*

* 1. ***I gave Egypt for your ransom***: The Lord delivered Israel from some of Sennacherib’s wrath by directing him to defeat the Egyptian army that included people from Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba.

3…I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. 4Since you were precious in My sight…and I have loved you; therefore I will give men for you, and people for your life.
(Isa. 43:3-4)

* + 1. Sennacherib, the king of Assyria attacked Israel in 701 BC. The Lord diverted Sennacherib from Israel by stirring him to attack Egypt (which was also being disciplined by the Lord).
		2. It would have been far worse for Israel if Sennacherib had not been diverted to turn to Egypt.

*Now here He says, “I gave Egypt for your ransom.” You might look at that and wonder how that happened. One way that is commonly understood is that when Sennacherib the king of Assyria—Assyria was the superpower of the day, the one main superpower—when they were coming up and attacking Israel fiercely, what the Lord did is He stirred up this cruel evil king to attack Egypt, so the attack of Israel by this superpower was lessened. Well, Egypt needed discipline, too. The Lord says, in effect, “Hey, I stirred him up to go down south to Egypt. In that way I spared you. It could have been far worse if Sennacherib had the freedom to do everything he wanted, but I redirected him in flight because I love you. I did not want you extinguished as a nation. I saved you. It was only a remnant, but I saved you. Do you remember when I did that for you?”*

*Of course, the nation of Israel might have thought, “Oh, that is why he turned left! Okay. That was kind of a sudden turn. Okay, interesting.”*

*Then He goes on in verse 4, “You are precious in My sight and I have loved you.” This idea of “I loved you” is going to be one of the premiere themes of the Holy Spirit in the generation the Lord returns. I love you, Israel. I love you, Body of Christ. It is not just that I am going to use you and release My glory in you. I actually have an affectionate interaction with you. My heart is moved by your heart. I love you.*

*The first commandment is going to be restored to first place. It is a kingdom where wholehearted love is exchanged. There is a declaration of this right in the midst of their discipline. “This military invasion is coming,” He said, “But Israel, it is because I love you. This is about love, and I want you to love Me, and you will love Me.”*

1. The Lord will gather Israel from the nations (isa. 43:5-7)
	1. Israel is not to fear that their national calling and promises are cancelled even when they see their people scattered in the nations. The Lord promised to bring Jewish refugees to the land of Israel (11:11-12; 27:13; 41:9; 49:12). The Lord was saying, “I am not finished with you as a nation.”

5“Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and gather you from the west; 6I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not keep them back!’ Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth—7everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him…” (Isa. 43:5-7)

*So He goes on, as it were, “Not only do I have tender affection for you, in the midst of the fire I am going to be with you. You are precious. You are honored. I love you. You are Mine.” He uses all these words in verse 1, 4. But it is more than that. In verses 5-7, He said, “I am going to regather all the scattered ones of Israel.”*

* + 1. The people of Israel were scattered to the nations from Israel on three major occasions—
		by the Assyrians in 721 BC, by the Babylonians in 586 BC, and by the Romans in AD 70.

*Israel has been scattered several times over the years. They were scattered up north, from the northern kingdom. Remember they had a civil war that lasted about 200 years between the north and the south. The northern kingdom was scattered in 721. The twelve, the ten tribes of Israel were scattered. So there were refugees all around the world, 721 BC. Then 586, Nebuchadnezzar came and scattered them again—Judah— and destroyed the city of Jerusalem. Then AD 70, the Romans did it.*

* + 1. Nazism caused many Jewish people to flee Germany and Europe, “from the ends of the earth,” back to Israel.

*Of the various times all through history, the most intense attack was from Nazi Germany, and the Jews were scattered to the ends of the earth as well as gathered and killed. They are scattered and gathered, but both of them were just expressions of demonic persecution against them.*

* + 1. The people of Israel have been gathered back to the land from the nations on two major occasions—in 536 BC they returned from Babylonian captivity, then again in 1948. Since 1948 over 3 million Jewish people have immigrated to Israel from various countries.
		2. The largest gathering of the Jewish people to the land of Israel will be after Jesus returns.
		It will far surpass even the 1.2 million Russian-speaking Jewish people who have moved to Israel since 1990. The end-time regathering is happening now. What will happen in fullness when Jesus returns is happening in part leading up to His return.

*The Lord says here, “I am going to regather My people from all around the world. I am going to do this supernaturally.” Now this is going to be more than a human effort. There is going to be a supernatural move of God which has already begun. One of the signs of the times is the regathering of people with Jewish heritage back to Israel. A million people with Jewish heritage that speak Russian language have gathered back to the land in the past three decades. There has never been a gathering of this magnitude of just one ethnic group coming back to their land. The only other large one strangely is Germany. After World War II, Germans were scattered to all over Europe. Then over the next few years several million, even more, came back from back from the Russian territories and other nations. This gathering of Israel will be the largest gathering back to a homeland besides the scattered Germans that returned after the war, which is a point that most people are not even aware of. History says that twelve million Germans came back from other territories after the war.*

*Anyway, there is regathering coming now. The regathering is going to come to fullness when the Lord returns. The regathering is happening now because what happens in fullness when the Lord returns is happening in part in an increasing way even now. So we do not wait until then to give ourselves to be involved in it, because He is doing the regathering of the people to the land in part now. So we are celebrating that, and we are praying and asking for the Lord’s provision.*

*He says, “Fear not! I am going to bring them from the north, the south, the east, and the west, from the ends of the earth.” That is beginning, but there is going to be the ultimate finale when the Lord Himself comes back. The regathering will far eclipse even the million that have come from Russia in the last twenty-five years to thirty years.*

*Look at verse 7. He asks, as it were, “Do you know why I am going to gather you? Do you know what is really moving Me to get you back in the nation in one nation?” That is the implied question. He says, “I created you. I created you as a nation so that you would experience My glory and you would manifest it to the earth. I am gathering you because I want you to experience the glory of God in an unprecedented way in the land and even the process of gathering. Then I am going to make you vessels of My glory to the ends of the earth.”*

* 1. ***I will bring your descendants***: The Lord will gather the Jewish people from the ends of the earth (41:9). The return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity was not from “the ends of the earth,”
	so it fulfilled this prophecy partially; its ultimate fulfillment occurs when Jesus returns (5:26).
	2. ***I created for My glory***: God’s purpose for His people is to experience and manifest His glory. Jesus elaborated on this most amazing calling for the people of God (Jn. 17:22-24).

22“And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one… that the world may know that You have sent Me and loved them as You have loved Me. 24Father, I desire that they whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory…”
(Jn. 17:22-24)

*Now Jesus elaborates on this truth in John 17 where He cries out to the Father. This is not just about Israel; this is about all believers. He prayed, “Father, I want My glory to be released in them. I want them to experience My glory.” God is going to gather them as a nation, and there is going to be an intense encounter of the glory of God that is going to have global ramifications after the Lord regathers them in the land. The Lord says, “My whole purpose of creating you was that you would experience My glory and you would manifest it, that we would do it together in partnership.”*

*Look at what Jesus says here in John 17. He says, “The glory You gave Me, Father, I gave to them. I want them fully unified as a community. I want them to love each other like we love each other, Father. Then the world will know that I love them.”*

*Look what He says in verse 24, “Father, O I desire! I desire that they would be with Me where I am. They would behold, they would encounter My glory.” This is so when we look at the severity of the big justice masterplan we understand it is all about love and glory at the end of the day. If we know this, it tempers the way we communicate it. It tempers the way we interpret it. It is how we steward it in our own life when the divine discipline comes, because the discipline is not just coming on Israel, it is coming on the Church as well.*

*I am guessing the Church in the earth right now as it is, there are many carnal, compromising believers, millions and millions, with barely a second thought about the Lord. They will even go to the church service, and they will worship a little bit. But they just do life as they want. The Lord would say, “No, no!” to the Body of Christ, and “Israel, no to you either. You cannot be a near-atheistic nation, you cannot. Body of Christ, you cannot live this way. You are Mine.”*

*So this discipline is not harsh or in anger. Sometimes we look at Israel and say, “Wow.”*

*I say, “Well, take a step back. This is what happens when God is in covenant and He loves people. He comes after them to wake them up so they make those choices of love will last forever.*

*You know, a million years from now we will look back. I mean it will not take a million years. The Lord could say, “Hey, you have all the information now. Wasn’t it right that I cornered you a little bit? Wasn’t it right that you choose new things? You did not like it at the time, but aren’t you glad for billions of years?”*

*“Yes, Lord! Oh, I am so glad You did not give in to me when I was kicking and screaming.”*

*You know, it is kind of like an intimidated parent, “Oh, my kid doesn’t like me. I will give in and give up.”*

*The Lord would say, “No, no, no, no! I have big shoulders. I know what I am doing. I have a masterplan. I love you. This is not going to feel good all the way, but there is a great outpouring of the Spirit too.”*

*So we kind of get lost, locked into the “Israel trouble,” because there is not a revelation of the Church in the Old Testament. Broaden the perspective. It is the “people in covenant with God” perspective, and that puts us right in the middle of some of the persecution and some of the divine discipline, and also the outpouring of the Spirit and the release of the glory. All of this applies to us as well, not just that we are messengers to them. We are messengers to the Body of Christ as well. I do not mean “we” here in this place, but I mean the Lord’s messengers in that generation, those that will dare to eat the scroll is what the angel told John. They will go deep in the message. They will study it, they will meditate on it, they will pray through it, and they will boldly say it. I believe there will be hundreds of thousands, if not millions, who will do that. They will bring insight to the nations of the earth.*

1. Lord is raising up His messengers (isa. 43:8-15)
	1. The Lord summoned the nations to a hypothetical gathering to testify on behalf of the prophecies given by their idols (43:8-9). Isaiah called the nations to present their claim that their idols were powerful (43:8-9).

9Let all the nations be gathered…Who among them can declare this, and show us former things? Let them bring out their witnesses, that they may be justified… (Isa. 43:9)

*The Lord is raising up His messengers. Here in Isaiah 43 He says it really boldly. He uses the words, “I am going to make you My witnesses.” In the New Testament you find the word. A phrase that is used a handful of times is “faithful witnesses.” God wants us to be faithful witnesses of His kingdom, which is the same thing as being messengers.*

*Now notice what happens in verses 8-9. I am only putting this verse in so you get the flow of the context. It is kind of a hypothetical situation where God is calling, summoning, the nations to a gathering. Of course no one comes, and He does not expect them to. It is a hypothetical gathering. God is challenging the nations through Isaiah the prophet.*

*The nations were saying, “Hey, our idols are powerful. Our idols have real spirits behind them that really give us information. They really make it rain. They really make us win wars. They make our fields fruitful and our livestock productive.” You know, because there are real demons involved in idols, so there was a big argument in the nations in Isaiah’s day. Israel was being sucked into the deception that there is real spirit activity behind idols. Now the idols are just dumb idols, but there are spirits behind it. What is happening is that nations were boasting about the power of their idols. Israel was being seduced into that.*

Because Israel bought into the idol worship, God said, “I want to challenge you to a debate, a worldwide debate.” Again, nobody came, but He says and what He is saying in this so that when you read it later it will make sense.

*He said, “Anywhere in the world, all the top leaders, show Me that an idol and the spirit behind the idol can prophesy the future in an accurate way.”*

*Now we have people today—psychics and all kinds of groups—who can get this fact right and that fact right and little bits and pieces of people’s lives. People swear by it, “No, it is really true.” There are séances with demonic information.*

*God is not asking for a little trivial piece of information of somebody’s name or some event. Here is the idea: “Tell Me of a significant international event that changes world history that any of you have prophesied and then had the power to make that event come to pass.” So that is the challenge He throws out to the idols and to the nations. Israel is listening. The Lord is looking at Israel saying, “Do not buy into this thing because none of them can predict the future of international events and then have the power to make them happen and then have the wisdom to interpret them and make it fit into a masterplan. Only I can do that. There is no other God.” That is the logic of what is going on here.*

*Now there are quite a few passages in Isaiah, like four, five, six, seven of them—I do not know the exact number—where there are lengthy discussions just like this. There was one in Isaiah 41 last week. There are a few more coming up in Isaiah in the forties. You think, what is this? Number one, it had relevance in its day.*

*Why is there so much space in the prophets, particularly Isaiah, given to this idol debate? Because, number two, the greatest idolatry movement in human history is yet future. It is the Antichrist worship system that will have idols all around the earth. People will take the mark of the beast, and it will be fully energized with demons. I am assuming there will be all kinds of powerful miracles and prophecies. The earth is going to be seduced by this argument.*

*God will say to them again, “Yeah, they might know somebody’s name They may know an event. They may know a date of something. They may know about Aunt Susie who died ten years ago or something like that. One thing they do not know is significant international events. They cannot make them come to pass, and they cannot make them fit together in a masterplan either.” Nobody can do that but the God of Israel. That is the statement that is going on here. This is going to be a really relevant issue in the years to come, in the face of the Antichrist empire, because they will worship the Antichrist. When you read it, and we will get to it later in the other weeks, it says in Revelation 9:20 that it is idolatry filling the nations. It is idolatry. It is demons being activated in this system. Millions in the earth are going to buy into the idol seduction.*

*So this is not the Lord putting an undue amount of time on this. It feels like, “Isaiah, why do you keep hammering this point?” Of course, Isaiah might say, “I do not know. The Spirit just keeps pushing it.” When you take a step back and look at the masterplan, it will be one of the most prominent issues in the end times, in the generation the Lord returns.*

* + 1. No one can predict international events, make them happen, and then interpret their significance in master plan that unfolds with a clear purpose over thousands of years.
		2. Some claimed that their idols were powerful, causing fields to be fruitful, livestock to be productive, and determining who would win a military battle. Israel was being seduced into the deception by idol worship. Today, people claim to receive accurate information from psychics, séances or other demonic sources. Their information is trivial compared to the significant information about international events that change the course of world history.
		3. ***Who among them can declare this?***: The “this” that the Lord declared through Isaiah included the raising up a “super power” from the east (41:2), Jewish refugees returning to the land of Israel (41:9), Israel’s enemies becoming as nothing (41:12), Israel’s military being empowered as a threshing sledge (41:15), Israel’s national salvation (41:2), rivers flowing on mountains and in deserts (41:18), trees growing in the desert (41:19), the raising up a “super power” in the north (41:25), establishing justice in the whole earth (42:4), liberating prisoners (42:7), a global end-time worship movement (42:10-12), the Messiah, the “super power” from heaven, coming to earth (42:13), releasing divine discipline on Israel (42:25; 43:28), declaring

God’s affection for Israel (43:1, 4), releasing supernatural protection of Israel in their affliction (43:2), God diverting military powers from Israel (43:3) refugees coming from the ends of the earth to Israel (43:5-6), Babylon being defeated (43:14), a road and water being in the wilderness (43:19), then naming Cyrus as the “super power” who would free Israel from Babylonian captivity and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple (44:24-45:131), and more.

* + 1. ***Their witnesses***: Who can testify of any prophetic words concerning important international events being given by any idol? If there are any, then let that idol be justified as a real god.
	1. God called Israel to be His witnesses (43:10, 12; 44:8). His witnesses will openly declare His plans. The Lord wants to make aspects of His global end-time plan known through His witnesses. God called His people to be faithful witnesses or to be His messengers. Isaiah was one such a witness.

10“You are My witnesses…that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He… 11I…am the Lord, and besides Me there is no savior. 12I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed…therefore you are My witnesses,” says the Lord, “that I am God.” (Isa. 43:10-12)

*Well, He says twice in verses 10-12, then says it a third time in Isaiah 44:8, “You are My witnesses.” That is, these idol worship movements have their witnesses. None of it is real. Again, they might have some little facts of someone’s personal life that demons give them. They cannot determine any significant international events. They do not have the power to make them come to pass. They cannot interpret them, and they cannot pull them all together to make them have this fit in a great masterplan.*

*He said in verse 10, “You are going to be My witnesses.” That is, “Israel, you are going to know what I am doing and you are going to declare it.” Because, you know, God could just declare it audibly in heavens if He wanted to and everybody could hear it. When Jesus comes back, that will be a loud voice in the heavens and everybody will hear it. He would say, “No, I am going to make My ways known through My witnesses.”*

*This is not just soul winning, getting somebody to accept salvation, which I do not think there is anything more important than that. But I do not mean only soul winning. When He says, “witnesses” here, He is talking about those who are carrying the prophetic message of God’s masterplans of what He is doing in the nations. That is the prophetic scriptures. We have them. Isaiah was one of those witnesses. That is what these 150 chapters are. This is the bringing together of the message for those who will be witnesses, because it is inside information into what God is like, all the multi-layers of what He is doing from the outpouring of the Spirit to the divine discipline to the persecution to purifying the Church to the judging the Antichrist. There are all these elements. God is saying, “The dark side does not have the information of where it is going. I do, and only I do. It is in the prophets. I have written it in the Book.”*

*He communicates in verse 10 that “If you are going to be My witnesses,”—this is really key here—“you have to know Me. You have to believe what I say.” That is the whole Bible, for sure. In our context here, we are believing Isaiah 43. We are believing this. We are taking time to understand it. He says in the next phrase, verse 10, “You have to understand who I am and what I am doing. How else can you say it? How else can you alert people so they can respond to Me rightly? If I do not have those who are My witnesses, how will they know?” Again, we use the word, “messengers.”*

* 1. ***That you may know Me***: This speaks of personal experience and knowledge of God. To be a faithful witness or a messenger, one must know, believe, and understand Him and proclaim His
	plan of action in the nations to fill the earth with His glory.
	2. ***Besides Me there is no savior***:The Lord’s end-time plan will demonstrate to all the nations that He is the only Savior who can deliverer them from the Antichrist’s darkness and oppression.
	3. The Lord demonstrated His ability to predict major international events such as the downfall of Babylon (43:14-15). This was in contrast to the idols that He just challenged to declare international events (43:9). The Lord gave another example of this when prophesying the rise of Cyrus (44:28).

14Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “For your sake I will send to Babylon and bring them all down as fugitives—the Chaldeans, who rejoice in their ships.
15I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.” (Isa. 43:14-15)

* + 1. ***Bring them all down***: About 150 years before the Jewish people went into Babylonian captivity, the Lord openly promised to “bring down” or judge the mighty Babylon empire.
		2. ***Fugitives***: Some Babylonians would flee as fugitives in light of Persia conquering them.
		3. ***Rejoice in ships***: This pictured them fleeing in their merchant ships on the Euphrates River.
		4. ***For your sake***: The Lord would judge Babylon for the sake of the Israelites, that is, to liberate Israel from Babylonian captivity about 150 years later when Jeremiah prophesied. What was the responsibility of Isaiah’s generation towards Jeremiah’s generation?
			1. The Lord will save Israel by destroying the Antichrist’s empire (Zech. 14:1-5).
			2. His judgment on Babylon and the Antichrist demonstrates His sovereignty and His love and commitment to Israel to fulfill His covenant promises to preserve them.
		5. Isaiah highlighted five names or aspects of God’s character to strengthen Israel (43:14-15).
			1. ***The Lord***: The God who established a covenant relationship with Israel
			2. ***Your redeemer***: This title reveals God’s relationship to Israel as her near-kinsman.
			3. ***The Holy One of Israel***: The God of transcendent glory who is “wholly other than”
			4. ***The creator of Israel***:God originally conceived of the idea of Israel as a nation.
			5. ***Your King***:The Lord is their sovereign leader to whom they owe their alliance.
1. The Lord’s power to deliver and transform (isa. 43:16-21)
	1. The Lord’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt included dividing the Red Sea as the *proof and model*of His power to deliver Israel from her enemies—Babylon, Rome, Nazism, and the Antichrist. Isaiah just mentioned the overthrow of Babylon (43:14), and here he highlights God’s power to accomplish this along with delivering Israel from all of her enemies, including the Antichrist.

16Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea…17Who brings forth the chariot and horse,
the army and the power (they shall lie down together…): 18“Do not remember the former things,
nor consider the things of old. 19Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. 20The beast of the field will honor Me…because I give...rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen.” (Isa. 43:16-20)

*Well, I am skipping a lot in Isaiah 43, but I will have it on the updated notes. Mike, just stay focused. Go on. You are out of time. Stay on page four. Okay, personal note there. I was going to go back and bring up another point or two.*

*Now the context is found in the verse before Isaiah 43, the verse right before: the military invasion, cities burning with fire, people thrown in prison. That happened in history, but it is going to happen again in Israel. All this prison and fire happens several times in history. It is going to have its biggest, most intense expression at the end of the age. So these chapters are very, very relevant.*

*He says, “I am going to deliver you. I am going to go with you. Not only am I going to deliver you and bring all your people back and pour out My Spirit, I am going to transform the entire world. You are in the center of My heart; I am doing it because I love you, My covenant people.”*

*Verse 16, He says, as it were, “Let Me tell you what I am going to do. I am going to deliver you from these nations that are going to come against you.” Assyria came against Israel, then Babylon did, then Rome, and then various nations through history through to the Nazi Germany, again very prominent. More fierce than all will be the Antichrist empire that will be far bigger, more powerful, more cruel, more demonic, more everything negative than all the other empires combined. All of these messages are culminating. They have an expression in that hour. Though the evil has had an expression through history, it will have a greater expression for that grand hour of history when this thing all comes together.*

*In verse 16 He goes back to look at the exodus, “When I divided the Red Sea, when I released the ten plagues of Egypt…” Look at verse 16 and following, “Thus says the Lord.” He said, “I am going to deliver you. Remember when I made a way in the sea? You read the whole passage there. I have it edited down here. “Remember the horse and the rider on the Red Sea, and I split it, and all the miracles?”*

*They nod, “Yeah.”*

*Isaiah goes on, “Well, the idea is that what God did at the Red Sea and the miracles of Moses and the ten plagues, that is proof that God is going to get involved in a dramatic way. It is also a model of how He is going to do it.” So it is the proof that, at the timing of the Lord, He will intervene dramatically. It is a model, it is proof, and it is a picture of what it might look like.*

*He says in verse 18—this is very important— speaking about what He did in Egypt in dividing the Red Sea, verse 18, “Do not remember the former things.” Verse 19, “I will tell you a new thing. Now it shall spring forth. Shall you not know it? I will even make roads, this highway, in the wilderness. Rivers will break out in the deserts.” Verse 20, “The wild beasts of the fields will rejoice because there will be water in all the desert regions.” This is the millennial blessing He is talking about.*

*This is an interesting thing in verse 18. He says, “Do not remember the former things,” verse 18. The former things are what He just said in verse 16-17 about the Red Sea and the deliverance through the miracles of Moses. Do not remember them? He is not saying to forget the memory of them. He is saying not to limit your view of what God is going to do to just the miracles of Egypt. They are going to be far beyond it. When He is saying, “Do not remember,” He is saying, “Do not limit your view of what God will do to only what He did in Egypt.”*

*The end-time scenario is far greater in power than the Moses drama, which is the most powerful event in history. I am talking about national events where heaven broke in with miracles for a whole nation. Never has there been an episode in human history like the Moses event, the Exodus. He is saying, as it were, “You like that one? Don’t even go think of that one because yes, it is a model, but it is going to be far beyond that. It is going to be global.”*

*The book of Revelation really is the Egypt deliverance magnified on a global level. It is not Moses and the Pharaoh; it is the end-time Pharaoh—the Antichrist—and the greater Moses—Jesus—with tremendous plagues far beyond the plagues of Moses on a global level. The Lord through Isaiah is saying, “You don’t have even an idea how big this is going to be.”*

*As a matter of fact, it is the bigness of it that trips up the Body of Christ. I have talked to various leaders over the years, looking at Revelation. They say, “Well, that is symbolic.”*

*I ask, “Why?”*

*“Well, it could not really…it is kind of ridiculous…really?”*

*I answer, “Really. That is the point. It is way beyond the Moses story.”*

*So look what He says in verse 18, “Do not remember”—do not limit your thinking to the Moses paradigm. Again, that was the most dramatic international, super divine intervention that was seen across the nation with miracles. The most dramatic ever in history was the Moses event.*

*He said, in effect, “But I am going to do something far beyond,” verse 19. I want you to catch this, “it is new.” It is the millennial kingdom. It is a Man coming in the clouds in glory. It is the entire earth transformed to the garden of Eden over a period of time. It is the hostility in the animal kingdom removed. It is…on and on, way beyond what happened in Moses. He says, “It will spring forth.” I love that. It shall spring forth. No matter if it is delayed, and it has been for what? Thirty-five hundred years since Moses and 2,700 years since Isaiah said it. The Spirit of God says that it will come to pass. It shall happen. It* ***shall*** *happen.*

*Now here is the question of the hour. There are groups like ourselves. We look at this. Of course I think it is for the Body of Christ. Shall you not know it? Will you even be familiar with the storyline when it happens? I look at this verse and I say, by the spirit of grace and by the Word of God, “The 150 chapters, yes, we will be aware of it. Lord, we want to be aware of it.” It is a paradigm; there is a completely different level of dimension of power in what happens in the book of Revelation when God transitions the earth to the age to come. Most of the Body of Christ—I am not trying to be negative, because I love the Church—is sleeping. They think, “Oh, Jesus is coming! Great! We are going to be caught up and out of here. It is going to be fantastic.” They go about their business.*

*Beloved, the most dramatic hour in human history is around the corner. I want to be involved in it. I want to be one of the witnesses declaring it, whether to fives or tens or tens of thousands. I do not care what the number is.*

*When He says in verse 19, “Shall you not know it?” then He goes on and says, “I am going to make a road in the wilderness.” That is that famous highway we have talked about at times, that Isaiah talks about. There is going to be a literal highway that the Lord builds in the millennial kingdom. Everything is going to be transformed, nature, etc., etc., etc.*

* + 1. ***Who makes a way in the sea***: God divided the Red Sea, making a path through the waters. When the Lord released the ten plagues of Egypt and divided the Red Sea, it was the proof that He would get involved with Israel in a major way. It is also a model of how He will do it.
		2. ***Who brings forth the chariot and horse***: This speaks of the Egyptian army pursuing Moses.
		3. ***They shall lie down together***: They drowned in the Red Sea and thus shall not rise.
	1. ***Do not remember the former things***: Do not limit your view of what God will do to the miracles that He did in the Exodus (43:16-17). The deliverance of Israel from Egypt was the greatest demonstration of power in history. Never has there been an episode in human history like the exodus event.
		1. In the end times, Jesus will do new things—miracles far surpassing any in history.

15“As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders.”
16The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might…17They shall be afraid of the Lord… (Mic. 7:15-17)

12“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.” (Jn. 14:12)

* + 1. The book of Revelation describes miracles greater that are far greater than those done in the days of Moses. The book of Revelation parallels the deliverance of Egypt, yet magnified on a global level. The Antichrist (the end-time Pharaoh) will be destroy by Jesus, the “greater, end-time Moses.”
	1. ***I will do a new thing***: The ultimate new thing is related to the full blessings of the new covenant including the transformation of nature and the nations in the Millennium (11:6-9; 41:18-20, etc.). The earth will be transformed to the conditions described in garden of Eden. The hostility of the animal kingdom will be totally removed.
	2. ***Shall you not know it***: Isaiah asked if they perceived what God declared about the time when
	He would deliver, save, and transform Israel and fill the earth with glory. The Lord is raising up messengers who will be faithful witnesses of His glory to be released in context to the Millennium. Will you be familiar with the end-time biblical storyline as it unfolds? What will happen in the book of Revelation is a totally new paradigm with an unprecedented measure of power and activity. It will be the most dramatic time in human history.
	3. ***I will make a road in the wilderness***: Isaiah prophesied of the Lord making a road or highway through the wilderness and desert regions in the end times (11:16; 19:23; 35:8; 40:3; 43:19; 57:14; 62:10). This highway will be a great blessing to Jewish refugees walking to Israel after Jesus’ second coming.
	4. ***I will make rivers in the desert***: God promised to provide such abundant rain that there will be rivers even in the deserts (Isa. 30:23-25; 35:1-2; 41:16-20; 43:19-20; 51:3; Jer. 31:9; Joel 2:23).
	5. ***To give drink to My people***: The Lord will provide these rivers to give drink to His people who are walking through the desert as refugees returning to Israel after the second coming.
1. Being a faithful witness for the Lord
	1. The first designation of Jesus in the book of Revelation is as the “faithful witness” of the truth. Jesus stood firm on speaking the truth in His generation, thus understands the challenge to do this.

5…from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness…and the ruler over the kings of the earth. (Rev. 1:5)

*I am going to take about a two or three-minute pause here and just look at the word, witnesses, or the idea of a faithful witness. Isaiah said it twice here in Isaiah 43:10, 12. Then he said it again a third time in Isaiah 44:8. I have all those verses in the notes. Three times, “You are My witnesses. My covenant people are to know what I am doing and to say it. They are not just to wait and wait for the rapture, and then there you have it. They are to be declaring what I am doing. They are My witnesses. I am not going to speak it from an angel in a cloud.” I mean, He might do that someday, but that is not His norm. “I am going to do it through My covenant people.”*

*It is interesting that of all the names of Jesus and titles for Jesus in the book of Revelation the very first designation of Jesus is as a faithful witness, Revelation 1:5. What that means is He spoke the things nobody else would say. Nobody else would say the things Jesus said. Jesus was killed in the human sense because of what He said. He was not killed for miracles, He was killed for what He said. He would not back down. His family was angry at Him. His city rejected Him. In Nazareth, they wanted to kill him. The leadership, the religious leadership, abandoned Him. The political leadership abandoned Him. Even the common people did. He would not back down.*

*There are many, many names and descriptions of Jesus in Revelation. The Father said, as it were, “Jesus, Your first title in the book of Revelation, above everything or the first thing, You are faithful. You would not back down, no matter what it cost You. You said what I say.”*

*I look at that and I say, “Lord, I just love that, by the grace of God.” Some of the things He said, whew! I mean they are good Bible studies, if you are in a friendship group of happy people and all love each other. Boy, to say those things out in the public square, whew! You know we basically kind of stick with the blessing stuff in the Church.*

* 1. John referred himself as one who bore witness to the truths that he saw about the Lord’s end-time plan (Rev 1:2, 9).

2John bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus, to all things that he saw… 9John…was on Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus… (Rev 1:2, 9)

*John the apostle, when he said, “I told you all the things I saw in the book of Revelation,” he used the words, “I was a witness.” He meant the end-time storyline here specifically, not that being a witness is only that. In the book of Revelation he was saying, “I saw everything.” I wonder, would you have said what John said? I mean they are so outside of the box, like what sane person would actually say what he said? Now John is famous. The Bible said it, so therefore it is cool to believe it. John said it for the first time.*

*I cannot imagine what the people said. “John, what on earth? What? Where did you get that?” I am imagining them saying that the day he first heard it and said it.*

* 1. The Lord will raise up two witnesses who will speak out boldly (Rev. 11:3-7).

3I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days [3½ years] …6These have power…to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire. 7When they finish their testimony, the beast [Antichrist]…will kill them. (Rev. 11:3-7)

*Well, the two witnesses. That is what they are called. They are the two messengers. The emphasis is on the fact they are going to say what God is doing. This is not just how to receive Christ and get your sins forgiven. Again, that is the most important message in the personal sense for people. That is where we start. The witnesses declaring the panorama of what is happening is offensive, but it must be made known so that people can adjust to it and line up with it, and not resist it and not draw back in fear and offense, etc.*

* 1. One of the functions of the end-time Church is to be a witness of Jesus and what He is doing.

17And the dragon [Satan] was enraged with the woman [Israel], and he went to make war with…[those] who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.
(Rev. 12:17)

* 1. A faithful witness of the truth must speak in a way that is biblical, clear, bold, tender, and humble. The Lord’s messengers must not speak with a tone of arrogance, anger, or accusation, nor with an argumentative spirit.

24And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient,
25in humility correcting those who are in opposition… (2 Tim. 2:24-25)

1. The Lord was wearied by Israel’s refusal to respond to Him (isa. 43:22-28)
	1. The Lord spoke of His displeasure and judgment for Israel’s sin and lack of worship (43:22-24). As a messenger for the Lord, Isaiah sought to convince Israel to confess their sins to God.

22“But you have not called upon Me, O Jacob; and you have been weary of Me, O Israel…
24You have…burdened Me with your sins, you have wearied Me with your iniquities.”
(Isa. 43:22-24)

*Now what has happened is that the Lord, here in verse 21, has just given these great promises I mentioned that new things are going to happen, things that have never been heard of shall spring up. Will you declare it? There will be a highway built by God in the wilderness. The animal will be touched, and all these great promises.*

*Verse 22, Isaiah looked to the people, and he wrote, “But you,” despite all these promises, “You do not even call on Me. I cannot even get you to respond to Me,” says the Lord. “I cannot get you to respond to Me. You are weary of Me.”*

*So how should a covenant people respond when they hear these grand promises? Well, Israel responded, but they were prayer-less. They did not do anything with it. They said, as it were, “Cool. Now, hey, can I make this deal with you over here?... Can we do that?... I have a house to build…” Like, “Hey, Isaiah, that is cool stuff. I will check in with you maybe next year. I have things I have to do.”*

*The Lord cried out, “But!” This is after all the promises He just laid out that I gave there in verses 19-21. He said, “But you are weary of Me,” says the Lord. “You are not responding to Me.” Verse 24, “But I want you to know, I am weary of you. Not weary of you as a people, but of your nonchalant, unresponsive heart to the grandeur that I am putting before you, the deep affections and tenderness I have for you in your sin and My willingness to forgive you. My desire to have you experience My glory and then to be vessels of that glory. Doesn’t it move you?” He said, “It wearies My heart that none of this interests you, but your sin interests you.”*

* + 1. ***But you***:They still refused to engage in relationship with Him, evenafter the Lord gave them such glorious promises (43:16-21) and communicated His affection to them (34:1, 4).
		2. ***You have not called on Me***: The Israelites should have called on God with gratitude and love in light of 43:19-21.
		3. ***You have wearied Me***: God was burdened and wearied by their refusal to turn from their sin while they continued to offer animal sacrifices to Him “in worship.” Their sacrifices were meaningless without a spirit of loving obedience and gratitude. The Lord was wearied by their hearts unresponsive to the promises of grandeur that He set before them and the deep affections and tenderness in which He spoke to them, even while they were in sin.
	1. The Lord promised to forgive Israel’s guilt—nationally and individually (43:25). However, even the promise of total forgiveness did not motivate them to acknowledge and repent of their sin. Therefore, the Lord was going to discipline Israel (43:28) to wake them up to respond to Him.

25“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins. 26Put Me in remembrance; let us contend together; state your case, that you may be acquitted. 27Your first father sinned, and your mediators [priests] have transgressed against Me. 28Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary; I will give Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.” (Isa. 43:25-28)

*Then He goes on, as it were, “I want to say it again to you. I will blot out your sins. I am not writing you off. I am weary with you. I am not exasperated. My heart is hurting at your inability to be moved by any of these great things: My patience and even the threatening of divine discipline, the warning of persecution, the promise of glory. Everything I am saying here, I am moved by it. I am weary, and it hurts My heart.” Verse 25, He says, “But I want you to know, I want you to know I am going to forgive you.” I mean this is amazing! He says, “I will blot out your sins. I am not even going to remember them.” That is a remarkable thing.*

*When God says He does not remember our sins, it does not mean that intellectually He cannot recall them. That is not what it means. For example, David sinned. He committed adultery and then murdered a man. It is in the Bible. It will be in the Bible forever. It is not like in heaven that chapter got ripped out. It will be in there. David could say, “Thanks, guys! You know it is in the forever in the Bible?” I do not know how he feels about that.*

*When God says, “I will not remember,” it means that our sin will not be in any of the conversation. It will not be in the relationship or in the conversation between us and God. It is forgotten. It never, ever affects or comes up, ever, at all. It does not mean that intellectual God cannot remember it. He is saying that it is not going to be in the conversation. It is not going to be in the relationship. It will not affect us at all at that time. This is a remarkable thing.*

*Now here is an interesting verse, verse 26. He said, “Put Me in remembrance and let us contend together. State your case that you may be acquitted for your father’s sin.” What He is saying is basically, “Israel, you do not really like My read, what I am telling you about your sin. So if I have it wrong, remind me where I am wrong, where I have incorrect information about you. I am very gracious to you, but you think I am overdoing it. So state your case, acquit yourself, and prove where is your dedication that I missed.” This is, again, rhetorical. Anybody who would hear God say this would be silenced in the fear of God, if God were to say, “I dare you to speak up and remind Me of your dedication when I say it was not there.” So this is a rhetorical question.*

*And the answer: no one in Israel stood up and answered this. They just thought, “Ooh, I better be quiet.”*

*He would say, “I am right. Your sins are intensifying.”*

*Then He goes on in verse 28 to prophesy, in essence, the Babylonian judgment. The end of verse 28, He says, “I am going to give you over to reproach.”*

*They are thinking, “What?”*

*He says, “I am going to give you over to reproach.” He makes it clear later that it is Babylon. It took place 150 years later. He says, “But I am going to give you over to reproach.”*

*They are saying, “Reproach? Why?”*

*“Because I cannot wake you up. My promises do not move you. My plan does not move you. The persecution does not move you, the divine discipline. I am going to wake you up.” So He says there is going to be a great reproach. That again is the Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar, 586, the most terrible day in the Old Testament history when the city of Jerusalem was burned, the temple was burned, and the nation was brought into work camps in Babylon. It was a horrible, horrible time. That was 150 years from this. He says, “That is really going to happen.”*

* 1. ***Blots out your transgressions***: The Lord will completely forgive and erase Israel’s transgressions and will not remember their sins. He does this for His own ask and because of who He is as the “God who delights in mercy” (Mic. 7:18). Salvation is by grace in spite of their sin. This message gives the end-time Laodicean church great hope of being restored by His great mercy.

18…He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. (Mic. 7:18)

* 1. ***Put Me in remembrance***: God invited His people to correct Him if what He had said about their sin was not true. He asked Israel to remind Him of anything He had forgotten about their obedience.
	2. ***Your first father sinned*** (43:27): Israel’s sin was traceable back to their first father Jacob (v. 22; cf. Deut. 26:5; Hos. 12:2-4). Israel had a long history of stubbornness.
	3. ***I will profane the princes of the sanctuary***: The princes of the sanctuary were the primary leaders over Israel’s priesthood (1 Chr. 24:5). Their office was “profaned” as they were stripped of their priestly authority and carried into Babylonian captivity with the other captives (2 Kgs. 25:18).
	4. ***I will give Jacob to the curse***: The Hebrew word “curse” can be translated “devote to destruction.” The Septuagint translates this as “I have given Jacob to be destroyed.” This occurred 150 years later when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, which caused the daily sacrifice to cease.
	5. ***I will give Israel to reproaches***: God used Babylon to discipline Israel for their rebellion to Him.
		1. Jesus prophesied that Israel would come under divine discipline by the Romans (Lk. 19:44).
		2. John prophesied that Israel would be persecuted by the Antichrist (Rev. 12-13).
1. The Lord will pour out His Spirit (Isa. 44:1-5)
	1. God proved His deity, covenant love, and promise by delivering the Jewish people from captivity in Babylon (43:25) and from the power and penalty of their sins (44:1-5). The promise to Israel includes the regathering of the refugees to Israel (43:5-7), the outpouring of the Spirit (44:3),
	a great increase of their population (44:4), and being established in a new spiritual identity (44:5).

1Yet hear now, O Jacob…2Thus says the Lord…who will help you: “Fear not, O Jacob My servant; and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. 3…I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring…5One 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.” (Isa. 44:1-5)

*Okay, let’s look at chapter 44, verse 1. He has said, “Okay, you are going to be disciplined by Babylon.” Then later we find out from Jesus that they are going to be disciplined by Rome in AD 70. We find out by the prophets and John that the Antichrist empire is going to rise up at the end of the age.*

*So there is this element of discipline regardless what season. Some commentators will say, “Well, this was the Assyrian invasion.” Or the Babylonian one. Or the Roman one. Those are the three big ones. Which one is it? I say that it does not really matter. The point of it was it was a divine discipline and they did need to wake up. That is the real point. You could debate if it was Assyria or Babylon or Rome. You could go back and forth on the historical information.*

*The real point is, God says, “I am going to wake you up.” Look what He says the very next phrase after He says, “I am going to give you over to reproach,” 43:28. Again, when you read the whole story, it is the Babylonian captivity. It is reproach beyond reproach. It is the destruction of Jerusalem. It is a horrible hour.*

*Look at the first thing God says in Isaiah 44:1. Remember there was no chapter break. So He is still in the same conversation. He would say, “Do not pause now. I am in the middle of the conversation.” He says in Isaiah 44:1, “Yet hear now, O Jacob. I am going to help you.” That is, “Yes, I am going to discipline you in Babylon, but I am going to help you. Do not be afraid even though you are scattered abroad. Your purpose is not going be nullified. I am staying true to My covenant. I am staying true to My purposes for you. My purposes will not be canceled out.” Yes, there would be personal grievances and tragedies in the midst of it, and they have said a number of times that Israel was finished. “No, have no fear. Your national identity, your purposes, will come to full glory.” He says, “Fear not, O Jacob.” He says, “and you, Jeshurun.” Jeshurun is another name for Israel. This is an affectionate term. It is an affectionate term which means “My upright one, My beloved upright one.”*

*So He says, in effect, “Yes, Babylon is coming to discipline you, you sinful nation. Here now you are Jacob, you deceiver, you twister. Oh, but you are Jeshurun. You are My delight and My beloved. You are going to be a prince with God.” So He uses this affectionate tone even in the midst of warning them of the Babylonian judgment coming. Why do we care about this? Because God never changes, so the storyline of Israel’s ancient past gives snapshots and foreshadowing of the end-time storyline. We look at these little snapshots that happened in a short period of time years ago. The Lord would say, “Now imagine that on a global level with far more intensity. The negative is more intense, and the power and the glory are more intense. Study the little foreshadowing shots and see the big panorama of what I am doing.”*

*So when I look at these, this is really personal. It is not like I am just a historian studying ancient history. Although there is an element where we study the history to get the storyline, the goal is to apply the storyline since God never changes. God might say, “Why do you think I gave this story? Because Israel is a very small nation, and the Word of God is eternal. You think I put their story in for the X amount thousands of people that lived in that hour? It is My storyline. It is a big storyline. It is going to have a global dimension at the end of the age.”*

*He said, “Hear now, Jacob, oh Jeshurun, My beloved. I know you are going to be disciplined by Babylon, but,” verse 3, “remember I am going to pour My Spirit out on you. You are going to have the greatest outpouring of the Holy Spirit.” Now this is going to happen in fullness when the Lord returns. Again, the Spirit has been poured out now, but there is a great global outpouring that is yet awaiting.*

*Then in verse 5, and I will not develop this now, He says, “This outpouring of the Spirit is going to move you so deeply.” This is unbelieving Israel He is talking to. “You will be so deeply and thoroughly changed and transformed by this outpouring that one of you will say of your spiritual identity, ‘I am the Lord’s.’ The other one will say, ‘No, I am going to identify with the weakness of Jacob. I am so grateful that God forgave me because I am so much like Jacob. I understand that.’ The other guy says, ‘No, I am going to write with my hand that I am just the Lord’s.’ The other guy says, ‘No, I am Israel.’”*

*These are just different spiritual ways the different individuals are going to see themselves before the Lord. The point being, there is going to be such a massive outpouring of the Holy Spirit. People are going to identify themselves, this unbelieving nation, with such close identity with Jesus of Nazareth, with the God of Israel. They name themselves according to different facets of how they are responding to him. That is what verse 5 is talking about.*

* 1. ***Yet hear now***: A call to pay close attention to a word of promise so that they will not fear (44:2). This phrase looks back just one verse to the prophesy of a military invasion (43:28). The promises in 44:1-5 follow Isaiah’s prophecy of divine discipline in 43:28 similar to the way the promises in 43:1-2 followed his prophecy of divine discipline in 42:25.
		1. Both passage 42:25 and 43:28 describe God’s discipline on Israel by a military invasion but without identifying which invasion was specifically intended—Israel’s most destructive military invasions were by Assyria in 701 BC, Babylon in 586 BC, and Rome in AD 70. They are all previews of the ultimate military invasion by the end-time Antichrist’s armies.
		2. The trouble in past generations were snapshots and previews of the end time storyline.
		3. ***Fear not***: They were to be assured that God’s purpose for the nation was not canceled.
	2. ***Jeshurun***: The name *Jeshurun* was used in the place of *Israel*. It was a poetic name for Israel, used with affection, meaning, *My dear upright people* (Deut. 32:5; 33:5, 26). Even though Israel had sinned in grievous way, the Lord saw her in the perspective of her destiny in His grace—as upright. The Lord spoke with an affectionate tone, even in the midst of disciplining the nation.
	3. ***I will pour My Spirit:*** The Lord promised to pour out His Spirit on Israel. The giving of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was only a down payment or partial fulfillment of the Old Testament promises for outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit will empower people be faithful witnesses.
		1. God promised to pour out His Spirit on *all* believers (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17-21).
		2. The number of believers with “charismatic” theology and experience has grown in the last 100 years from about *1 million* (1920) to *60 million* (1970) to over *600 million* today.
		3. The day of Pentecost was a partial fulfillment of God’s promise of a global outpouring of the Spirit. First, the Spirit touched 120 people in the upper room (Acts 1-2).
		4. We must be people of the Word and the Spirit. We are hungry for the presence of the Spirit; we are hungry for the Word. Jesus will bring the Word and the Spirit together in His body.

*Okay verse 6, I am going to mention again, He said, “I am going to pour out My spirit.” We know that began on the day of Pentecost. Beloved, that was a down payment. That was a partial fulfillment of the global outpouring. The outpouring of the Spirit that happened on Pentecost touched 120 people, then it touched 3,000, then it touched 5,000. Now today they say there are 600,000,000 people that have charismatic theology and experiences, 600,000,000 in the earth. That is a number that a number of different historians stand by. I do not know how accurate it is, but that is the number that being used.*

*There is a far greater outpouring that is even yet to come. What I am saying is that as messengers, as faithful witnesses, it is absolutely necessary to be Holy Spirit people. That is, we cannot just be people of the Book. We have to be people of the Book* ***and*** *people of the Spirit. We do not choose one or the other. We are hungry for the presence of the Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit. We are hungry for the Book, for the written Word, as well. We are bringing the Word and the Spirit together.*

* 1. ***Spiritual identity***: To call oneself by the name of another expresses honor and affection toward that person. Believers in Israel will deeply desire to associate publicly with the Lord Jesus and with Jacob and Israel. These three names have brought great reproach on people who stood for them in the past. Yet, in the future, people will boldly associate themselves with these three names.

5One 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.” (Isa. 44:5)

* + 1. ***I am the Lord’s***: Some will emphasize that they are the Lord’s or belong to the Lord. The name of Jesus is one of the most hated names in Jewish history. It will become the most famous and honored name in Israel in the future.
		2. ***Name of Jacob***: Some with humility will emphasize that they were like Jacob, the deceiver. He should call himself as being like Jacob.
		3. ***Another will write with his hand***: The writing was not on the hand, but “with” the hands as in making a solemn covenant by which people pledged themselves to God’s service (Jer. 32:10-12, 44; cf. Neh. 9:38)
		4. ***Name himself by Israel***: Some will take the name of Israel as a title of honor.
1. Who is like our God (Isa. 44:6-8)
	1. Isaiah highlighted three faces of God associated with the ministry of being His witnesses (44:6-8). The Lord will strengthen His messengers by seeing Him as King, Redeemer, and the Lord of hosts.

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…7Who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me…8Do not fear…have I not told you…and declared it? You are My witnesses.’” (Isa. 44:6-8)

*Next, there are three faces of God that are highlighted. Then He calls them again, “My witnesses,” in verse 8. Look at verses 6-8. Look at verse 8. He says again, “You are My witnesses.” What I want you to see as He is emphasizing this witness/messenger ministry, I want you to see the three faces of Jesus that Isaiah highlighted. These are going to be an important part of those who are the witnesses for the Lord. Again, every believer is a witness, but I am talking specifically about witnessing to His plans in the nations. Because that was the challenge He had with the idolaters when He said, “Tell Me My plans. Tell Me global plans. Tell Me the big picture stuff,” He adds, “because My guys are going to say it across the nations, these witnesses, these messengers.”*

* 1. ***You are My witnesses*** (44:8): God called Israel to be His witnesses or messengers. Every believer is a witness, but some will give witness to His plans in the generation in which He transitions the earth to the age to come.
	2. Jesus presented Himself as Bridegroom, King, and Judge (Mt. 24-25). A King with power, a Bridegroom with desire for relationship, and a Judge with zeal to remove all the hinders love.

*In verse 6, there are three faces of the Lord that are going to be prominent. Now I like to say, “Bridegroom, King, and Judge,” because in the teaching of Jesus, Matthew 24-25, He presents Himself in a primary way at the end of the age as Bridegroom, King, and Judge. He is a King with power, He is a Bridegroom with desire for relationship, and He is a Judge with zeal to confront everything that hinders love. There is no contradiction in Him as Bridegroom, King, and Judge. There are several places in the Scripture where those three faces of God come together. Here I can see these three faces right here in verse 6.*

* + 1. ***King of Israel*** (41:21; 43:15): Jesus will be openly received as King of kings when He returns (Rev 19:16). As king, He controls history, rules all nations including Israel, and establishes new laws and social institutions based on justice and righteousness in Israel and throughout the whole world.

*Well as King, we know what King means, or at least we have an idea.*

* + 1. ***His redeemer***: This title reveals God’s covenant relationship to Israel as her near-kinsman. The redeemer is associated with the slain Lamb and with the Bridegroom who contends for relationship (Rev. 21:9). The Lord is orchestrating history to save Israel, not to destroy her.

9…saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.” (Rev. 21:9)

*As Redeemer, He is Jehovah Redeemer. That is the God of the covenant relationship. The God of the family covenant. I put in here the association of the Redeemer with the Lamb that was slain. The Bride and the Lamb, Revelation 21:9–this has the tone of the Bridegroom God. The God of covenant in family relationship who is fighting for the relationship, the Redeemer to recover all that is lost in the relationship. So I would put Bridegroom there.*

* + 1. ***The Lord of hosts***: “Host” speaks of “the armies of heaven.” Jesus is the Lord of the armies of heaven who is coming as the divine Warrior to confront evil and darkness in the earth. As the divine Warrior, Jesus will fight for Israel. He is a zealous Judge whose judgments are released to remove all that hinders love.

*Then the Lord of hosts. You know the word, when it says the Lord of hosts, the word “host” means the armies of heaven. He is the God of the armies of heaven. He is the Judge. He is the One who is coming with great zeal to confront darkness in the earth. He is the Lord of hosts. He is coming in a military fashion as the divine warrior, the zealous Judge to confront everything that is coming against His people.*

*So when I see these three, these three realities of Jesus in the lips of Isaiah—King, Redeemer, and Lord of host—I can clearly see in them Bridegroom, King, and Judge as well.*

* 1. ***The First and Last***: This title describes the Lord’s sovereignty over history. He alone is the orchestrator of history. All history, from the first to the last events, is under His leadership.

*It is interesting that Isaiah mentions the Lord as being the first and the last. This one is the primary title for Jesus in the book of Revelation. He is the first and the last. John is actually quoting Isaiah 44.*

* + 1. The Lord has a plan for His people that cannot be stopped. He oversees every detail. Nothing will surprise Him. Nothing can hinder Him. Therefore, we need not fear because the ultimate plan will come to pass even though there is resistance along the way.
		2. The First and the Last is the title Jesus used most in Revelation (Rev. 1:11, 17; 2:8; 22:13).
		This title is an interpretive key to connect the storyline of Isaiah with the storyline of Revelation, concluding that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah and Yahweh, the First and Last.
		3. Jesus as a man is first in prominence and authority. He was the first man to conquer death and to be raised from the dead (Col. 1:15, 18; Rev. 5:12). Jesus associated this title with His physical suffering, death, and resurrection to encourage believers not to fear martyrdom. Jesus suffered a cruel death; He understands our suffering.

17Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore…I have the keys of Hades and of Death.” (Rev. 1:17-18)

8These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life…10Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer…be faithful until death. (Rev. 2:8-10)

* 1. ***Do not fear***: Even though Israel was to experience hard times, God told them that He would help them through it and even use the trouble to give them a greater voice as witnesses of Him and His kingdom.
	2. Isaiah exposed the folly of trusting in idols (44:9-20). The Holy Spirit stirred Isaiah to emphasize the foolishness and vanity of idolatry. One very important issues in the generation that the Lord returns is worshipping idols. This will be related to the Antichrist’s image and the mark of the Beast (Rev. 13:14-18). Idolatry will be practiced across the nations (Rev. 9:20).

20But the rest of mankind…did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood… (Rev. 9:20)

* 1. The Lord called them to remember and repent, and He promised not to forget them and to blot out their sins (44:21-22).

21“Remember these...for you are My servant…you will not be forgotten by Me! 22I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions…Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”
(Isa. 44:21-22)

*Well, I will just end with this. He says in verse 21, here is what I want you to do. That is, “I have two things I want you to do and two things I promised you. I want you to remember these things. Remember them. I want you,” verse 22, “to return to Me, to repent. I want you to break your agreement with darkness. I want you to remember these things.” The call to remember is one of the primary exhortations in the Bible, the call to remember: remember the promises, remember the storyline, remember what this is about. When we do not put energy into remembering what happens, because we are human beings we are prone to drift. We prone to forget, then, when we forget, we drift from the mandates that He gave us. Then when we drift from them, we do not engage with them anymore. Then we drift away from them. Then five years go by and we cannot remember. “Well, we used to really be into that. I do not know. I am not really into that anymore.”*

*The Lord would say, “You should have remembered.”*

*I find it takes intentionality to remember. That is one thing that I really appreciate about this class in which we are studying the 150 chapters. We are remembering week by week. Again, there are about twenty-five facets in these 150 chapters. All of them have little nuances. The twenty-five—that is a made-up number—there are about twenty-five big events. I am going to try to list them all according to my understanding. It is not a real big list to get the whole thing. I want to remember: remember what we are doing, why we are doing it, where it is going. The negative obstacles, the setbacks, the promises, the outpouring of the Spirit, the purified Church, the Antichrist. I want to remember what is going on. I do not want to get lost over in social-media world, in some fantasy world over there about what everybody is doing or what everybody is thinking or what they are having for lunch or something.*

* + 1. ***Remember***: The call to “remember” is one of the most emphasized exhortations in the Scripture, with over 80 references. We are must be intentional to “remember.”
			1. We are to remember the biblical narrative and our calling as His witnesses. We are intentionally remembering, week by week, by studying the 150 end-time chapters.
			2. If we cease to remember, then we will begin to neglect to engage in the things to which God called us, and then we will drift away from our calling and find ourselves with a different perspective and changing priorities from those we embraced in former days.
		2. ***Return***: To repent or to break our agreement with darkness
		3. ***You will not be forgotten***: The Lord will show Himself reliable and true to all His promises.
		4. ***I will blot out your sins***: Israel has not gone too far, and it is not too late. Since God promised to forgive rebellious Israel, we have confidence that the Lord’s mercy is so glorious that He will forgive anyone who cries out to Him.
	1. The prophetic oracle in Isaiah 41-44 crescendos with a call to celebrate what the Lord has done. God’s messengers are to “fully engage” with the Lord by singing about and declaring what the Lord has done.

23Sing, 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. 44:23)

* 1. Isaiah began a new prophetic oracle related to Cyrus and the restoration of Jerusalem (44:24-45:13) and many Gentile nations coming to know the Lord (45:6, 14-25).

*Well, amen and amen! Let’s stand before the Lord. Remember, remember, remember! I forgot to mention the two promises. He says, I will blot out your sins. In other words, you have not gone too far and it is not too late. Israel, if you will remember, I will cover you again and again and again and again. I love it. The Lord says, “I will push ‘delete,’ and we will start fresh again.” Isn’t that beautiful? Isn’t that beautiful? “Remember the storyline and do not come under condemnation. Repent and let it go, and run with Me with a heart of confidence.”*

*So I want to pray for people who are saying in their heart, “Lord, I need to remember. I need to remember what this is about. I need to forget the things I already repented of. I need no condemnation. I need to stand with confidence before the Lord,” because if God would call Israel in rebellion to this glorious thing, He will call anybody.*