

“FOR I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NO OTHER”

Isaiah 43-45

Introduction

- 1) **God vs. idols** (false religions) has been an ongoing struggle throughout human history
 - a) Idolatry is man’s material worldly substitution for the true God and His revelation of truth
- 2) The whole reasoning and practice of idolatry is deception and foolishness (Deut. 4:15-19, 25; Rom. 1:22-25; 1 Jn. 5:21)
- 3) God warns against being deceived and destroyed by idolatry – shameful (Isa. 44:9-11)
- 4) The foolishness of idolatry and the greatness of the true God is highlighted in Isaiah 43-45

I) The Lord will Deliver Israel, His Witnesses (43:1-21)

- A) “But now,” God would not destroy all of Israel – “Fear not! (vv. 1, 5a)
 - 1) God had created, formed, redeemed, and called Israel – “You are Mine”
- B) Lord will be with Israel – the faithful remnant is loved by God and He will protect and bring it back [from captivity] (vv. 2-7)
- C) Israel is Jehovah’s “witnesses” to all the nations that He is the one, true God and there is no other God besides Him (vv. 8-13; 44:8; cf. Deut. 4:32-40; Josh. 2:8-11)
- D) For Israel’s sake, Lord would bring Babylon down – fall of Babylon [539 BC] (vv. 14-15)
- E) God would do a “new thing” – return of remnant from captivity (vv. 16-21)

II) The Indifference of Israel, Yet Not Totally Destroyed (43:22-28)

- A) Unfaithful Israel had not called on God and became weary of Him [His ways] (v. 22)
 - 1) Wearied of bringing honorable and reverent sacrifices to worship God (vv. 23-24a)
 - 2) They burdened and wearied God with their unfaithfulness (v. 24b; cf. Mal. 1:13)
- B) Only by God’s grace, not by their goodness, will they be spared severe and complete punishment/destruction (vv. 25-28)

III) God will Bless Israel – the Faithful Remnant (44:1-5)

- A) Jacob/Israel, God’s servant, will be preserved – God would pour His Spirit on their descendants and they will spring up as God’s faithful people (vv. 1-5)
 - 1) Fulfillment begins in faithful remnant, and completed in the spiritual blessings of the Messianic kingdom (cf. Joel 2:28-29; Zech. 12:10)
 - 2) Spirit was eventually poured out in the kingdom of Christ for miraculous gifts and for revelation, indwelling, and sealing (Acts 2:17, 33; Eph. 3:5; Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 1:22)

IV) The True God vs Foolish Idols (44:6-20)

- A) God is King, Redeemer, Lord of Hosts, First and Last, who alone is God (v. 6)
 - 1) Challenge to any who would speak as God – declare the future as God does (vv. 7-8)
- B) Foolishness of idolatry (vv. 9-20)
 - 1) Idols profit their makers nothing but shame (vv. 9-11)
 - 2) Blacksmith wearies in making and fashioning an idol (v. 12)
 - 3) Craftsman fashions an idol from trees he plants and cuts, using half the wood to make the idol to worship and half to burn in a fire to warm himself (vv. 13-17)
 - 4) Idol makers and worshippers are too self-deceived to understand how foolish their actions and beliefs are (vv. 18-20)

V) Israel Will be Redeemed and Restored (44:21 – 45:13)

- A) God formed Israel, His servant, and will not forget them – redeemed them as a faithful remnant (vv. 21-23)
- B) God confirms the truth of His coming promises of deliverance and restoration based on His sovereign power and greatness (vv. 24-27)
- C) Prophecy of **Cyrus** (44:28 – 45:13)
 - 1) Cyrus II, the Great, of Persia [ca. 580-530 BC]; reigned 559-530 BC
 - 2) This prophecy by Isaiah (who prophesied between 739-690 BC) is over 100 years before Cyrus was born and over 130 years before he reigned!
 - 3) Cyrus is God’s “shepherd” to enable rebuilding Jerusalem and temple (44:28)
 - 4) Cyrus is God’s “anointed” [chosen one] whose right hand God would strengthen to subdue nations and make straight paths through broken gates (vv. 1-3a)
 - 5) This was done that Cyrus may know the power of the one true God of Israel who called him by “name” even though Cyrus did not know God (vv. 3b-5)
 - a) Josephus, the Jewish historian, states that Cyrus read Isaiah’s prophecies and was motivated to fulfill what was written about him (*Antiquities* 11.1.1)
 - 6) God is all-powerful to do His will on earth for His elect people (vv. 6-8)
 - 7) Some apparently questioned God’s ways, as though the clay pottery could object to the potter; God is the great Maker – we must submit to His will (vv. 9-12)
 - a) God will raise up Cyrus to build His city and free His exiles (v. 13)!

VI) The Lord is the Only God and Savior of Israel (45:14-25)

- A) Gentiles will acknowledge the God of Israel (v. 14)
- B) The God of Israel is the Savior; idol-makers, not God’s people, will be ashamed (vv. 15-17)
 - 1) God created, formed, made, and established the heavens and earth (v. 18; Gen. 1:1)
 - 2) God has spoken openly and those who seek will find Him (v. 19; cf. Acts 17:24-27)
- C) God of Israel stands alone as a true, just God and Savior (vv. 20-21)
 - 1) All who bow before God and take an oath will have righteousness and strength, and Israel will be justified and shall glory (vv. 22-25)

Conclusion

Everyone who would bow before the authority and grace of God now must do so before the throne of *Messiah Jesus, the Son of God*, who has been exalted on high (Phil. 2:9-11). He is the complete and final fulfillment of what God intended through His Servant for our salvation.