



ISAIAH 43

PROMISE OF RESTORATION ~ GOD’S WITNESS ~ GOD, ISRAEL’S PROTECTOR ~ GOD WILL DO A NEW THING

Encouragement! Encouragement! This is no time to sit back and mourn about what you don’t have. What the Lord has placed in your hand today is beyond any difficulty. It’s beyond any sorrow. This is a new day! This is a new era! “Don’t you perceive it?”

Isaiah 43 delivers a powerful word of encouragement to anyone who desires to operate in the spirit of the Sons of Issachar, anyone who seeks to “know the time and what to do in response” to the time we find ourselves in. Why not grab hold of this word from the Lord, wrap your arms around it and make it yours? Why not believe that what Yahweh was speaking to his people Israel, is available to us today? Why not begin to walk out the reality of this very encouraging word in our lives TODAY?

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Notes	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>Isaiah 43:1 But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. 3 For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you. 4 Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you, I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life.</p>	<p>a 43:1 Jacob was created, but Israel was formed. God forms (transforms) Jacob into Israel. God is seen here as the one who changes the nature of man. See Gen. 32:28.</p> <p>b 43:2 God’s method of deliverance is often not “out of” but “through.” His presence as we go through difficulties becomes our deliverance. See Ps. 23:4.</p> <p>c 43:3 Seba was an African nation that bordered Egypt. God is saying that there is no price too high for him to pay to set his people free. In the days of Isaiah, these nations (Egypt, Cush, and Seba) were united as one dynasty. They were given in exchange, as it were, to Persia for Israel’s future deliverance through the successors of Cyrus.</p> <p>d 43:4 Or “dear, costly, of great price.”</p> <p>e 43:4 This is the Hebrew word for “glory” (kabad).</p> <p>f 43:4 Or “people” (Heb. adam). God gave up a Man (the last “Adam,” 1 Cor. 15:45) for those who are precious to him.</p>	<p>Promise of Restoration</p> <p>Isaiah 43:1 Now, this is what Yahweh says: “Listen, Jacob, to the One who created you, Israel, to the one who shaped who you are. a Do not fear, for I, your Kinsman-Redeemer, will rescue you. I have called you by name, and you are mine. 2 When you pass through b the deep, stormy sea, you can count on me to be there with you. When you pass through raging rivers, You will not drown. When you walk through persecution like fiery flames, you will not be burned; the flames will not harm you, 3 for I am your Savior, Yahweh, your mighty God, the Holy One of Israel! I give up Egypt as the price to set you free, Cush and Seba in exchange to bring you back. c 4 Since you are cherished and precious d in my eyes, and because I love you dearly and want to honor e you, I willingly give up nations in exchange for you— a man f to save your life.</p>

English Standard (ESV)

⁵ Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you. ⁶ I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, ⁷ everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”

⁸ Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears! ⁹ All the nations gather together, and the peoples assemble. Who among them can declare this, and show us the former things? Let them bring their witnesses to prove them right, and let them hear and say, It is true. ¹⁰ “You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. ¹¹ I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no savior. ¹² I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and I am God. ¹³ Also henceforth I am he; there is none who can deliver from my hand; I work, and who can turn it back?”

¹⁴ Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “For your sake I send to Babylon and bring them all down as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, in the ships in which they rejoice. ¹⁵ I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.”

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, ¹⁷ who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: ¹⁸ “Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. ¹⁹ Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ²⁰ The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, ²¹ the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.

Passion Translation (TPT)

g 43:5 Or “your seed.”

h 43:7 Isaiah is prophesying of Israel’s restoration and foretelling of a great worldwide harvest among the nations as a fulfillment of the Feast of Ingathering (Harvest) known as Tabernacles.

i 43:7 Or “for my glory.”

j 43:7 We were created both to bring God glory and to experience his glory. See Rom. 8:30; Rev. 4:11.

k 43:9 Or “who of them.”

l 43:12 Or “proclaimed,” a word often used for proclaiming what is to come (v. 9).

m 43:13 Or “Ever since day was, I am he.”

n 43:14 It is a beautiful thought that the Holy One, who must punish evil, is also our Kinsman-Redeemer. He loves us so much that he became the sacrifice to return us to God. See Lev. 25:25; Ruth 3:9; 4:14; Isa. 44:24.

o 43:14 Or “in ships their joyful shout.” The Hebrew of this clause is uncertain.

p 43:16 Jesus, walking on the water, made a way (or journey) in the sea. See Ps. 77:19.

q 43:17 Or “led out (to destruction).”

r 43:17 Chariots and horses are frequent biblical metaphors for the strength of the flesh.

s 43:19 See Amos 3:7.

t 43:19 Or “paths” (Dead Sea scroll 1QIsaa). See John 7:37–39.

u 43:20 The beast is a common biblical metaphor for human nature. See Ps. 73:22.

v 43:20 The Hebrew word for “jackals” (tannim) and can be translated “dragon.”

w 43:21 See 1 Peter 2:9–10.

Passion Translation (TPT)

⁵ I am with you now, even close to you, so never yield to fear. I will bring your children **g** from the east; from the west I will gather you. ⁶ I will say to the north, ‘Hand them over!’ and to the south, ‘Don’t hold them back!’ Bring me my sons from far away, my daughters from the ends of the earth! ⁷ Bring me everyone who is called by my name, **h** the ones I created to experience my glory. **i** I myself formed them to be who they are and made them for my glory.” **j**

God’s Witness

⁸ Lead out those who have eyes but are blind, those who have ears but are deaf. ⁹ Let all the nations gather together and the people assemble. Which of their gods **k** prophesied this? Which of them foretold what is about to happen? “Let them bring out their witnesses to make their case; let them take the stand and testify, “It is true.” ¹⁰ Yahweh says, “You are my witnesses, my chosen servants. I chose you in order that you would know me intimately, believe me always, and fully understand that I am the only God. There was no god before me, and there will be no other god after me. ¹¹ I, only I, am Yahweh, and there is no Savior-God but me. ¹² I am the only one who revealed this to you. I saved you, foretold **l** the future, and brought it to pass. It was not some foreign god who did this! You are my witnesses that I am God,” declares Yahweh. ¹³ “From the very beginning, I am the only God! **m** No one can be snatched from my hand. When I choose to act, who can reverse it?”

God, Israel’s Protector

¹⁴ This is what Yahweh, your Kinsman-Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, says: **n** “For your good, I will send for the Babylonians; I will bring them all as fugitives and turn the shouting of the Chaldeans into mourning. **o** ¹⁵ I am Yahweh, your Holy One and your King “the Creator of Israel.”

God Will Do a New Thing

¹⁶ Yahweh is the one who makes a way in the sea, a pathway in the mighty waters. **p** ¹⁷ He destroyed **q** chariots and horses **r** and all their mighty warriors. They fell, never to rise again—gone forever, snuffed out like a wick. This is what he says: ¹⁸ “Stop dwelling on the past. Don’t even remember these former things. ¹⁹ I am doing something brand new, something unheard of. Even now it sprouts and grows and matures. Don’t you perceive it? **s** I will make a way in the wilderness and open up flowing streams **t** in the desert. ²⁰ Wild beasts, **u** jackals, and owls will glorify me. **v** For I supply streams of water in the desert and rivers in the wilderness to satisfy the thirst of my people, my chosen ones, ²¹ so that you, whom I have shaped and formed for myself, will proclaim my praise. **w**

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Translation (TPT)	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>²² “Yet you did not call upon me, O Jacob; but you have been weary of me, O Israel! ²³ You have not brought me your sheep for burnt offerings, or honored me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you with offerings, or wearied you with frankincense. ²⁴ You have not bought me sweet cane with money, or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices. But you have burdened me with your sins; you have wearied me with your iniquities.</p> <p>²⁵ “I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins. ²⁶ Put me in remembrance; let us argue together; set forth your case, that you may be proved right. ²⁷ Your first father sinned, and your mediators transgressed against me. ²⁸ Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary, and deliver Jacob to utter destruction and Israel to reviling.</p>	<p>x 43:22 Or “weary yourself (with longing).”</p> <p>y 43:24 See Heb. 13:15.</p> <p>z 43:25 This is doubly emphatic in the Hebrew. God refers to himself with fifteen emphatic personal pronouns in this chapter.</p> <p>aa 43:25 Or “for my own sake.”</p> <p>ab 43:27 Some believe this to be a reference to Abraham, Jacob, or Adam.</p> <p>ac 43:27 This is most likely the teaching priests.</p> <p>ad 43:28 One ancient manuscript reads “Your rulers (priests) profaned my holy sanctuary.”</p>	<p>²² Yet you did not call out to me, O Jacob. Are you so weary x of me, O Israel? ²³ You have not brought me your sheep for burnt offerings or honored me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you by requiring many grain offerings or wearied you with demands for frankincense. ²⁴ You did not buy me fragrant calamus reeds or lavish me with the fat of your sacrifices. y Instead, you have burdened me with your many sins and wearied me with your evil deeds.</p> <p>²⁵ I, yes I, am the One and Only, z “who completely erases your sins, never to be seen again. I will not remember them again. Freely I do this because of who I am! aa ²⁶ Help me remember the past. Let’s debate! Bring me your version to prove your innocence. ²⁷ Your earliest ancestor ab sinned, and your spokesmen ac rebelled against me. ²⁸ So I brought disgrace on the holy priests of the holy sanctuary ad and brought destruction to Jacob, humiliation and scorn to Israel.</p>

Bible Knowledge Commentary

JOHN A. MARTIN

- **A PROMISE TO REGATHER THE UNWORTHY SERVANT** (43:1-44:5) Judah’s exile was pictured as drawing to a close (40:2) for the Lord was raising up a leader who would release them (41:2-4, 25). God would also raise up a Servant, the Messiah, to give them spiritual release (42:1-17). However, the nation was still in spiritual captivity (42:18-25). Now the Lord exhorted the nation not to fear (43:1-7) for their condition would show the world that He is truly the only God (43:8-13). He would restore them from Babylon, bringing them back home in a new “Exodus” (43:14-28). Therefore He said again they were not to fear (44:1-5).
 - **Israel exhorted not to fear** (43:1-7)
 - **43:1-2.** Jacob (also called Israel; see comments on 40:27) need have no fear in her captivity because God had created (cf. v. 7) and formed her (cf. vv. 7, 21; 44:2, 24) and had redeemed her from bondage in Egypt. “Redeemed” translates, “to buy out of slavery” (cf. comments on “Redeemer” in 41:14 and note “redeemed” in 44:22-23; 48:20; 52:9; 63:9). Reference to this Exodus was fitting in view of what Isaiah wrote in 43:14-28 about a new “Exodus” in which God would bring the people back to their homeland from Babylon. To be called (cf. 48:12) by name points up Israel’s special relationship with the LORD as His covenant people. This is similar to a shepherd calling his sheep by name in his personal care for them. Because of God’s past work in creating, redeeming, and caring for Israel, He would continue to protect her. Therefore in difficult times, pictured as floodwaters and fire, Israel should not give up and fear, for God would be with her and protect her.
 - **43:3-4.** A second reason Israel need not fear is that God loves her. This special love is not because of something the nation did or some quality she possesses. It is because of His choosing. As a ransom or reward for releasing the Jewish captives, Persia was enabled by God to conquer Egypt ... Cush

(modern-day southern Egypt, all of Sudan, and northern Ethiopia), and Seba, possibly the same as Sheba in southern Arabia (cf. 60:6; Job 6:19; 1 Kings 10:1-13) where the Sabeans lived (cf. Job 1:15; Isa. 45:14; Ezek. 23:42; Joel 3:8). In contrast with non-Israelites (represented by these three nations), Israel is precious and honored because of God's love.

- **43:5-7.** A third reason Israel need not fear (do not be afraid; cf. 41:10, 14; 44:2, 8; 54:4) is that God, who was with them (cf. 41:10), promised to bring them back to their land. Though Isaiah was referring primarily to the restoration from Babylon (2 Chron 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4), he was also speaking of a wider regathering. At the second coming of Christ Israel will be regathered to her land (Matt. 24:31) from around the world—from the east ... west (Isa. 43:5), north, and south (v. 6), and even from the ends of the earth (see comments on 5:26). These regathered ones who will be called by God's name and are those He created (cf. 43:1) and formed (cf. vv. 1, 21; 44:2, 24) for His glory (cf. 44:23); they will display His attributes.
- **Israel to be a witness to the world (43:8-13)**
 - **43:8-10.** God invited Israel, still spiritually blind and deaf (cf. 42:20; 48:8), to be brought before the nations. God challenged the nations to bring ... witnesses to try to prove that they could predict the future (cf. 41:21-23). Then He said that the Israelites, as His witnesses (cf. 43:12; 44:8) and His chosen servant (cf. 41:8-9), demonstrate that He is the only God (43:10). He existed before any god was made, and He will continue to exist long after the last idol perishes.
 - **43:11-13.** The Lord's deliverance of Israel also shows that He is the true God. He is her only Savior and no one can oppose His plans. "Savior" is another title of God that Isaiah used frequently (cf. 17:10; 43:3; 45:15, 21; 49:26; 60:16; 62:11; 63:8). God's revealing His plans and saving His people could not be duplicated by any foreign god. Israel's existence witnesses to His sovereignty and eternity. No one can reverse what God puts into action or thwart His plans (cf. Job 42:2).
- **Israel promised deliverance from Babylon (43:14-21)**
 - **43:14-15.** Verses 14 and 16 are introduced by the statement, This is what the LORD says, a statement used frequently by Isaiah in the second major division of his book (43:14, 16; 44:2, 6, 24; 45:1, 11, 14; 48:17; 49:7-8; 50:1; 52:4; 56:1, 4; 65:8, 13; 66:1, 12) to stress the divine authority behind his words. The Lord calls Himself Israel's Redeemer (cf. comments on 41:14), the Holy One of Israel (cf. comments on 1:4), the LORD, the Holy One, Israel's Creator and King (cf. comments on 33:17). He said He would change the Babylonians from conquerors to the conquered. Babylon's ships may have been the trading vessels she used on the Euphrates River and the Persian Gulf.
 - **43:16-21.** God, who in the first Exodus brought Israel out of Egypt and drowned the Egyptian army, would do an even greater thing. Therefore forgetting the past (v. 18), Israel should realize God would do a new work. In this new "Exodus," the return from the Exile, the Jews would be going through desolate desert land where God would provide water and streams in abundance (cf. 35:6-7; 41:18; 44:3-4). Therefore His Chosen People (cf. comments on 41:8-9), whom He created (formed; cf. 43:21; 44:2, 24), would praise Him (cf. 42:10-13). Still a third and more glorious "Exodus" will take place when the Messiah returns to regather His people (cf. 43:5-6) and establish His millennial reign on earth.
- **Israel's deliverance to be by God's grace (43:22-28)**
 - **43:22-25.** The future "Exodus" from Babylon would not come as the result of Israel's religious acts, including prayers, offerings ... sacrifices ... incense, or calamus (possibly sweet cane; cf. Song 4:14; Jer. 6:20; Ezek. 27:19). They had not bothered (wearied, Isa. 43:22) themselves in the sacrificial system, but their sins had wearied God! (cf. Mal. 2:17) Without the Jerusalem temple the exiles were obviously unable to take sacrifices to the altar. So with no offerings their unforgiven sins piled up! However, God would forgive them because of His grace, for His own sake.

- **43:26-28.** Though the Lord would forgive Israel (v. 25), He still needed to discipline them. Suggesting that they state their case (v. 26), the Lord then stated His case against them. Their first father—either Adam (cf. Hosea 6:7) or Abraham (cf. Gen. 12:18)—had sinned as had their spokesmen, the prophets and priests. Therefore God would punish Israel with disgrace ... destruction, and scorn (Isa. 43:28), which He did in the Babylonian Captivity.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Most of this prophetic word to the people of Judah found in Isaiah 43, is pure encouragement. How would you describe the nature of encouragement? What is it all about? How does encouragement “work”?
2. When you receive encouragement from someone that you know is coming from the heart of the Father, what process do you go through in your mind that determines just how you will receive it? What do you do with it? How much do you actually let that word encourage you? Why is an encouraging word from one person go right to your heart and a word from another person seem to almost bounce off you?
3. Verses 18-19 talk about a “New Thing” the Lord is going to do. Why do you think he starts with a warning about holding on to the “former things?” How do you think having our eyes fixed on the past might keep us from seeing the new thing?
4. In verse 22, the Lord asks the question, “Are you so weary of me, O Israel?” How do you think a person might become “weary” of the Lord? Do you know anyone or have you ever become weary of the Lord’s leadership in your life? How might this dynamic be present and play out historically in the church at the end of the age as seen in the book of Revelation?