

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 13 (March 22-28, 2015)

Chapter 42 of Isaiah ends with God's judgment on His stubborn, wayward nation of Israel. This week, we will move into God's mercy and grace extended to the Jews. More importantly, God is reaching out His hand to each of us in the same way.

Sunday, March 22 (read Isaiah 43:1-1-2)

"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine." (Isaiah 43:1b)

Chapter 42 ends with judgment, but chapter 43 begins with "**But now.**" Judgment is never God's **final** word while we are living in the Day of Grace. You will miss a tremendous blessing if you assume that God is speaking only to Israel in today's text, and not to you. This is a very personal passage to **anyone** who comes to Him for salvation. Just look at His promises in the printed verse above and rejoice in His love! The blood of the Lamb has **redeemed** you, so you have nothing to fear. God knows you **by name** (see John 10:3)! You **belong** to Him! This verse is very personal to me because the first definitive word from the lips of Sydney, my oldest granddaughter, was "mine." What a joy it is to know that "mine" is the Lord's description of you and me as well!

Monday, March 23 (reread Isaiah 43:1-2)

***When** you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and **when** you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. **When** you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. (Isaiah 43:2, emphasis mine)*

If you have **not** learned to claim the promises of God as your own, you will surely miss these blessed assurances from Him in today's printed text. Maybe you would like it better if He did not say "**when.**" Maybe you think a Christian will never be tested and experience trying times. If so, you probably have been listening to some health and wealth, positive-only TV preacher. The Lord's promises take you **through** the waters and the fires, not **around** them! His **presence** is all you need (see Psalm 23:4)! You'll never drown when you get in over your head, because God promises to be with you. The **fires of lust** will never consume you! Can you trust Jesus enough to claim these wonderful promises as your own?

Tuesday, March 24 (read Isaiah 43:3-7)

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

In today's text, God continues to reassure Israel as well as all Christians. I printed v. 3a because of the different names for God included within it (Lord, God, Holy One of Israel, Savior), reminding us that whatever we need in life, God is the answer. Don't miss the fact that you "are **precious** and **honored** in (His) sight" and He **loves** you as though you were an only child (v. 4). His presence is promised once again, so we have absolutely nothing to fear (v. 5). God's promise to bring Israel back to the land from all over the globe (v. 6, fulfilled on May 14, 1948) will be repeated when He calls His true Church from all parts of the world in the rapture. You were created to bring glory to God! You carry His name (v. 7)! Rejoice! You are a child of the King!

Wednesday, March 25 (read Isaiah 43:8-13)

I, even I, am the Lord, and apart from me there is no Savior. (Isaiah 43:11)

We are called to witness His love to anyone who has not seen or heard God's plan of salvation (v. 8). The Lord issues a challenge about all the false gods of all the unbelieving nations: Did any of them foretell the future? Bring them in and let them testify (v. 9). It is time for all professing Christians to agree on one truth: Jesus **alone** offers salvation to a lost world (v. 11)! We must witness to that fact without caving in to the politically correct views of our society. We will be accused of being narrow-minded, but we are commanded to witness to the exclusive plan of salvation offered to anyone who will receive Jesus. He is the same yesterday, today and forever (see Hebrews 13:8)! No one can pluck us out of His hands (v. 13; see John 10:27-29).

Thursday, March 26 (read Isaiah 43:14-17)

"I am the Lord, your Holy One, Israel's Creator, your King." (Isaiah 43:15)

Notice once again the names of God given in today's text (Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, the Lord, **your** Holy One, Israel's Creator, **your** King). Take a moment to meditate on these names. Now, what do you have to fear? God ended the Jews' captivity in Babylon many years after He parted the waters of the Red Sea to allow them to pass through (v. 14-15). You know from history that He did this to allow the Jews to enter the Promised Land. Do you think He will do anything less as you continue your march toward the Kingdom of God? Learn to trust His promises! Study the miracles done in the past and expect them in your future, but you must claim them as your own!

Friday, March 27 (read Isaiah 43:18-24)

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past." (Isaiah 43:18)

God is calling us to trust Him for our needs today! Don't bring yesterday's baggage along with you; it won't fit through the gate you will enter on this day as you follow Jesus (v. 18). God will provide a way for you to thrive, even though the way before you looks dry and deserted (v. 19-20). We are created to honor and praise our Creator, even as the animals are already doing (v. 20-21). Are you guilty of bringing your sins and offenses to Him while withholding your offering? Have you exhausted your body while working for your own benefit and not the Lord's (v. 22-24)? Surrender totally to God and "He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4).

Saturday, March 28 (read Isaiah 43:25-28)

"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more." (Isaiah 43:25)

Today, I want you to concentrate on the beautiful promise of God given to anyone who will confess his/her sin and accept the Lord's provision for salvation (v. 25). Adam, your first father, introduced sin into the world, and death came through sin (see Romans 5:12). Since Adam's day, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Review **your** past before God! Can anyone make a claim of innocence (v. 26)? Israel brought God's scorn by unbelief (v. 28), but your story can have a happier ending. Repent of your known sins right now, and enjoy the wonderful promises of the Lord given to all true believers. He forgives and forgets (v. 25)! You can trust Him completely!