

Sermon Notes & References

Remember; Anticipate  
Isaiah 43:14-21

February 13, 2011

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D. Anticipate the Coming Exodus . . . . . 43:18-21

1. Leave the past, look to the future (18)<sup>D</sup>

2. The character of this exodus (19-20)<sup>E</sup>

3. The result of this exodus (21)

4. How was this prophecy fulfilled?

a. the return from Babylon<sup>F</sup>

b. the return in 1947

c. the deliverance from bondage of sin in Jesus Christ<sup>G</sup>

<sup>A</sup> Isaiah 41:2, 44:28, 45:1, 2 Chronicles 36:23, Ezra, chapter 1

<sup>B</sup> Leviticus 26:19, 44-45

<sup>C</sup> Exodus 14:26-29

<sup>D</sup> Isaiah 48:17-18

<sup>E</sup> Isaiah 11:6-9, 65:25, Romans 8:19, 22

<sup>F</sup> Ezra, chapters 2, 7

<sup>G</sup> John 14:6, 1 Corinthians 10:1-4, John 7:37-38

A. Introduction

1. Mementoes

- a. we all have them
- b. maybe it's a picture of a person or place;
- c. an award or trophy;
- d. some little article as a coffee mug or stuffed animal
- e. a trinket; a gift
- f. we keep them around and in view because when we look at them they recall pleasant memories of a person or event

2. Nations can have mementoes, too

- a. erecting statues or monuments to commemorate events
- b. or perhaps by a motto such as
  - (A) in Quebec, 'Je me souviens'
  - (B) or in Texas, 'Remember the Alamo'
- c. or a historic event, usually the winning of some battle
- d. I wonder how the events of this past week will be looked back upon by citizens of Egypt some twenty years ahead: will it be a memento of progress or disappointment?
- e. well, Israel had such an event: it was the miraculous exodus from Egypt and entrance into Canaan: a memento that prophets used to recall the thoughts of Israelites to Yahweh

3. Surely that was a good thing to remember

- a. but we are sometimes told not to dwell on the past
  - (A) usually that means not to think over and over again about some mistake we have made in the past
  - (B) but also not to live in nostalgia in some past good time
- b. I would like to have some of you share your testimony in our morning service – let me know if you would like to do so – but have you ever heard such a testimony which stops some 20 or 30 years ago? ... it's all in the distant past; there is nothing about God's dealings in the past month or week; of how God is

working today

- c. well the message of today's passage briefly is
  - (A) it's good to remember what God has done
  - (B) but don't dwell on His past works
  - (C) but look forward to what He is going to do

- 4. we shall look at these verses with the following outline
  - a. God's coming work for His exiled people, verses 14-15
  - b. Remember the past exodus, verses 16-17
  - c. Anticipate the coming exodus, verses 18-21

B. God's Coming Work for His Exiled People . . . . . 43:14-15

- 1. Babylon Will Come to Her End – 14 Thus says the Lord your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, 'For your sake I have sent to Babylon, And will bring them all down as fugitives, Even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice.
  - a. The translating of this verse, particularly the last part, is very difficult, but the overall meaning is clear
    - (A) Babylon was going to be destroyed
    - (B) Babylon hasn't been mentioned by name in Isaiah since chapter 39 which foretold of Judah's exile there
    - (C) but the thought of this exile underlies Isaiah's words of comfort and warning in these chapters
  - b. and the encouragement is that Babylon will cease
    - (A) she will cease as a city, a nation, an empire
    - (B) she will cease as the place of enforced Jewish exile
  - c. how this is to take place is stated – 'I have sent to Babylon'
    - (A) God is sending someone to conquer Babylon
    - (B) Isaiah 41:2 promised that God: "... has aroused one from the east Whom He calls in righteousness to His feet? He delivers up nations before him And subdues kings. He makes them like dust with his sword, As the wind-driven chaff with his bow."
    - (C) and in the chapters to come we will read: 44:28 "It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.' And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' And of the temple,

'Your foundation will be laid.' 45: 1 Thus says the Lord to Cyrus His anointed, Whom I have taken by the right hand, To subdue nations before him And to loose the loins of kings; To open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:" (Isaiah 44:28-45:1)

(D) that is just what God did; you can find that history recorded in the first chapter of Ezra, it is summarized in the last verse of 2 Chronicles , "36:23 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up!'"

d. why is this to take place?

- (A) why did God raise up this great empire only to have it superceded by another such empire?
- (B) the purpose is found in 3 words: 'for your sake'
- (C) God works in tremendous, empire-shattering ways
- (D) and the purpose is for the sake of His chosen people
- (E) a simple comforting thought for which we have ...

2. The Reason for Assurance – 14 Thus says the Lord your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, ... 15 'I am the Lord, your Holy One, The Creator of Israel, your King.'

a. the reason for assurance is who God is

b. His names and titles are a description of God and the basis for assurance for Isaiah's audience

c. to Israel Isaiah says, 'He is your Redeemer'

- (A) He is your Go'el, your Kinsman-Redeemer
- (B) remember the record of Boaz who was the Go'el to Naomi – the one who had a family relationship – who would pay the price when they fell upon hard times
- (C) God claims a family relationship to His people Israel
  - (1) He says He acts as both Father and Mother
  - (2) He says He acts as Husband
  - (3) and as such He is willing to pay the price to deliver them when they fall upon hard times

d. but to Israel Isaiah also says, 'He is your Holy One'

- (A) but the Lord God is a holy God
- (B) you have fallen on hard times because of sin

- (C) you are to be exiled into the Babylon I have raised up as a powerful nation simply because of your sin
- (D) and in order to have a relationship with Him, sin must first be dealt with, be cleansed and taken away
- (E) that is true today as much as it was 3,700 years ago
- (F) any religion or supposed spirituality that does not first deal with sin and the obstacle it presents to having a relationship with God is totally forlorn and helpless
- (G) and only Christ Jesus can deal with our sin
- e. and to this He adds that He is 'Creator of Israel'
  - (A) as such they are part of His work for Himself
  - (B) in them he desires to take pleasure
  - (C) and they are His possession
  - (D) so while because of their sin He has carried out His warning of Leviticus 26:19, "I will also break down your pride of power; I will also make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze." (Leviticus 26:19)
  - (E) He also remembers His promise later in that chapter: "44 Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God. 45 But I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God. I am the Lord." (Leviticus 26:44-45)
- f. for this reason they should ...

C. Remember the Past Exodus . . . . . 43:16-17

1. The Way of Salvation (for Israel) – 16 Thus says the Lord, Who makes a way through the sea And a path through the mighty waters,
  - a. in the exodus, God deliberately led the people of Israel around to where Pharaoh thought them trapped in front of the Red Sea and in vengeance marched against them
  - b. then God opened the way through the sea
  - c. that path was a way of salvation for Israel
  - d. along it they marched – the waters held up on both sides by God – until they reached the other side

e. there they stood: safe on the shore; but wait! look back!

2. The Way of Destruction (for Egypt) – 17 Who brings forth the chariot and the horse, The army and the mighty man (They will lie down together and not rise again; They have been quenched and extinguished like a wick):

a. there came Pharaoh's army

(A) with 600 chosen, specially selected chariots

(B) along all the rest of Egypt's chariots and captains

(C) pressing along that same path by which Israel had fled

b. but the wheels became stuck and Pharaoh's army unstuck

c. following God's command, Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the waters returned over Egypt's army

d. in a moment the enemy of Israel and the enemy of God was extinguished like a bit of wick that has been snuffed out

e. and the way of salvation became the way of judgement for those who refused to believe in the God of Israel

f. in like manner, Christ we are informed is the way of salvation: John 3:36, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

g. it is good to remember, but what is coming is better:

D. Anticipate the Coming Exodus . . . . . 43:18-21

1. Leave the Past, Look to the Future – 18 'Do not call to mind the former things, Or ponder things of the past.

a. Yes Israel, I the Lord your God, your Holy One saved you in a wondrous and miraculous way from Egypt and brought you into the land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey; a land full of good things where I will dwell with you and you will be my people

b. that was God's purpose for Israel,

(A) if they would have but hearkened to them

(B) as we read later in Isaiah 48: 17 Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, Who leads you in the way you should go. 18 If only you had paid attention to My commandments! Then your well-being (your peace, your Shalom)

would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea.”

- c. but Israel did not hearken; did not obey; but forsook God
  - d. so looking on their past is of little relevance to their now
  - e. so God will do a new thing
  - f. God will bring about a new exodus
2. The Character of This Exodus – 19 ‘Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, Rivers in the desert. 20 The beasts of the field will glorify Me, The jackals and the ostriches, Because I have given waters in the wilderness And rivers in the desert, To give drink to My chosen people.
- a. in leaving Egypt, water was an impediment, and obstacle to be overcome before Israel could escape: God overcame
  - b. here, water is a help and comfort that is provided in the harshest of circumstances for the deliverance of Israel
  - c. the seed for this deliverance has already been planted
  - d. even now, events are sprouting – springing forth – that will culminate in the deliverance provided through Cyrus
  - e. when these events take place, the animate creation will partake in the blessing of what is taking place, and they will praise God, and not they alone, but as ...
3. The Result of this Exodus – 21 ‘The people whom I formed for Myself Will declare My praise.’
- a. the essence of praise is that of having pleasure in the object of praise
  - b. God had dealt with the sin and idolatry of Israel
  - c. a sin and idolatry that had broken the intended fellowship between God and His chosen people
  - d. but with fellowship restored, they could take pleasure in their God, their Creator, their Holy One
  - e. and that pleasure flowed forth as praise
4. How Was This Prophecy Fulfilled?
- a. there is no doubt that a primary and historical fulfilment took place when the people returned to Canaan from exile

- (A) but that return seems anaemic when compared to what has been prophesied
  - (B) that return was sparse and sporadic
  - (C) many Israelites found life in the empires of the time very comfortable; ,large Jewish communities existed in Egypt, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor, which continued down until NT times
  - (D) the first wave of return under Sheshbazzar recorded in Ezra 2, amounted to about 50,000 people
  - (E) it was about 80 years later when a second group, mainly Levites and priests, returned under Ezra, being followed a few years later by those under Nehemiah
  - (F) and sin still plagued the people of God
- b. the establishment of the state of Israel in 1947 appears as a further fulfilment to this prophecy
- (A) Leon Uris was a reporter in Israel in 1956 and from his interviews with those who had come from detention camps, he wrote the book 'Exodus' published in 1958
  - (B) here is the author's remarks on his book:
  - (C) 'EXODUS is the story of the greatest miracle of our times, an event unparalleled in the history of mankind: the rebirth of a nation that had been dispersed two thousand years before.
  - (D) 'It tells the story of the Jews coming back after centuries of abuse, indignities, torture, and murder to carve an oasis in the sand with guts and blood. ...
  - (E) '... I have ... written about my people who, against a lethargic world and with little else than courage, conquered unconquerable odds.
  - (F) 'EXODUS is about fighting people, people who do not apologize either for being born Jews or the right to live in human dignity. Their story was a revelation to me as I discovered it in the farms and cities of Israel.'—<sup>{2}</sup>.
  - (G) little is said of praise to God in this humanistic, geo-political record; and sin remains; sin still remains
- c. but there has been a fulfilment
- (A) Just because there has been a definite, historical fulfilment of a prophecy, does not mean that there will not be further fulfilment of the same prophecy, nor that such further fulfilment is limited to a lesser, material kind but may be of the greater, spiritual sort.—<sup>{3}</sup>.
  - (B) the primary subject of these chapters is the suffering servant, God's chosen one, the Messiah, Jesus Christ
  - (C) and the deliverance, the way made through the desert of sin, and the wilderness of separation



from God is the Person of Jesus Christ Himself: the Way

- (D) it is He who is a spring of water, of living water as He promised to the woman of Samaria at the well
  - (1) Paul says that it was He who was the Rock giving water in the wilderness (I Corinthians 10: 4)
  - (2) John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"
- (E) Jesus fulfilled this prophecy spiritually, dealing with sin; completely; finally; once for all; on that cross

## E. Conclusion

1. it is those who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ
  - a. and are born anew into the family of God
  - b. and made His children, and the Bride of Christ
  - c. and are re-established in fellowship with Him
  - d. that fulfill that final verse, who are "The people whom I formed for Myself Will declare My praise." (Isaiah 43: 21)
2. Let us close by a hymn of praise to our Saviour God.

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ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
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NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
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NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
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2. *Exodus*, by Leon Uris, Doubleday, 1958, the Author's comments
3. Paraphrase of comment on this passage, but I have forgotten the source.