

**A Redeemed Remnant
The Gospel According to Isaiah
Isaiah 44:1 – 20**

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We have spent the last several weeks witnessing YAHWEH in the courtroom of the universe. He had invited the nations to court, the fallen members of the heavenly host, and Israel.

The hearing was simple, is YAHWEH alone God and worthy of worship or are any of the fallen ones able to meet the requirements placed in front of them by their creator.

Spoilers: They don't

Israel is there because they continue to get sucked into acting like the nations who are following these false gods. Even though they have been the beneficiary of being hand-picked by the Creator to be His people and have been eyewitnesses to His deliverance at the Red Sea, et al, they moved towards spiritual blindness. The verdict.

Isaiah 43:11–13

“I, even I, am the LORD, And there is no savior besides Me. It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed, And there was no strange god among you; So you are My witnesses,” declares the LORD, “And I am God. Even from eternity I am He, And there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?” (NASB95)

For Israel, the nations and the fallen ones, the verdict is definitive and final.

Then God turned towards His people once again telling them just how He was going to be their deliverer...once again...more than one time too.

Before we finished up with Isaiah 43, we heard from YAHWEH His reminder to His people as to just how far they had moved from Him. They were now relying on ritual rather than relationship. The nation no longer had a relationship, other than the remnant, with their God; the one who had chosen them,

delivered them and taken care of them. They would do their ritual thing and then simply walk away after the no-gods; those who wouldn't even speak up in the courtroom.

For some today, this may look like lighting a candle and walking away.

YAHWEH continued to point all of this out to them.

Isaiah 43:25–28

“I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins. Put Me in remembrance, let us argue our case together; State your cause, that you may be proved right. Your first forefather sinned, And your spokesmen have transgressed against Me. So I will pollute the princes of the sanctuary, And I will consign Jacob to the ban and Israel to revilement.” (NASB95)

God spoke of His grace, how He is ready and willing to forgive them and forget their sin...forever. He also stated the other side of that promise, that if rejected, the weight of all the sin since Jacob would come down upon them, inclusive of the curses in the Torah.

But about His grace...that is about to be placed on full display for all to see. “The nation has not merely sinned; it has become the very opposite of what it was meant to be. Far from its behavior providing some justification for deliverance, that behavior gives ample reason for its complete abandonment. Nevertheless, God will not allow that to happen. Why not? Solely because of his own grace.” (Oswalt 1998, 162)

Isaiah 44:1–2

“But now listen, O Jacob, My servant, And Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus says the LORD who made you And formed you from the womb, who will help you, ‘Do not fear, O Jacob My servant; And you Jeshurun whom I have chosen.’” (NASB95)

The Lord makes use of three names for the nation here. All three are descriptive and speak to the spiritual state of the nation.

The first used is Jacob - that supplants, undermines; the heel. (Hitchcock 1871, 1108)

Jacob, at the beginning, was a deceiver. He had some issues and the Lord graciously changed him; but at the beginning, he was the fulfillment of what the meaning of his name was...a supplanter or underminer. A deceiver.

YAHWEH though says that Jacob is His servant. After he received a name change to Israel, the result was an affirmation of the hand selection of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob resulting in Israel. Jacob received a name change as a result of an all-night wrestling match (Genesis 32:28). Israel - He will be a prince with God; prince with God; contender of God; he strives with God; soldier of God; God will rule; God ruled man; ruling with God; one that prevails with God. (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 114)

The name progression takes us from someone who undermines and deceives others, which he indeed did do, to one who strives with and is a prince with God. That is a significant change that can only take place as the result of the grace of God.

As the Creator, YAHWEH is the one who made Israel, and He formed them to be who they are. There was no mistake made. YAHWEH is the one who hand-picked them, He made them, He formed them in the womb, and He will help them. There were to be witnesses.

Even though they are worthy of judgement, as we have seen, that is not what God has in store for them.

They are still acting like Jacob, but He has given them a new name, Israel. By the way, we find out in Revelation 2:17 that overcomers, those who remain faithful, all receive a new name too. “He who has an

ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.” (Revelation 2:17, ESV)

Jesus was in the habit of giving His disciples names, for example, James and John being called the Sons of Thunder, a good new name since they wanted to call fire down onto a city that rejected Jesus (Luke 9:54).

The best meaning of the white stone probably has to do with the ancient Roman custom of awarding white stones to the victors of athletic games. The winner of a contest was awarded a white stone with his name inscribed on it. This served as his “ticket” to a special awards banquet. According to this view, Jesus promises the overcomers entrance to the eternal victory celebration in heaven. (Got Questions Ministries 2002-2013)

We all have new names, but do we still act like that old person from time to time?

The picture being given to us is of the nation moving from Jacob to Israel. This is the same picture that we see in the New Testament. We were all blinded by sin, just as the nations were. This was a problem for most of Israel.

Israel had been a recipient of God’s grace; He loves them, and they are still His even though they have made themselves blind and deaf. They will continue to be the object of His love and grace. We too are recipients of God’s grace. He promised new things (Isaiah 43:19) and we are the recipients of the new things promised. All works of His grace.

Ephesians 2:8–10

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (ESV)

Just as Israel had to decide how they would walk with the Lord; we get to make that same decision as well.

Romans 6:11–14

“So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus. Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires. Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God’s grace.” (NLT)

The third name that the nation is called shows up after the affirmation that God chose them, made them, formed them into who they are and will help them.

The name given is Jeshurun. That name means “upright; righteous; very upright.” (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 131)

Really? What a name. Something is going to have to change for the people of Israel for that name to be fact. God must still be working in His creation as Creator for that to happen.

Creation was not the conclusion for God being involved with His creation. It was not the end for Him being involved with being personally involved with His creation. “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.” (Psalm 139:13–14, ESV)

This has not ended.

2 Corinthians 5:17 “So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away—look, what is new has come!” (NET)

New - καινή Newly made, not impaired by time or use. (Zodhiates 2000)

Pertaining to being in existence for a relatively short time, new, unused...to being not previously present, unknown, strange, remarkable... (Arndt, et al. 2000, 496-497)

Creation - κρίσις - act of creation, creation...the result of a creative act, that which is created...of individual things or beings created... (Arndt, et al. 2000, 572-573)

Καινή κρίσις now, comparably to the function of κρίσις as nomen actionis in Rom. 1:20, connotes God's creative act, which establishes a completely new beginning, and at the same time—similarly to Rom. 1:25, but now clearly given a positive and personal point—the result of the creative process; still, in the aspect of the new and existential community of life with Christ the special quality of the phrase comes to full expression: καινή κρίσις is a nomen relationis and as such describes the relationship of believers to Christ. (Wedderburn and Christopherson 2002, 119)

The moment we come to Christ; a creative work of YAHWEH takes place. I have news for you, your DNA has been changed. Christian, you will live forever, not as a ghost or shade as it says in the Old Testament, but as a person. All things are indeed new (Isaiah 42:9, 48:6, Revelation 21:5). We think we made a simple prayer and Jesus fulfilled on His promise giving us the Holy Spirit as a down payment. This was not an easy simple thing that was done. For us, it is the acceptance of a free gift from our Creator who wants us to live with Him forever.

Jesus became sin for us on the cross, He had to give up His spirit volitionally in order to physically die. Odds are He probably bled out way before He did that.

Three days later He rose from the dead. That same death changing to life power now resides in each one of us. “Moreover if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive through his Spirit who lives in you.” (Romans 8:11, NET)

Why?

As believers in Christ, we are born again to a newness of life. Paul says we are a new creation. New (Greek kainos) means “in contrast to something old” (BAGD, 394). It has the sense that the old has become obsolete and should be replaced by what is new. In such a case the new, as a rule, is superior to the old (BAGD, 394). Creation (Greek ktisis) carries the idea of “that which is created as the result of that creative act” (BAGD, 455). Paul describes the Christian as this kind of new creation. Creation is always God's work, never ours. (Anders 1999, 84-85)

John 14:12

“I am telling you the truth: those who believe in me will do what I do—yes, they will do even greater things, because I am going to the Father.” (GNB)

Matthew 28:19–20 “Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.” (GNB)

To be personally selected, witnesses, empowered with the tools necessary to do the job is why.

Isaiah 44:2

“Thus says the LORD who made you And formed you from the womb, who will help you, ‘Do not fear, O Jacob My servant; And you Jeshurun whom I have chosen.’” (NASB95)

God has not and will not change His mind about Israel. He already sees them for what they are yet to become, but God sees that as a done deal. Just as He sees what is taking place in us as a done deal too. Why should we not fear? Because of the future that is guaranteed in God. Nothing can change that for those who are His.

Ephesians 1:3–6

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah! He has blessed us in the Messiah with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm, just as he chose us in the Messiah before the creation of the universe to be holy and blameless in his presence. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself through Jesus the Messiah, according to the pleasure of his will, so that we would praise his glorious grace that he gave us in the Beloved One.” (ISV)

Jeshurun means ‘the righteous one.’ How far beneath the ideal of the name these Jewish people fell we all know, and yet the name is applied to them. Although the realisation of the ideal has been so imperfect, the ideal is not destroyed. Although they have done so many sins, yet He calls them by His name of ‘righteous.’ And so we Christian people find that the New Testament calls us ‘saints.’ (MacLaren 2009, 305)

Isaiah 44:3–5

“For I will pour out water on the thirsty land And streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring And My blessing on your descendants; And they will spring up among the grass Like poplars by streams of water. This one will say, ‘I am the LORD’S’; And that one will call on the name of Jacob; And another will write on his hand, ‘Belonging to the LORD,’ And will name Israel’s name with honor.” (NASB95)

In the immediate future, God will save His people from Babylon and will reestablish the nation. Not all will return, but what He will do in the near term is a miracle. But bigger things are coming.

On the surface, verse 3 looks like it is the Lord speaking about impending changes in the climate, things He will do in the last days after Jesus Christ returns and rescues His people from the Beast. This is also speaking about another reality that will be realized in the last days. This is a reality which has already begun. The pouring out of the Holy Spirit on His people.

The prophet Joel spoke about this, and Peter picked up on it in his sermon on the day of Pentecost when he said “You men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, know this and listen carefully to what I say. In spite of what you think, these men are not drunk, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. But this is what was spoken about through the prophet Joel:” (Acts 2:14b–16, NET)

Joel 2:28–32

“After all of this I will pour out my Spirit on all kinds of people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your elderly will have revelatory dreams; your young men will see prophetic visions. Even on male and female servants I will pour out my Spirit in those days. I will produce portents both in the sky and on the earth— blood, fire, and columns of smoke. The sunlight will be turned to darkness and the moon to the color of blood, before the day of the LORD comes— that great and terrible day! It will so happen that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be delivered. For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who survive, just as the LORD has promised; the remnant will be those whom the LORD will call.” (NET)

This began on the day of Pentecost as the Lord poured out His Holy Spirit on those who would believe. “The “spirit” is the agent both of physical and moral regeneration, as in ch. 32:15 (cf. Ez. 37:11–14); the

former idea being prominent; hence the parallelism “spirit”—“blessing,” the former being the cause, the latter the effect.” (Skinner 1898, 46)

The Holy Spirit is poured out on the planet. After the return of Messiah, this is a condition that will exist worldwide among all who have survived in belief. The drought is over. Those who have been thirsty for living water, have that thirst resolved.

The remnant, who has been rescued by Messiah (Zechariah 14:3 – 11) will experience His blessing and will indeed “spring up among the grass like poplars by streams of water” as they enter the Millennial rule and reign of Jesus Christ.

Because of the rescue by Messiah, and as they see YAHWEH arrive to come and dwell with them here on earth in the Temple (Ezekiel 43:1 – 9); they will begin to prosper as never before. They will increase numerically; they will see and be with those who were part of the remnant from the Old Testament, and they will see and hear King Jesus. Everything changes, now they want to be known as righteous, and so do those who remain from the nations.

Isaiah 44:5

“This one will say, ‘I am the LORD’S’; And that one will call on the name of Jacob; And another will write on his hand, ‘Belonging to the LORD,’ And will name Israel’s name with honor.” (NASB95)

Just a few weeks before, you were required to have the mark of the beast on your hand or forehead in order to conduct day to day business, but now, with Christ on the throne, all that changes. Now there is a desire to willingly identify who they belong to. Those who survived, they belong to the King.

And here is the shocking thing, this is not exclusive to Israel, these are not from Israel, they are gentiles.

Prophecy is full of surprises, common theological motifs suddenly giving way, as here, to a startling thought. Isaiah is almost Pauline at this point, for the Gentile converts of v.5 seem like an (adopted?) extension of the children of Israel to whom v.4 refers. The statement I will pour out my spirit (v.3) reminds us of Joel 2:29, with its fulfillment at Pentecost and the Gentile evangelization that followed it. North (Isaiah 40–55, in loc.) says, “The passage is remarkable as being perhaps the earliest in which what we call the church is conceived of as a community transcending the boundaries of race.” (Grogan 1986, 264)

Galatians 4:4–5

“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” (NASB95)

Galatians 3:27–29 “For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise.” (NASB95)

We see the scripture saying that they will write on their hand “Belonging to the Lord.” At this point in history, slaves were many times, branded or marked to indicate ownership. In some of the surrounding cultures, it was not unusual for someone to tattoo the name of their god into their forehead. “Isaiah foretold how “one will say, ‘I belong to the Lord’; ... still another will write on his hand, ‘the Lord’s’ ” (Isaiah 44:5). Moses, at the ordinance of the Passover, said the observance of the annual feast “will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead” (Exodus 13:9). He meant that Jewish thoughts and actions were to glorify God.” (Fitch Jr. 1986, 91)

But I thought tattoos were forbidden by the Torah? Note the context. “You shall not make any cuts on your body for the dead or tattoo yourselves: I am the LORD.” (Leviticus 19:28, ESV)

The context was related to veneration of the dead, which was a big thing in the surrounding cultures. For the Jew, there is the resurrection, and they were not supposed to act like the nations who had no hope.

The nations around Israel, the “pagans often marked their bodies to show devotion to a particular deity. They tattooed and mutilated their bodies as a pledge of allegiance. This is the relevant context for this verse. God makes it very clear in Scripture that he does not want his people to be identified with any make-believe gods (Ex 20:2–3).” (Klassen and Rooker 2017, 142)

So, if you want to get that rose tattooed onto your ankle, sorry, but using the Bible to prohibit it is a misuse of scripture.

“Using the Torah in this way illegitimately assumes that tattoos in the ancient world (including the Bible) had the same associations that they have in contemporary society. This is an uninformed view and reflects the fallacy of reading something from the ancient cultural river as if it were addressing the same practice and understanding in our cultural river.” (Walton and Walton 2019, 184)

Now we come a definitive statement from YAHWEH to answer the why question. Why Israel? Why are you telling us the future?

A lot of this ties back to the straying nation which keeps running off to other gods who we now know are not gods at all but created fallen beings. They cannot tell the future. They have never told the future. The Creator of the universe does not share His glory with any comeupance of a god. More on that to come, but first, a word from our sponsor.

Isaiah 44:6–8

“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me. Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it; Yes, let him recount it to Me in order, From the time that I established the ancient nation. And let them declare to them the things that are coming And the events that are going to take place. Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any other Rock? I know of none.’ ” (NASB95)

The descendants of Israel were Yahweh’s portion of humanity. But the interactions between Yahweh and the patriarchs seemed convoluted. Sometimes Yahweh came visible as “the Word.” At other times he came as an angel, apparently sent by Yahweh! Still other times there was only Yahweh in human form without any descriptive label. The language created questions about whether Israelites affirmed or denied omnipresence, and about their conception of Yahweh’s identity. (Heiser 2015, 141)

We see something here in verse six that is old news; two entities. There appear to be two powers in heaven. YAHWEH, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, YAHWEH of Heavenly Armies. This really is not a new concept but shows up throughout the Old Testament.

Exodus 3:2–4 “And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.” When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.”” (ESV)

Exodus 23:20–24

“Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him. But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, you shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do as they do, but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces.” (ESV)

The startling reality is that long before Jesus and the New Testament, careful readers of the Old Testament would not have been troubled by the notion of, essentially, two Yahwehs—one invisible and in heaven, the other manifest on earth in a variety of visible forms, including that of a man. In some instances the two Yahweh figures are found together in the same scene. (Heiser 2015, 134)

The court case has already concluded. This is like watching the credits and getting a few extras in at the end of the flick. Prior to this, we have been in court and dealing with Israel and their future.

Now we begin to move towards closing out this section of Isaiah. What we have learned since we entered the courtroom is that God is truly unique. There is no one else like Him. He is the Creator; He controls history, and He can and does step into history to achieve His purposes. He restates the point made in the case. He is Lord.

God's uniqueness means that the gods of Israel's enemies can do nothing to prevent him from delivering his people at the moment he chooses to do so. The deliverance has also been told in advance. To all of this Israel is a witness, not only to what has already happened but to what will happen. Israel's experience, past, present, and future, can be accounted for only by God's uniqueness. (Oswalt 1998, 170)

He is the first and He is the last. This statement of deity is way understated.

We assert His eternity; for He who so exists could have had no beginning, and can have no end: we assert His creation of all other beings, and His sovereignty over them; for He who alone is from eternity, must have given existence to all things that are besides Himself; and, as the Author of all, in and for whom all exist, must be the sovereign Ruler and Disposer of all. Nevertheless the ampler form of expression, "I am the First and I am the Last," implying comparison with and precedency to all other existences, would seem to convey to the mind more distinct notions of the eternity, the omnipotence, the creative will and beneficence, of that infinite Being "who is above all, and before all, and in all." (Exell n.d., 403)

Genesis 1:1

"In the beginning, God created the universe." (ISV)

Revelation 22:12–13 "See! I am coming soon! My reward is with me to repay everyone according to his action. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." (ISV)

In this one verse here in Isaiah we have everything between Genesis 1:1 and Revelation 22.

Isaiah 44:7

"Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it; Yes, let him recount it to Me in order, From the time that I established the ancient nation. And let them declare to them the things that are coming And the events that are going to take place." (NASB95)

God is asking a rhetorical question here. There is no one even remotely like Him. That has been the point of the court case. That is the point that the nation of Israel will struggle to learn and hold onto. They will continue to look for salvation from others until they realize they need their Messiah and ask for Him to come praying as one. Then He comes to rescue them from the Beast and his armies.

We do see some of the same questions which have already been answered. This once again makes the point that only YAHWEH knows the beginning from the end. "Yahweh challenges others to predict the future accurately." We already know that they cannot. (Ogden and Sterk 2011, 1208)

God is eternal, the no-gods are not. God is outside of time, the no-gods are not. God can be everywhere and every time at the same time, the no-gods are unable to do so and can only be in one place at a time. God created time and is outside of it as well as in it. The no-gods are not, they all had a beginning.

The amazing thing to realize is that the fallen members of the heavenly host were created by God. They had a beginning which means they are subject to time and not outside of it as God is. “God is also very much involved in creation, for it is continually dependent on him for its existence and its functioning. The technical term used to speak of God’s involvement in creation is the word immanent, meaning “remaining in” creation. The God of the Bible is no abstract deity removed from and uninterested in his creation. The Bible is the story of God’s involvement with his creation—and particularly the people in it.” (Grudem 2020, 344)

All of us fall into that dependency for the maintenance of our being...including those members of the heavenly host who are in rebellion. So back to the original rhetorical question posted by YAHWEH...”who is like Me?”

No one. The conditions to be comparable are still the same. “This final element in the Lord’s challenge to the idol-gods is a demand for specific examples—had they, in fact, established and then cared for their people? The Old Testament stresses the exodus event as demonstrating the uniqueness both of the Lord and of Israel. (2 Sa. 7:23 uses the same verb, *√śîm*, in ‘to appoint for himself a name’.) Unlike the idols (18–20) he did not leave his people in their distress.” (Motyer 1996, 344)

The no-gods still cannot answer the challenge. Even in this last challenge after the trail is over. Even with the credits running, they still are unable to respond.

Because YAHWEH does know the end from the beginning, because YAHWEH is God, He can say to the nation “Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any other Rock? I know of none.” (Isaiah 44:8, NASB95)

There it is again, the command not to fear. This is based in the fact of prophesy. “When all the promises of the exile had come horrifyingly true, alongside them stood these detailed promises, equally old, that the exile would not be the end: have I not made you hear from of old? Before all the world Israel will be a living witness to the fact that God had predicted all of this far in advance, and that he had the power to make his promises come true.” (Oswalt 1998, 172-173)

Fulfilled prophecy shows, or at least should show to His people, that He is the Rock. He can be relied upon and turned to without fearing that He would not be there for them.

Because there is no other God besides the LORD, it means that God the Father is the LORD, God the Son is the LORD, and God the Holy Spirit is the LORD. Yahweh—the name translated by the small-caps LORD—is the Triune God, the One God in Three Persons. There are no “grades” or “degrees” to true deity. There are false gods, symbolic gods, and the true God—and the only true God is Yahweh, the LORD. (Guzik 2000, Is 44:6-8)

He is the Rock upon which Israel can rely upon. Because He is the only God who can tell the future correctly, a future which tells the story of how He has cared for His people, fear is no longer an option, just reliance upon and witnessing to the fact He is God and there is no other.

Now that we have that established, the Holy Spirit moves on to expose idolatry for what it is...utterly stupid. The Lord will do this through satire. “Satire is the exposure, through ridicule or rebuke, of human vice or folly. It consists of three essential elements: an object of attack, a satiric vehicle, and a satiric norm (the stated or implied standard by which the object of attack is criticized).” (Comfort 2004, 145)

As we read this, there is something we have already been told about the Creator, the one who truly is God and has made everything. He does not grow tired. He is the one who can restore us, “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary, And to him

who lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.” (Isaiah 40:28–31, NASB95)

We are about to read about man, creating his own gods, and getting pooped in the process. Some creator this is? As we read this, I am reminded off a portion of the curse for those who follow their own wisdom rather than God’s. Consider this scripture for our culture today. “The LORD will strike you with madness, blindness, and panic. You will grope around in broad daylight like a blind person groping in the darkness, but you will not find your way. You will be oppressed and robbed continually, and no one will come to save you.” (Deuteronomy 28:28–29, NLT)

On the making of idols.

Isaiah 44:9–20

“Those who fashion a graven image are all of them futile, and their precious things are of no profit; even their own witnesses fail to see or know, so that they will be put to shame. Who has fashioned a god or cast an idol to no profit? Behold, all his companions will be put to shame, for the craftsmen themselves are mere men. Let them all assemble themselves, let them stand up, let them tremble, let them together be put to shame. The man shapes iron into a cutting tool and does his work over the coals, fashioning it with hammers and working it with his strong arm. He also gets hungry and his strength fails; he drinks no water and becomes weary. Another shapes wood, he extends a measuring line; he outlines it with red chalk. He works it with planes and outlines it with a compass, and makes it like the form of a man, like the beauty of man, so that it may sit in a house. Surely he cuts cedars for himself, and takes a cypress or an oak and raises it for himself among the trees of the forest. He plants a fir, and the rain makes it grow. Then it becomes something for a man to burn, so he takes one of them and warms himself; he also makes a fire to bake bread. He also makes a god and worships it; he makes it a graven image and falls down before it. Half of it he burns in the fire; over this half he eats meat as he roasts a roast and is satisfied. He also warms himself and says, “Aha! I am warm, I have seen the fire.” But the rest of it he makes into a god, his graven image. He falls down before it and worships; he also prays to it and says, “Deliver me, for you are my god.” They do not know, nor do they understand, for He has smeared over their eyes so that they cannot see and their hearts so that they cannot comprehend. No one recalls, nor is there knowledge or understanding to say, “I have burned half of it in the fire and also have baked bread over its coals. I roast meat and eat it. Then I make the rest of it into an abomination, I fall down before a block of wood!” He feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside. And he cannot deliver himself, nor say, “Is there not a lie in my right hand?” (NASB95)

Romans 1:28–32

“Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done. Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They invent new ways of sinning, and they disobey their parents. They refuse to understand, break their promises, are heartless, and have no mercy. They know God’s justice requires that those who do these things deserve to die, yet they do them anyway. Worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too.” (NLT)

The solution for Israel is the Lord. He promises to redeem them which we will cover next time. Redemption is still needed today. Only Jesus can save us from the madness of our culture and where it has chosen to go. The gospel is simple.

1 Corinthians 15:1–4 “Now I’m making known to you, brothers, the gospel that I proclaimed to you, which you accepted, on which you have taken your stand, and by which you are also being saved if you hold firmly to the message I proclaimed to you—unless, of course, your faith was worthless. For I passed on to you the most important points that I received: The Messiah died for our sins according to the Scriptures, he was buried, he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures—and is still alive!” (ISV)

Romans 10:8–10

“But what does it say? “The message is near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart.” This is the message about faith that we are proclaiming: If you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with his heart and is justified, and declares with his mouth and is saved.” (ISV)

Salvation is a Gift

1. Admit you are a sinner.
2. Believe in your heart that Jesus died for your sins, was buried and He rose from the dead three days later.
3. Call on the name of the Lord.

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