

The Prophecies of Isaiah ⁶⁰

Lesson 27

As Vision 22 continues, Isaiah is still feeding Hezekiah the message that the Lord wants the king to convey to Israel to bring her comfort. The last chapter ends with the promise that the Southern Kingdom will go into exile just as the Northern Kingdom did, but the south will be taken over by the Babylonians that sent by the Lord. The warning and promise are made at the end of chapter 43 but the Lord follows in chapter 44 with a word of hope.

Far Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – DESCENDANTS BELONG TO THE LORD

Isaiah 44:1 "But now listen, O Jacob, My servant; And Israel, whom I have chosen: 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. ³

'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; ⁴ And they will spring up among the grass Like poplars by streams of water.' 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.

"But now listen ... whom I have chosen" is directed at the Jews and no one else. The Lord chose the Jewish nation to be the people from whom He will eventually be born. Here he promises that the Jews belong to Him. He has watched over the births of each member of that nation and continues to help them survive through all the threats directed at them. "Do not fear ... Jeshurun whom I have chosen" is a direct reference to the descendants of Jacob whose name the Angel of the Lord changed to Israel. Jeshurun, which means the upright one, is mentioned only three other times in the Bible and they all occur in the book of Deuteronomy.

The Majesty of the Lord

- He formed Israel.
- He helps Israel.
- He will bless and revive Israel when she calls Him Lord.

Deuteronomy 32:15 " But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked-- You are grown fat, thick, and sleek-- Then he forsook God who made him, and scorned the Rock of his salvation.

Deuteronomy 33:5 " And He was king in Jeshurun, When the heads of the people were gathered, The tribes of Israel together.

Deuteronomy 33:26 " There is none like the God of Jeshurun, Who rides the heavens to your help, And through the skies in His majesty.

All of the references to Jeshurun apply only to the nation of Israel as a group. The Lord will protect Jeshurun and bless her. Ultimately, when the appointed time arrives, the nation will love the Lord as He loves them; the Israelites will finally put their eternal trust in Him. From the time of Isaiah's words until today, Israel has not presented herself as upright; however, that will change when she finally accepts the Messiah. He will revive her physically and spiritually at that time.

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Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 44:1-5	<i>Far Prophecy</i> One day, the Lord will bless and revive Israel physically and spiritually.	Will be fulfilled at the Lord's Second Coming.

Far Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – NO OTHER GOD

Isaiah 44:6 "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. ⁷ 'And 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. ⁸ '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.'"

Because other gods do not exist, idol worship is absolutely ludicrous. Non-existent gods cannot proclaim the future. The words of the false prophets of the imaginary gods should not cause Israel to tremble in fear; rather, the Word of the Lord should bring upon them great fear and trembling. The Lord is the Rock and no other god exists except Him.

The Majesty of the Lord
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He is Israel's Redeemer. • He is the Lord of Host. • He is the first and last. • He is the only God. • He established the ancient nation. • He does what no imaginary god does. • He tells the future and it occurs. • He is the Rock.

Far Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – FUTILE CREATIONS OF MAN

Isaiah 44:9 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. ¹⁰ Who has fashioned a god or cast an idol to no profit? ¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ *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. ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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." ¹⁷ 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 thou art my god." ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ And 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!" ²⁰ 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?"

The Lord explains to Hezekiah the absolute futility of the craftsman who casts or carves the idols. He gets hungry and grows tired while he is making the idols that the people will worship. He uses the leftover wood to build a fire to cook his food or keep him warm while using a portion of the wood to create an idol that is an abomination to the Lord. The Lord will not tolerate an idol maker or worshiper; He will cause them to delve further into darkness and blindness.

Far Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – I FORMED ISREAL

Isaiah 44:21 " Remember these things, O Jacob, And Israel, for you are My servant; I have formed you, you are My servant, O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me. ²² "I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud, And your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you." ²³ Shout for joy, O heavens, for the LORD has done *it!* Shout joyfully, you lower parts of the earth; Break forth into a shout of joy, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it; For the LORD has redeemed Jacob And in Israel He shows forth His glory.

The Majesty of the Lord
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He has redeemed Israel. • He has wiped away Israel's sins.

When the nation of Israel finally turns to the Lord, He will redeem her and wipe away all references to her sin from the record books. Here, He speaks the promise into being which will occur at the time of His Second Coming.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 44:6-23	<i>Far Prophecy</i> When Israel puts away her idols and worships the Lord as her Messiah, He will wipe her sins out of the eternal record books.	Will be fulfilled at the Lord's Second Coming.

Near Prophecy

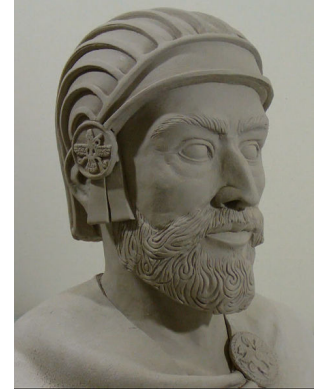
LORD'S ANSWER – CYRUS, THE LORD'S SHEPHERD TO RAISE ISRAEL'S RUINS

Isaiah 44:24 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, "I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, Stretching out the heavens by Myself, And spreading out the earth all alone, ²⁵ Causing the omens of boasters to fail, Making fools out of diviners, Causing wise men to draw back, And turning their knowledge into foolishness, ²⁶ Confirming the word of His servant, And performing the purpose of His messengers. *It is I* who says of Jerusalem, 'She shall be inhabited!' And of the cities of Judah, ' They shall be built.' And I will raise up her ruins *again*. ²⁷ "*It is I* who says to the depth of the sea, 'Be dried up!' And I will make your rivers dry. 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.'"

The Majesty of the Lord
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He controls all of nature. • He will send Cyrus to release Israel from the Babylonians.

It is approximately 710 BC when Isaiah delivers this vision to Hezekiah. Here the Lord promises to return the Jewish nation of Israel from Babylon under the leadership of the Lord's servant Cyrus. Born in 600 BC in Persia, he becomes the king of Persia in 580 BC at the age of 21. In 536 BC, he conquers the Babylonian Empire at the age of 64; the date of his death is surrounded with uncertainty occurring either on December 4th of 530 BC or in June or July of 529 BC. Either way, he died at the age of 70 or 71. Cyrus is born 110 years after this vision; he fulfills its prophecy 174 year after its delivery. In his edict to allow the release of the Jews to return home he says,

Ezra 1: 2 "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. **3** 'Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem. **4** 'And every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.'"



Picture 13: Cyrus the Great King of Persia

Near Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – CYRUS, THE LORD'S ANOINTED

Isaiah 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: **2** "I will go before you and make the rough places smooth; I will shatter the doors of bronze, and cut through their iron bars. **3** "And I will give you the treasures of darkness, And hidden wealth of secret places, In order that you may know that it is I, The LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name. **4** "For the sake of Jacob My servant, And Israel My chosen *one*, I have also called you by your name; I have given you a title of honor though you have not known Me. **5** "I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me; **6** That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other, **7** The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these. **8** " Drip down, O heavens, from above, And let the clouds pour down righteousness; Let the earth open up and salvation bear fruit, And righteousness spring up with it. I, the LORD, have created it.

The Scripture gives a perfect example of how the Lord will anoint the ungodly to do His business. Cyrus will arrive on the scene in Babylon in 536 BC, a follower of the god Marduk. The Lord will prepare the way for Cyrus; his war efforts will run smoothly because the Creator of all has anointed Cyrus as His man to do His work.

Near Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – WOE TO ONE WHO QUARRELS WITH MAKER

Isaiah 45:9 "Woe to *the one* who quarrels with his Maker-- An earthenware vessel among the vessels of earth! Will the clay say to the potter, 'What are you doing?' Or the thing you are making say, 'He has no hands'? **10** "Woe to him who says to a father, 'What are you begetting?' Or to a woman, 'To what are you giving birth?'" **11** Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: " Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons, And you shall commit to Me the work of My hands.



Picture 14: Marduk with thunderbolts pursuing Anzu who stole the Tablets of Destiny

Anointing Cyrus will make some Israelites unhappy. How can the Lord use an unholy vessel like Cyrus? Some might even say, "What is God thinking?" It is none of Israel's business whom the Lord chooses to use and whom He chooses to reject. If the people of the Southern Kingdom would pay attention to their own thinking and live according to the wishes of the Lord, Cyrus would not be needed. But, the Lord knows the future and He knows the direction of the Southern Kingdom in the next 100 years. She will need to be punished and exiled and she will need to be redeemed and released. Cyrus will be the one to release them from their Babylonian exile.

Near Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – CYRUS, BUILD'S LORD'S CITY

Isaiah 45:12 "It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it. I stretched out the heavens with My hands, And I ordained all their host. ¹³ "I have aroused him in righteousness, and I will make all his ways smooth; He will build My city, and will let My exiles go free, Without any payment or reward," says the LORD of hosts.

In releasing the Jews to return to the Promised Land, Cyrus will require nothing for their freedom. In fact, Cyrus will offer to the Jews the treasury of Persia to pay for the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple.

Near Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – EGYPT, CUSH, SABEANS BELONG TO CYRUS

Isaiah 45:14 Thus says the LORD, "The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush And the Sabeans, men of stature, Will come over to you and will be yours; They will walk behind you, they will come over in chains And will bow down to you; They will make supplication to you: ' Surely, God is with you, and there is none else, No other God.'" ¹⁵ Truly, Thou art a God who hides Himself, O God of Israel, Savior! ¹⁶ They will be put to shame and even humiliated, all of them; The manufacturers of idols will go away together in humiliation. ¹⁷ Israel has been saved by the LORD With an everlasting salvation; You will not be put to shame or humiliated To all eternity. ¹⁸ For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (~~He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, But formed it to be inhabited~~), "I am the LORD, and there is none else.

The Lord will repay Cyrus for his kindness toward the Jews. History records that Babylon lost control of Egypt, Cush and Seba in the last years of the weak Babylonian kings. The Lord will give those three nations to Cyrus as a payment for the release of the Jews. As they travel in chains through Israel to go into exile in Persia, they will proclaim that Israel has a Savior Who is the Lord, the Creator of all, and there is no one else like Him.

Near Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – WORDS NOT HIDDEN

Isaiah 45:19 " I have not spoken in secret, In some dark land; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, ' Seek Me in a waste place'; I, the LORD, speak righteousness Declaring things that are upright. ²⁰ " Gather yourselves and come; Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; They have no knowledge, Who carry about their wooden idol, And pray to a god who cannot save.

This vision is being delivered to the Jews 110 years before its fulfillment so they will know that the Lord is the God that they should thank, not their man-made idols who can neither speak nor prophesy.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 44:24-45:20	<i>Near Prophecy</i> The Lord will send Cyrus to release the Jews from their Babylonian exile and at that the same time reward Cyrus with exiles from Egypt, Cush and Seba.	Fulfilled in 536 – 530 BC

Near Prophecy

LORD'S ANSWER – TURN AND BE SAVED

Isaiah 45:21 " Declare and set forth *your case*; Indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, A righteous God and a Savior; There is none except Me. ²² " Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other. ²³ " I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back, That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance*. ²⁴ "They will say of Me, 'Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.' Men will come to Him, And all who were angry at Him shall be put to shame. ²⁵ "In the LORD all the offspring of Israel Will be justified, and will glory."

Has any other god foretold that Cyrus would come to rescue and release the Jews from exile? None of the man-made idols have proclaimed this news or any of the hundreds of other prophecies because no god exists except the Lord. He promised to Himself that the events of His prophecies will come true and nothing will keep them from occurring. Here He says, "That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance*." What will their words be? They will swear that, "Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength." Paul uses some of the same words when he writes to the Philippians about the Lord.

Philippians 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Yet, the Lord still wants the Jews of Hezekiah's day to turn to Him, serve Him, and love Him. The Southern Kingdom is not apostate yet, Hezekiah removed most of the idols from the land when he took it over in 726 BC. However, when his son takes over in 697 BC, the new king will welcome the worship of idols and pollute the land with abomination.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 45:21-25	<i>Far Prophecy</i> Every knee will bow and every mouth will confess that the Lord is God when He returns to reign on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords.	Will be fulfilled at the Lord's Second Coming.