

I Am Your Redeemer

Key Verse: *“I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.”*
—Isaiah 44:22

Selected Scripture:
Isaiah 44

IN TODAY'S LESSON THE

Prophet Isaiah instructs Israel—God's chosen people—to recall the fact that their standing before God was only through his divine care and providence. It was God who had, as Isaiah states, “formed thee from the womb.” (Isa. 44:2) It was also God who blessed them and provided for their needs, “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty,

and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.”—vs. 3

Particularly worthy of note in this chapter of Isaiah is the fact that the prophet speaks four times of God as Israel's Redeemer. The first of these references is in verse 6, “Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.” To redeem means to buy back, thus paying the debt of one who cannot pay it himself. In this verse the prophet reminds Israel that their first responsibility in recognizing God as their redeemer is to appreciate that there is no other God beside him. As the one who had purchased them by establishing his covenant with them, he alone was to be their king, and they were to serve no other.

God, through the prophet, continues in this regard by speaking of the vanity and uselessness of having other

gods, and making graven images. “Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any. They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed.” (vss. 8-11) Isaiah further says that those who disobey in this regard “have not known nor understood: . . . And none considereth in his heart.”—vss. 18,19

God desired better of his people Israel and, in verse 21, reminds them that they are his servants, they were formed by him, and he would not forget them. In our Key Verse, we find the second reference to God as Israel’s Redeemer. Here he states that his redeeming power was such that their sins, typically speaking, had been blotted out; and he encouraged them to return to him. Verses 23 and 24 contain two more references to God, the Redeemer of Israel. “Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: . . . the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel. Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.”

Although Israel’s typical kingdom was cut off due to their continued unfaithfulness, God promised, once again through the prophet, that he would raise up a “shepherd, and [he] shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.” (vs. 28) Although this verse identifies Cyrus as this ‘shepherd,’ he was merely a picture of a much greater shepherd—God’s son, Jesus—whom he sent to carry out the greater redemptive work on behalf of both Israel, and the entire world of mankind. As a result, not only Israel, but “all the nations of the earth [shall] be blessed.”—Gen. 22:18 ■