

Come Witness Greatness

Isaiah 43:10-13

Body:

- I. Gather to See and Hear 8-10
 - a. The Blind and Deaf
 - i. The very people that 6:9–10 condemned to blindness are now to be released (also 42:18). The period of cursed judgment (6:11–13) is past (cf. 40:2).
 - b. Let them gather and assemble
 - i. Nations - The stress is on kinship as the basis of the group, at least in the original meaning of the word
 - c. It is justified
 - i. At times one is referred to as righteous because he or she stands in right relationship to another. At other times one is righteous because he or she fulfills certain obligations in a relationship
 - d. It is true
- II. Witness Me v.10
 - i. Witness - someone who confirms before a court that something is right or wrong, someone who is able by his evidence to bring a legal dispute to a conclusion ,
 - ii. God indicates in a verbless clause that “you, yourselves [*'atem*] are [implied] my witnesses,”
 - iii. Justification and righteousness have technical significance because of their close association with the saving activity of God on behalf of his covenant people. The righteousness of God is bound up not so much with justice as with his intervention on behalf of his people under the covenant.
 - iv. The nations already know the news of Babylon’s weakness and the meteoric rise of the Persian. The nations are to testify that YHWH predicted it and is responsible for it.
- b. Know and Believe and Understand
 - i. Know - Testament connotes an intimate acquaintance with something. This is not so much knowledge “about,” in the sense of an objective, mental apprehension. Rather, a personal relationship is implied between an individual and the object, whether a spiritual relationship as between worshipper and deity
 1. God answered that he chose them “so that [they] may know and believe me,” a response that focuses on Israel’s own personal relationship with God as a fundamental goal of God’s involvement with them. This included a personal recognition of God’s divine sovereign power, plus a firm commitment to accept his will and to faithfully follow his guidance

2. Enlightenment is the object of Israel's being chosen
- ii. Believe
 1. "belief" was fundamentally based on understanding and accepting the idea that "I am he" ('ănî hû) or "I am that one" who can be known and who is worthy of trust. Knowing about God or understanding something about God is not an end in itself. Instead, understanding God naturally leads to a personal acknowledgment of his presence and action, and this naturally leads to the creation of a firm personal relationship of trust.
 - iii. Understand
 1. I am He
 2. No God formed before me
 - a. This does not imply that God was formed like the wooden idols; it merely indicates that all the idol images that were formed by human craftsmen appeared on the scene long after God's creation and sovereign control of the universe was well established
 3. None after me
 - a. one in connection with Yhwh's dynamic presence present, past, and future
 4. I am the Lord, there is no savior besides me
 - a. Savior- In Isaiah, where "savior" is a frequent title for God, the term is used to emphasize his uniqueness. God alone is seen as Savior in contrast to foreign gods and idols: "I, even I, am the Lord, and apart from me there is no savior, I have revealed and saved and proclaimed—I, and not some foreign god among you" (Is 43:11, 12). Isaiah further states that God would show himself as savior by the future blessing and restoration of Israel (Is 49:26; 60:16). The designation *savior* is not directly applied to the Messiah in the OT but a passage like Zechariah 9:9 indicates that salvation would be an aspect of God's anointed one
 - b. The Lord's deliverance of Israel also shows that He is the true God. He is her only **Savior** and no one can oppose His plans. "Savior" is another title of God that Isaiah used frequently (cf. 17:10; 43:3; 45:15, 21; 49:26; 60:16; 62:11; 63:8).
 - c. Yahweh is unique among all the supernatural beings (a) because one can know that he lives based on his spoken prediction and the fulfillment of his prophecies, (b) because one can have a real relationship of trust with God, and (c) because no other gods have these qualities.
 - d. God who 'is with you', and that to deliver. The SYR omits 'deliverer', perhaps for better parallelism, but thereby

losing the MT's point that being or existence is a matter of active presence.

III. Just Me v.11-13

- a. Declared, saved and proclaimed
 - i. Declare - to make known, proclaim Is 42:12 43:9
 - ii. Proclaim- to **cause to hear**, meaning to announce,
 - 1. No strange god- It denotes these gods not as objects of worship but as subjects of activity, beings who could act to save. L. A. Snijders suggests the word refers to Yhwh, who delivered them as someone they knew, not as a stranger.
- b. You are my witnesses
- c. For Eternity I am God
 - i. No one can deliver you
 - 1. God's revealing His plans and saving His people could not be duplicated by any **foreign god**. Israel's existence **witnesses** to His sovereignty and eternity.
 - ii. I act and no one can reverse it
 - 1. No one can **reverse** what **God** puts into action or thwart His plans (cf. Job 42:2).
 - 2. Verses 12–13 constitute the closest links between Isaiah 40–66 and **Deuteronomy 32**. Such links appear throughout the chapters, but particularly in chapters 43–44

