

Fact Sheet for "Who Is It?" Isaiah 48:12-22

Pastor Bob Singer
05/24/2015 (Memorial Day Weekend)

Probably the passage in Isaiah that is most visited by Christians is chapter 53. For me the passage in Isaiah I visit most often is chapter 48... and you will soon see why.

Let's begin today with a little exercise. In your mind's eye picture Jesus. What do you see? What are you thinking? You may be thinking of His birth in Bethlehem, or of His being in the temple at twelve years of age. You may have the image of Him healing, or feeding the 5,000, or walking on water. You may be thinking of His crucifixion and resurrection. You see, we have a tendency to think of Jesus first as a man, who secondly was also God. We don't tend to think of Jesus first as God, who secondly was also man. This passage may change that for you.

¹² **"Listen to me, O Jacob,
and Israel, whom I called!
I am he; I am the first,
and I am the last.**

Who is "I"? (See Revelation 1:17-18; 22:13) It is Jesus. Now, let's bring that thought back to Isaiah 43:12. Who is speaking? Who called Jacob/Israel... the Father or the Son? The answer is the Son!

¹³ **My hand laid the foundation of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens;
when I call to them,
they stand forth together.**

It sounds a little like Job 38-42 doesn't it? But think about John 1:3, 10; Colossians 1:16. Who is speaking in Isaiah 48:13? The Son!

¹⁴ **"Assemble, all of you, and listen!
Who among them has declared these things?
The LORD loves him;
he shall perform his purpose on Babylon,
and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans.**

Who is "them"? This refers back to verse 5 and the idols some in Israel were worshiping.

"The Lord loves him" – What does this mean?

^{NLT} **Isaiah 48:14** Have any of your idols ever told you this? Come, all of you, and listen: The LORD has chosen Cyrus as his ally. He will use him to put an end to the empire of Babylon and to destroy the Babylonian armies.

¹⁵ **I, even I, have spoken and called him;
I have brought him, and he will prosper in his way.**

Who is "him"? It is the one who would conquer Babylon... Cyrus.

¹⁶ **Draw near to me, hear this:
from the beginning I have not spoken in secret,
from the time it came to be I have been there."
And now the Lord GOD has sent me, and his Spirit.**

Stop there for a moment. Take a good hard look at that last line. Who... is... "Me"? Some have suggested it is Isaiah, but that doesn't fit the passage well. Isaiah would only have broken into God's words for part of a verse, then would have gone right back to God's words. Some have suggested it is Cyrus, but that doesn't fit well either. This would be the only place in Isaiah when Cyrus spoke. There is another possibility that fits very well. "Probably the Messiah, God's Servant is intended because of His association (as in 42:1; also note 11:1-2) **with the Spirit.**"¹ The Ryrie Study Bible capitalizes "Me" and includes this note... "A reference to the preincarnate Christ, who is here associated with the *Lord God* and the *Spirit*, giving us an OT glimpse of the Trinity."

**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.**

Again, who is speaking? See Titus 2:11-14.

**¹⁸ Oh that you had paid attention to my commandments!
Then your peace would have been like a river,
and your righteousness like the waves of the sea;
¹⁹ your offspring would have been like the sand,
and your descendants like its grains;
their name would never be cut off
or destroyed from before me."**

**²⁰ Go out from Babylon, flee from Chaldea,
declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it,
send it out to the end of the earth;
say, "The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob!"
²¹ They did not thirst when he led them through
the deserts;
he made water flow for them from the rock;
he split the rock and the water gushed out.**

²² "There is no peace," says the LORD, "for the wicked."

What first comes to mind when you think about Jesus? Is it a man, who happens to be God... or is it God, who happens to have come as man in order to redeem us? That subtle shift will change the way we think about our relationship with Him. His next coming will be as judge.

See Revelation 14:19; 19:15. These verses inspired "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" during the Civil War.

Here's some concluding questions...

Whose side are you on?

Are you serving God the Son well?

What is the best message you can possibly give to anyone?

¹ The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament, pp. 1102f.