

OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 40-55 to highlight themes.

Ben Ollenburger, - *Ex Audita Vol III 1987*, points out that when CREATION is referred to in Isaiah it is not so much original creation that is on view but YAHWEH's DOMINION over politics society and nature (Fitting with the concept of the Kingdom of God). Creation themes are there to denote Yahweh's ORDER over CHAOS (Tohu - a word which means "nothing" and which is implied in desert and wilderness imagery. "Tohu" is applied to the idols, nations, blind Israel and nature)

Some uses of **Tohu** (Strong's 8414) Gen 1:2 without form, Job 6:18 to nothing, Job 12:24 in a wilderness, Job 26:7 the empty place, ISAIAH 24:10 desolate (NIV) chaos (NRSV), 29:21 false testimony (a thing of nought), 34:11 chaos (NIV) confusion (NRSV), 40:17 worthless (NIV) of the nations, 40:23 to nothing (NIV) of the rulers, 41:29 confusion (NIV) of images, 44:9 nothing (NIV) of idols, 45:18 I did not create it to be empty (NIV), 45:19 seek me in vain (NIV), 49:4 I have spent my strength in vain (NIV), 59:4 empty.

In Isaiah, the Exodus theme and its parallel (what Yahweh is about to do in returning His people to Jerusalem), are both acts of creation (or re-creation). Yahweh restoring order and bringing about deliverance for his people.

THEMES: The Sovereignty of Yahweh
Creator
Monotheism
Holiness
The Future of Israel (Zion, Jerusalem, Jacob)
Sin & Redemption
The Servant
Creation and recreation
Exodus imagery
Desert imagery
Eschatology

40:1-11 Introduction. SERVANT implied (comfort my people)
RECREATION and renewal. EXODUS (v3)

40:12-14 God of CREATION

40:15-17 God of the NATIONS

40:18-20 IDOLS are powerless

40:21-22 God of CREATION

40:23-24 God of the NATIONS

40:26-28 God of CREATION

40:29-31 God who RENEWS (RE-CREATION) his people

41:1-5 God of the NATIONS (Trial speech)

41:6-7 IDOLS ridiculed

41:8-16 Israel the SERVANT. (Comfort)

41:17-20 RE-CREATION (EXODUS)- the desert to flourish

- 41:21-29 IDOLS can do nothing
- 42:1-4 SERVANT SONG
 42:5-9 SERVANT (?) addressed
 42:10-12 Call to praise of Yahweh
 42:13 Yahweh the warrior
 42:14-17 Speech by Yahweh
 42:18-20 The deaf and blind SERVANT (Israel's SIN)
 42:21 Yahweh will make his law great
 42:22-25 (Therefore) Israel has been looted and plundered. JUDGEMENT
- 43:1-7 Israel redeemed and ransomed. RE-CREATION
 43:8-13 Trial speech calling witnesses to the uniqueness of Yahweh
 43:14-21 Yahweh will defeat and restore. RE-CREATION. NEW (better) EXODUS
 43:22-28 Israel's sins
- 44:1-5 RE-CREATION for the chosen SERVANT and witness, Israel.
 44:6-8 Yahweh's credentials as REDEEMER, the ONLY GOD
 44:9-20 Worthless IDOLS ridiculed.
 44:21-22 Israel the REDEEMED SERVANT told to remember these lessons.
 44:23 Hymn of praise for REDEMPTION
 44:24-28 Yahweh declares his SOVEREIGNTY in all realms. RE-CREATION.
- 45:1-7 Address to Cyrus, agent of God. RE-CREATION
 45:8 Yahweh CREATES righteousness and salvation
 45:9-13 Yahweh fashions his own tools - inc. Cyrus
 45:14-17 Yahweh's SOVEREIGNTY over nations/IDOLS, the SALVATION of Israel.
 45:18-19 Yahweh CREATES and speaks
 45:20-25 Call to the fugitives to acknowledge the UNIQUENESS of Yahweh
- 46:1-13 The nations & IDOLS are powerless. Yahweh is SOVEREIGN to rescue.
- 47:1-15 Judgement pronounced on Babylon.
- 48:1-21 Israel ignored the former warnings. Yahweh's word came to pass. Yahweh's word still comes to pass for the glory of his Name. CREATION v6-7, EXODUS v21.
- 49:1-6 SERVANT SONG
 49:7-13 RE-CREATION, restoration of Israel, EXODUS.
 49:14-21 Yahweh has not rejected Israel
 49:22-26 Yahweh of the Gentiles. SOVEREIGN saviour and redeemer.
- 50:1-3 Exile (uncreation) for discipline.
 50:4-9 SERVANT SONG
 50:10-11 Trust in Yahweh rather than your own light.
- 51:1-8 Address to the faithful of Israel. Salvation and RE-CREATION. Light to the nations

51:9-16 Return as a new CREATION, new EXODUS
51:17-20 Call to Jerusalem to rouse herself
51:21-23 Jerusalem's suffering to be transferred to those who oppressed her.

52:1-6 Jerusalem called to dress appropriately as a redeemed people knowing Yahweh.
52:7-12 The good news & joy of return. Yahweh will accompany them.
52:13
-53:12 SERVANT SONG

54:1-3 Language like the Covenant to Abraham
54:4-8 Language of Sinai Covenant
54:9-10 Language of Covenant to Noah
54:11-17 Zion rebuilt - new creation

55:1-5 Israel called to fulfil the covenant to be a witness to all peoples
55:6-7 Seek, turn to Yahweh
55:8-11 Yahweh's plans will be achieved
55:12-13 New CREATION/EXODUS a sign to Yahweh's renown.