

ISAIAH

ISAIAH 45:8-10, YAHWEH'S VERACITY & POWER, PART 1

The next verse is a reference to the Messianic Kingdom when salvation and righteousness will be fully restored to the world. This too will be the product of God's creative work; this is a world that man cannot produce. The evolutionary lie that man is ever evolving as a species into a being that is ever smarter, ever more humane, ever advanced culturally, socially, politically, and spiritually pervades the world's thinking at this point in time in history. Only God will be able to redeem the entire created order, not just mankind, from the effects of man's rebellion against the Creator. His plan for Kingdom history has that as His ultimate goal, and only He can accomplish it.

Some theologians believe this is a reference to the return from the Babylonian captivity, which was the subject of the prior verses concerning King Cyrus of Persia (Is.44:28-45:7), but just as Cyrus was a type of the coming King, so the return from Babylon is a type of the return to Israel at the end of the Tribulation. This verse certainly does not describe the state of affairs that existed in Jerusalem and Israel immediately after the return from the Babylonian captivity. The things that happened after that return from Babylon do not even begin to fulfill the blessings that will be found in the Messianic Kingdom; instead, they simply point to that greater, future return and fulfillment. This verse is a prophecy describing the conditions of the Messianic Kingdom. The return from Babylon was not marked by salvation and righteousness and peace and prosperity. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah detail the sin and the hardships the Israelites faced after they returned home from Babylon. It was a difficult time and they faced adversity from their opponents who were living in the area of Jerusalem at that time (Ezra 5:6-17; Neh. 4:1-8). They had serious sin problems with the men intermarrying with foreign women (Ezra 9-10). Some of the Israelites were taking financial advantage of their fellow citizens and forcing them into poverty (Neh. 5:1-13). The Sabbath was being routinely violated (Neh. 13:15-22). After the leaders in Jerusalem saw to it that the Temple was built (Ezra 5-6), it fell into disarray and had to be restored to service by Nehemiah. The Law had been forgotten and the feasts were not observed (Neh. 8) and the priests and Levites had scattered (Neh. 12). Tithing and observance of the Sabbath had to be restored (Neh. 13:10-22). The return from Babylon was not paradise lost and found, in fact, it was not very good, life was hard, and it certainly did not reflect the blessings described in this verse. On the other hand, the Messianic Kingdom will be the time when the conditions Isaiah describes will be found throughout the earth once the Babylonian world system of the end is destroyed and the Israelites are all returned to the land for the enjoyment that will come with the fulfillment of their unconditional covenant promises.

Unger recognized the Kingdom significance of this verse in connection with God's divine purpose that the world may know Him and Israel's part in His plan for the world to know Him. "This verse anticipates that divine purpose in an ultimate sense during the millennial Kingdom. Hence, the elevation of the imagery to a pitch that transcends application to a spiritual revival after the return from Babylon.... The Kingdom age is envisioned as an era of the gospel bearing the fruit of salvation, which will be disseminated worldwide and minister the justifying righteousness of God to all mankind" [Merrill F. Unger, "Isaiah" in

Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament, 1267]. During the Kingdom, Israel will finally be the nation God created it to be— “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex. 19:6). They will be the salt of the earth and the light of the world the Lord spoke about in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:13-14). Their divine mission will finally be fulfilled.

“But here God is not talking just about material blessing or even the deliverance from some enemy. The full extent of this promise will be seen when God one day establishes a period of salvation and justice on the earth for all humanity to enjoy. As sure as ‘I am the LORD,’ that is how sure the audience can be that God’s righteousness will invade the world of humanity and creatively transform it into a place of righteousness” [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 259].

Isaiah 45:8 ⁸“Drip [רָעַף] down, O heavens, from above, And let the clouds pour [נָזַל] down righteousness [צְדָקָה]; Let the earth open up and salvation [יִשְׁעַ] bear fruit, And righteousness spring up with it. I, the LORD, have created [בָּרָא] it.

The productivity of the earth and the blessings of salvation and righteousness will be such that the world has never before experienced since the original creation of the universe prior to the Fall. In this verse, the sense of salvation relates to physical safety and security as well to justification salvation. “Since God is who He is, the earth can anticipate salvation. God’s transcendence and uniqueness are not just abstract truths to be believed. They have practical and positive ramifications. Since God created the earth, He can pour out blessings on it: fertility and salvation” [Thomas L. Constable, “Isaiah” in *Thomas Constable’s Notes on the Bible, Volume IV, Isaiah-Daniel*, 4:129].

The references to the righteousness coming out of the heavens and the clouds pouring down righteousness are indicating God’s involvement in the blessings that are going to be manifested on the earth during the time of the Messianic Kingdom. “This brief hymn is in anticipation of the Messianic times when salvation and justice will fill the earth” [Victor Buksbazen, *The Prophet Isaiah: A Commentary*, 362]. Drip, רָעַף, means to drip, to trickle, to drop, or to fall referring to the movement of liquid from the sky as a gentle, healthy, non-destructive rain. The verb form here is a command and the action is causative which means this is something God is sending upon the earth. Blessings of salvation and righteousness will fall to the earth at the command of God as though a gentle, life-sustaining rain is falling. This is entirely a grace operation; no one, including the Israelites, deserves the blessings that will be poured out on Israel, on Gentiles, and on the planet during the Kingdom age.

Pour, נָזַל, means to flow down, pour down, steam down, or waft down or around referring to the movement of liquid or masses in several forms. This is a milder form of command, a jussive, which comes from God and causes righteousness to manifest on the earth, and because it is also an imperfect verb, this represents an incomplete, continuous action.

Righteousness and salvation represent an ideal state when they reveal a continual, worldwide state of blessing. That is obviously a revelation of the Messianic Kingdom. These words are referring to a life that is lived in safety and in a morally upright manner in relation to other people and to God. Obviously, salvation may also refer to the justification

salvation experience, and that will be an important factor in Kingdom life. We can't separate out the blessedness of the Messianic Kingdom into categories of personal safety versus justification salvation. The Kingdom concept of salvation will include both aspects of the use of this word.

Righteousness, צְדָקָה, means straightness, right or what is right and just, accuracy, and what is correct. Metaphorically, it refers to straight paths, hence, in an ethical sense, rectitude.

Salvation, גְּשׁוּלָה, means deliverance or safety. It relates to protection that produces freedom from a present danger.

"The word [righteousness] is closely related to *salvation*, and the two words often occur together. Indeed, *righteousness* points to a manifestation in which God is seen to be righteous in all His works and ways, and in which there is a righteousness among men whereby they are right with Him and also faithful in their dealings. In the broadest sense the term is a practical equivalent of *salvation*" [Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: A Commentary*, vol. 3, 3:202].

The next metaphor is that of the earth opening up at the command of God to allow salvation to bear fruit. In this verse, salvation is showered down from heaven and springs forth from earth to bear fruit all at the command of God. Righteousness also springs up in conjunction with salvation. The earth receives the blessings from heaven, characterized as life-giving, life-sustaining, falling rain, enabling the earth to be productive. The entire creation is to function harmoniously with God and with man.

All of this is the creation, בְּרָא, of God. This is the same word used in Genesis 1:1 to indicate the creation of the universe and all that is in it. Everything revealed here is the creation of God. It is all part of His plan and His purpose in restoring His Mediatorial Kingdom to what it was originally intended to be. "Created" is in the perfect verb form indicating completed action, but this is once again a perfect verb that is a prophetic perfect. The elements of this verse are Kingdom elements and cannot be fulfilled until the Kingdom begins.

Whether some Israelites were questioning God about His plan to use a pagan king to be His "anointed" at the time the prophecy was recorded, or whether He was revealing truth to those who might rebel at this development in the future is unknown, but the next verses reveal God's reaction to those who would presume to disagree with Him. This truth is applicable to any issue over which the creature would dare to quibble with the Creator, but, in these verses, most theologians believe this is His response to those who question Him about the use of the pagan king to interact with His nation Israel. The context may seem to suggest that the Israelites were angry with God about His plan to use a pagan king to be His "anointed" at the time the prophecy was recorded. However, there may be another reason why they would disagree with God at the time Isaiah revealed this prophecy.

Needless to say, disagreeing with the plan of God at any time for any reason is not a good plan on the part of man. This truth is a timeless truth applicable to any issue over which the creature would dare to quibble with the Creator.

Those who make the argument that the quarrelling concerns Cyrus, are making it this way [cf. J. Alex Motyer, *Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 288]: If they are complaining about Cyrus and God's plan to use this pagan king on Israel's behalf, this makes it seem that the Israelites were complaining about being set free. Many of them clearly did not want to go back; only about 50,000 Israelites returned. Babylon remained a thriving center of Jewish life until centuries after the Lord was crucified. The prospects of returning and rebuilding the city and the Temple were one thing, but they were still going to be subject to a foreign power in Israel; the Davidic throne was going to remain vacant. At this point, they had no idea of the magnitude of the obstacles that awaited them upon their return, but they would prove to be formidable. It is possible they were thinking they were going to be worse off than they were before the captivity when they were subject to paying tribute to Assyria and Babylon. At least then they still had a Davidic King, but even that is now gone. The argument the Lord is making to them is that they have no right to question His plan, His purposes, or His integrity regardless of what they thought conditions may or may not be when they went back.

We have to remember that the prophecy concerning both the Babylonian captivity and the restoration to Jerusalem by Cyrus are events that are in the future from the standpoint of the prophecy's revelation. I'm not convinced the Israelites would be complaining about restoration after a period of captivity even if their freedom was granted by a pagan king. It seems more likely that they were complaining about the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem and being taken into captivity in Babylon at all. "Their complaint deals with their unhappiness about what God has planned for their future, but the specific content of their complaint is not quoted. Certainly, it does not seem that they would be complaining about the good things God would do through Cyrus. Their dissatisfaction must relate to negative experiences they must go through before those events" [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 262].

Whatever they were arguing about had to involve a trial or trials of some sort. People don't complain about anything they perceive to be good for them. What they either can't see, or don't want to see, is that God's plans for them are always good; their rebellion which results in disciplinary consequences is what they don't appreciate—and they have the power to change that situation by obediently obeying the Mosaic Law. The Babylonian invasion, the destruction of the Temple, and elements of the captivity were already known (Is. 39:6-7) before Cyrus was revealed to be God's anointed in relation to Israel's restoration. God's promises to bless them and keep them were seemingly disregarded. The Israelites have a hard time understanding the concept of judgment and divine temporal discipline for their rebellion on the one hand (Lv. 26; Dt. 28), and restoration when the nation finally turns to Him in faith (Dt. 29:1, 30:1-10) on the other hand.

Either way, whether arguing over God's plans to punish them for their rebellion or His plans to restore them at the hands of a pagan king, they were complaining about God and His plans for Israel, and God was having none of it.

Isaiah 45:9 ⁹“Woe [הוי] to *the* one who quarrels [ריב] with his Maker [יצר]— An earthenware vessel [תִּרְשָׁו] 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’?”

It is self-evident that anytime a Scripture that is directed to specific person or group of people begins with “woe [to the] one quarrelling with [the] one being his Creator,” that person is being singled out for a particular reason that displeases the Creator. In this case, it is directed at those who would dare to argue with a decision made by the Creator God. The Creator God identified here is not only the Creator God of the universe, and this is a truth in that wider context, but, in this context, He is the Creator God of Israel, and Israel, or some portion thereof, seems to delight in quarrelling with the God of Israel, which, in turn, raises His ire and invokes His promises of temporal discipline for disobedience and rebellion.

Woe, הוי, is an interjection meaning ho! woe! alas! It expresses grief over a death, and it is used as a funeral cry. In the Bible, it is often used as a pronouncement of judgment or to reveal a threat. Conversely, it may also refer to a hope-filled joyous expectation, but that is not the context here. “Woe, a funeral cry, emphasizes the seriousness of what is taking place here. To disagree with God’s ordering of one’s life or one’s world is not merely a matter of preference or outlook. At bottom it is a refusal to let God be God, a reversal of roles, in which the creature tries to make the Creator a servant to carry out the creature’s plan.... [A] persistent refusal to allow God to be God, to establish the terms of our relationship with him, as in Gen. 3, will result in a funeral—our own” [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 208].

Quarrel, ריב, means to contend, to strive, to quarrel, to dispute. It may be used in a legal sense to contest as in a lawsuit or to contend forensically, that is, in a legal setting. It has the sense of a disagreement over something. In this verse, Israel is bringing charges against Yahweh. Whether they don’t like God’s plans at all and do not want them to come to pass, or whether they are telling God that His plans must fail is unclear, but it appears to be the former. Either way, they are expressing displeasure with God and with His plans for Israel. Whatever the reason, they are quarrelling with God, which is an inadvisable pursuit.

Maker, יצר, means to form, to fashion, to create, to shape, or to forge. The basic idea relates to cutting or framing. It refers to creating an object out of existing material. This word is translated “potter” in other Scriptures (9 times in the Old Testament), including in this verse. This word is translated “Former,” in the YLT as in a person who creates something by forming it, referring to being the maker or creator of something.

The idea being expressed in this verse is that a created thing has no business, no right, and no standing to quarrel with its creator. Every created thing exists only because of the will and the work of the maker. Whether it is a broken piece of pottery, an intact clay jar or piece of artwork, or a human being, it exists only because it was created to exist by a being greater than itself.

In this verse, Isaiah utilizes the metaphor of a potter and the clay he uses to make various items that are then placed in use in various ways for various purposes. A potter can make out of an inanimate lump of clay whatever he desires to make for whatever use he decides to make it. The object he makes has no standing to argue or debate what is made or what use to which it is put. It is purely ridiculous to think otherwise. Somehow, I don't think it is an accident that man, who was made from the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7), is depicted in a metaphor concerning the creation of something, i.e., clay pottery, which is made from the dust of the ground.

Lest anyone think that arguing with and rebelling against God is a problem peculiar to Israel, you should understand that people today, in terms of the church because we expect the people of the world system to rebel against God, do the same thing. I recently became aware of a church in Tennessee that proudly calls itself a church of "progressive (or liberal) Christianity." They do not believe the Bible is the Word of God as inspired, inerrant Scripture. Their gospel is, "The Good News is that you are inherently united with God," which is no gospel at all. Most people are unsaved and therefore spiritually dead and separated from God. They are not united with Him simply by virtue of existing as a human being. God is "a mystery to be explored, not a doctrine to be espoused," which seems to be a way to deny the doctrinal truths of God revealed, in favor of an imaginary god created in the mind as a result of each individual's imagination. They believe "that following the path and teachings of Jesus can lead to an awareness and experience of the Sacred and the Oneness and Unity of all life. [They] affirm that the teachings of Jesus provide but one of many ways to experience the Sacredness and Oneness of life, and that we can draw from diverse sources of wisdom in our spiritual journey." In other words, all paths lead to God. These quotes express pagan thought. Over half of this church's staff are practicing homosexuals of one kind or another, and some of their "leadership" council are as well. The pastor stated, "There is stuff in there (Bible) that I think really goes against the character of God. There are genocides that have been divinely sanctioned in the Bible. People have used the text in the Bible, plain readings of the text at times to support white supremacy, to defend slavery, to defend segregation," he noted. "Saying the Bible is inerrant and infallible, it absolves us of our responsibility to do what our ancestors did, which is to wrestle." [[Nashville church says Bible isn't the Word of God - The Christian Post](#), accessed 19 Feb. 2021, and <https://www.gracepointe.net/about-us>, accessed 19 Feb. 2021]. Just because sinful people have misused the Bible to do sinful things, the Bible is not invalidated. Accusing God of genocide is a standard unbeliever argument used to impugn the character of God. This is manipulative propaganda; it is not a sound biblical/theological argument, and the potter and the clay metaphor in this verse before us today invalidates that liberal, unbiblical argument.

I'm telling you this to show you that people who represent themselves as God's people are still doing the same kinds of arguing with God that have gone on since the Fall. The Israelites seem to have made it an art form, but we are no different, and God's anger about this type of situation is placed on us no less now than it was placed on Israel then. In the declarations of this self-professed liberal pastor, notice the primary factor in the determination of what is true and what is not. It is what he thinks, and it is what his congregation thinks, wants, and desires, and not what the Bible reveals as truth. They don't believe the Bible is truth anyway. That is the same thing the Israelites were doing when they argued with or questioned God. Our mind and our worldview should be set

on what God has revealed in the Word of God and not on what we think He should have revealed or on what we want Him to reveal. We simply need to accept and rest in what He has revealed. God's revelation is timeless truth, and it is applicable throughout history despite how much modern people erroneously think they know about truth.

The person who quarrels with God is compared to what the NASB calls "an earthenware vessel," but the word also means "potsherds" which is probably the better interpretation here, although it can refer to both and the text does not specifically say either way. Perhaps, the context is suggesting a comparison between a person arguing with God, which is a destructive behavior to the one doing the arguing with Him, with a clay pot that has been broken into pieces. Potsherds, *קֶרֶשׁ*, means a potsherd, earthenware, an earthenware vessel, referring to a piece of ceramic ware made of clay that has been fired and used for various purposes. The word also refers to the pieces of a shattered piece of fired clay called potsherds. A number of translations use "potsherd" or some variation thereof (potsherd: KJV, NKJV, ASV, NIV, ISV, LSV, LEB, YLT; shard: NET Bible). The translations using some version of clay pottery are: earthenware vessel: NASB; clay pot: CSB; earthen pot: ESV.

Keil and Delitzsch make the argument for understanding this to be a reference to an unbroken clay pot because the emphasis of the reference is to the clay and not to the condition of the jar itself. "[W]here the point of comparison is not the fragmentary condition, but the earthen character of the material (*'ādāmā*), the latter is intended [i.e., an intact clay jar]: the man, who complains of God, is nothing but a vessel of clay, and, more than that, a perishable vessel among many others of the very same kind" [C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament: Isaiah*, vol. 7, 7:445]. I think they undermine their own assertion; however, when they refer to the clay jar as a "perishable vessel" which seems to support the idea of jar broken into potsherds.

This piece of pottery, whether whole or in part, representing the argumentative one, is just one piece of pottery among many just like it and just as nondescript. All of them, the ones arguing with God and the ones not arguing with God, are from the same source and none of them have any standing to challenge Him at all for any reason at any time.

Clay pottery is just that—clay pottery. In and of itself, it is nothing. It is useful when utilized for its intended purpose, but it is destructible and it can easily be replaced with another one just like it. It is simply an object that something greater than itself has created. The pottery does not have a say in how it should be constructed, what it should look like, and to what use it should be put. The clay cannot challenge the potter and say "What are you doing?" "Why are you making me to be this?" "Why can't I be that?" "Why can't I be bigger?" "Why can't I be smaller?" Why can't I be painted in a different color or design? What if I don't want to be anything other than a plain jar without paint? It can do none of these things, and even if it could, it does not have the right to do so. The metaphor then represents a human being who has no right to question God, His Maker. The word translated "potter," *יָצַר*, is the same word used for "Maker" in the first line of the verse. The creative aspect of making something useful out of raw materials is the picture of what is taking place. Just as a potter takes a lump of clay and makes a useful piece of pottery out of it, God created man, in His image, to rule over His Kingdom. Presuming that "potsherds" is the best meaning in this verse, then just as a broken piece of pottery

is useless, so man is useless when He rebels against, or quarrels and questions, God's plans for mankind. Man then, when he quarrels with God, is no more useful than a broken piece of pottery.

“Should the clay say to the one who forms it, ‘What are you doing?’ No, the clay is subject to the will of the potter and it does not determine what the potter's hands do with the clay. The clay is not the potter and does not have authority over the potter. Likewise people are God's servants and cannot take God's place and try to determine their own destiny. They must accept God's plan and do God's will, for the clay has only one purpose—to be formed and used according to the will of the potter” [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 262]. Asking this question is not for the purpose of seeking information; it is for the purpose of challenging the Maker to explain Himself to His creation—which has no standing to ask the question in the first place and God is not obligated to respond to the creation's impertinent and rebellious questioning. Man is not God just as the clay is not the potter, and man has no more control over God than the clay has over the potter. Just as the clay cannot question the potter and has no control over its fate once it is in the hands of the potter, man has no authority to argue with God or question his fate in the hands of God.

It is rebellion when man argues with God's revealed truth, and that has been going on since the Fall. We are all of our father, Adam. Man, the creature, has no right to question God, the Creator, and argue with Him because that too is rebellion, and it is still going on. This truth applies to mankind in general, and it applies to Israel in particular.

The question from the clay to the potter, “He has no hands?” is difficult to interpret. This may be a challenge to the ability of God to be the Creator at all. Without hands, He has no control. That is the same as saying He has no authority because, after all, He is, in the mind of the one arguing with Him, not the Maker. Buksbazen believes this is a Jewish idiom. “This seems to be a common expression still used today among some Jews, to describe something which does not make sense” [Victor Buksbazen, *The Prophet Isaiah: A Commentary*, 363].

In order to reinforce the point, the prophet makes the same case that he made using the clay and the potter metaphor by using the metaphor of a child presuming the right to question his parents. A biological child does not get to choose the identity of his parents, and he has no standing to challenge their authority to be his parents. He has no control over either his conception or over his birth. The child has no control over his appearance, and he has no control over his upbringing, at least as a baby and as a very young person.

Isaiah 45:10 ¹⁰“Woe to him who says to a father, ‘What are you begetting?’ Or to a woman, ‘To what are you giving birth?’”

God is the Father of mankind, so to speak; therefore, in the same way that a child has no right to control his parents or to question their actions, mankind has no right to question God's plans and purposes either for mankind or for history and mankind's place in it.

The way this verse is presented, it is possible that someone is questioning a couple about their plans for creating a family. Some people suggest that it is another child of theirs doing the questioning, but the verse does not say that. Others think it is an adult child challenging the parents, and it doesn't say that either. There is no personal pronoun attached to "father" and "woman," i.e., it does not say "his father."

What it does say is that a woe is pronounced on the one who would presume to stick his nose into the family business of someone else particularly when it comes to whether or not someone has a child. It is impolite and it is always an unwanted intrusion into the personal business of another. The family unit is an intensely personal unit and outside interference is particularly disgusting. In the same way, but in a much greater way, woe to those who presume to stick their nose into God's business. This metaphor makes the situation involving God more personal, more absurd, and much more egregious than the potter and the clay metaphor. "This would be the rudest and most revolting attack upon an inviolably tender and private relation; and yet Israel does this when it makes the hidden providential government of its God the object of expostulation" [C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 7, 7:446].

There is some speculation over the fact that "father" is in this verse, but the natural parallel, "mother," is not and "woman" is instead used. Most theologians seem to believe this is primarily done for the purpose of avoiding any connotation that God is mother. Pagans use that concept a lot, as in "Mother earth," Gaia and so on. "Once that equation is permitted to stand it becomes all but impossible to maintain the doctrine of transcendence on which all biblical revelation stands or falls. This is so for two reasons: (1) because there is a physical continuity between mother and child, unlike that between father and child, and (2) because of the total association of mother goddesses in the ancient Near East with fertility and reproduction" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 209].

Some theologians refer to the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem as a second exodus; one referred to Cyrus as the "new Moses". I prefer not to do that because there are pronounced differences between the two events. The return to Israel from Babylon is more properly thought of as a repatriation. An exodus is a mass departure of people; a going out; a departure or emigration, usually of a large number of people, and repatriation is sending someone back to their own country; the act or process of returning a person or thing to the country of origin.

Here are some of the differences between the two events that I thought of and you can probably think of some more:

REPATRIATION FROM BABYLON	EXODUS OUT OF EGYPT
Babylon was not destroyed either by Yahweh or by the Persian Army.	Egypt was destroyed by Yahweh.

<p>Many Israelites chose to remain in Babylon.</p> <p>No signs, miracles, and wonders were used in Babylon to facilitate the release of the people.</p>	<p>No Israelites remained in Egypt.</p> <p>Signs, miracles, and wonders were used in Egypt to convince Pharaoh to let the people go.</p>
<p>No signs, miracles, and wonders were used to facilitate the nation's survival and travel back to their homeland.</p>	<p>Signs, miracles and wonders were used in the wilderness to facilitate the nation's survival and travel to their new homeland.</p>
<p>Israel was already a nation in Babylon.</p>	<p>Israel was formed into a nation in Egypt.</p>
<p>Israel was repatriated out of a life of relative comfort and safety in Babylon.</p>	<p>Israel was redeemed out of slavery in Egypt.</p>
<p>The Shekinah glory did not appear and did not accompany the Israelites out of Babylon for the journey back to Israel.</p>	<p>The Shekinah glory did appear and did accompany the Israelites out of Egypt on the journey to Israel.</p>
<p>From Babylon, the Israelites were returning to their own homeland.</p>	<p>From Egypt, the Israelites were going to a new land that would become their homeland.</p>
<p>The Israelites were implicitly repatriated by Yahweh acting through His anointed, King Cyrus.</p>	<p>The Israelites were explicitly redeemed and set free by Yahweh acting directly on Pharaoh.</p>
<p>No specific leader was appointed by Yahweh to lead the Israelites back to Israel. No one was granted any specific God given powers.</p>	<p>A specific leader, Moses, was appointed by Yahweh to lead the Israelites to their new homeland. Moses was granted God given powers to assist the people along the way.</p>
<p>The return from Babylon to Israel was made via an established route between the two locations.</p>	<p>The journey to the Promised Land was made through the wilderness led by the Shekinah glory of Yahweh.</p>
<p>No Tabernacle accompanied the people back to Israel from Babylon.</p>	<p>The Tabernacle was constructed in the wilderness and accompanied the people to their new homeland.</p>
<p>There was no meeting with God on the return from Babylon to Israel.</p>	<p>There was a meeting with God on Mount Sinai in the wilderness on the way to their new homeland.</p>

No covenants were cut between Yahweh and the Israelites.	The Mosaic Covenant was cut at Mount Sinai between Yahweh and the Israelites.
No miraculous deliverance was needed to ensure the safe arrival of the people back into Israel.	A miraculous deliverance was needed to get the people out of Egypt, across the Red Sea, and safely into the wilderness.
It took an army to free the Israelites from Babylon.	It took Yahweh alone to free the Israelites from Egypt.