

bold challenge. **“Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and READ: no one of these shall fail”** (ch. 34:16). Unquestionably Jehovah’s claims to declare **“the end from the beginning”** are justified. Reverently we accept His word, **“I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass”** (Ezekiel 12:25; Num. 23:19), and if none can respond to His challenge to do likewise **“that we may know that ye are gods”**, it is because **“they see not, nor know”**.

3. He is the One who is Able to Accomplish His Own Will

Not only is Jehovah able to declare the future; He is able to announce beforehand that which He intends to do and then do it. Not all the powers of hell and earth combined can hinder any thought of His, however plainly stated (Job 42:2). See chs. 41:1-4; 44:28; 45:1-6; 46:8-11; 48:14,15. In these scriptures the Lord states His intention to raise up a man **“from a far country”**, who is even named – Cyrus. He will **“subdue nations before him”**, causing him to **“rule over kings”**. Through him He will **“do His pleasure on Babylon”** (though the immediate aggressor of Israel was not Babylon but Assyria, whose end also is declared in ch. 14:24-27), delivering Israel from bondage to Babylon and **“saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid”**. That all this transpired is now historical fact. How poignant is Cyrus’s own testimony in Ezra 1:2-4, **“The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth ... the LORD God of Israel (He is the God)”**! Was it by these very prophecies that he came to speak thus, for he knew nothing of Jehovah at first (ch. 45:4,5)? The Lord contrasts His own sovereignty and omnipotence with those gods who are quite unable to do anything at all (ch. 41:23,24) in this passage. (cf. Jer. 10:5,6). Another Gentile monarch, Nebuchadnezzar, had to learn that God is the **“Most High”** and **“He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand”** (Daniel 4:34,35). Compare the greatest and most wonderful witness of this very fact – the cross of Christ (Acts 2:23; 4:24-28; Eph. 1:11).

4. He is the Saviour of His People when all Else has Failed

See ch. 42:13-17; 43:10-13; 46:1-8. This had been Israel’s experience in days past, as the Lord calls them to witness, both recently (ch. 37:10-20,36-38) and in the days of old (Deut. 4:32-39). They were also to prove it in their deliverance from Babylon. What a contrast between the gods of the nations which needed to be carried and Israel’s God who bears His people **“even to hoar hairs”** (ch. 46:1-7; 45:16-22). Here is a matter in which the Lord’s people can add their own testimony – His readiness to hear the cries of His own, and to work deliverance on their behalf. Men of old proved this (e.g. 2Chron. 33:12,13; Dan. 3:29). The book of Psalms is rich in this personal experience of God. See e.g. Psalms 3,28,30,34,57,66,138 etc. And one fact that every Christian has proved is that **“salvation is of the Lord”**, being an intervention of divine power in human life and experience, whether we think of initial salvation from the guilt and penalty of sin, or the continuous salvation from the power and habit of sin (Rom. 1:16; 2Cor. 5:5,17,18; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 2:13; Heb. 7:25).

By this means then, in these chapters, the Lord justifies His claims and silences His rivals. Other evidences could be presented from Scripture, particularly the subsequent fact of His incarnation in the person of the Son, Jesus Christ, but we forbear. The passage considered is adequate and establishes quite satisfactorily the truth that **“there is ONE GOD”**.

Let us notice, too, that it presents God as a PERSON. Creation manifests His power and His wisdom; prophecy manifests His knowledge; sovereignty is the nature of His will; while salvation reveals His love and mercy. These are expressions of personality, and demonstrate that God is not merely a mystical, ethereal First Cause – just an Idea, but a glorious PERSON.

How blessed it is that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are able to confess that, **“this God is our God for ever and ever”** (Psa. 48:14) who has said, **“I have redeemed thee ... thou art Mine ... I am the LORD thy God ... thy Saviour”** (Isaiah 43:1-3).

There is One God

The Fact of His Existence

These words were penned in the days of the **“gods many, and lords many”** (1Cor. 8:5) of the idolatrous religions which held the nations of the world in darkness and no doubt the emphasis would be placed upon the fact that there is ONE God. The multitudinous objects which men worshipped were not, even according to their own conceptions of them, worthy of the appellation God: **“for though there be that are called gods”** (1Cor. 8:5), men **“did service unto them which by nature are no gods”** (Gal. 4:8). There is only One who is self-existent in His Being, eternal in His days, infinite in His powers, sovereign in His authority, perfect in His nature – only One worthy to be called GOD. Today it is the fact that such an One exists which needs to be emphasised, for atheism and agnosticism abound and are becoming increasingly regarded as the only rational attitudes which intelligent minds can adopt. The Greek of the inspired Original reads simply **“eis θεος”**, seven sacred letters spelling out the perfect and ultimate truth, **“ONE GOD”**. It is the most momentous fact ever conveyed by human language

and, wherever the emphasis may be placed, it constitutes THE fundamental truth, the one foundation stone upon which the whole superstructure of divine revelation rests.

In chapters 40-48 of the prophecy of Isaiah, Jehovah the God of Israel, addresses His people who are turning to the gods of the nations around. He confronts them with His claims, challenging any to deny them or to present rival claims. His own claims are plain: e.g. **“Thus saith the LORD ... I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God”** (ch. 44:6); **“I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside Me”** (ch. 45:5); **“I am He; I am the first, I also am the last”** (ch. 48:12). The simple words “I am He” are inexpressibly significant, setting forth the divine Being of Jehovah; self-existent, eternal, absolute, incomparable and immutable. The expressions “I am the first, and I am the last” are also fraught with meaning. We can note but one obvious point here. There can of necessity be only one “first”. There likewise can be only one “last”: yet He who says “I am the first” adds “I also am the last”. Words could not more forcibly convey the absolute uniqueness of Jehovah. Eternity can produce no rival: His claims are exclusive.

But are these claims valid? That is the vital question. Can they be substantiated? The Lord Himself appeals to four great facts in these chapters to justify His claims, and thus He establishes for us the truth that “there is ONE God”.

1. He is the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth

God is the former of “all things”, including man himself. To this fact the Lord appeals from the very first and He repeatedly returns to it in these chapters. See e.g. ch. 40:12 ff.; 42:5; 45:9,12,18; 48:13. The Psalmist asserts, **“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard”** (Psa. 19:1-3). The witness of the material universe to the existence of a sublime

Mind and a transcendent Power is so convincing to any unbiased mind that for one to doubt the existence of God or have low thoughts of His glory, is to be, as Paul the apostle declares, **“without excuse”, “For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead”** (Rom. 1:19,20).

To understand that **“the worlds were framed by the word of God”** (Heb. 11:3) may require a modicum of faith, but to accept that this wonderful universe happened of itself as a result of a prolonged series of accidents or chances, requires an infinitude of credulity. The unbeliever would have us lay that humble adoration, that is the due of an all-glorious Creator, at the feet of Lady Luck! We are only too well aware of the prevalence of such theories of origins today, but the most rational and the most satisfying explanation of the universe, and indeed of our own existence, is GOD.

The sublime language of Genesis ch. 1:1, **“In the beginning God...”** has never been surpassed and will never become outdated. Telescope and microscope alike reveal His praise. Any ‘faults’ observable in His creation are either the misunderstandings of our limited knowledge, or are the result of that sin which man brought in to mar the pristine beauty of a scene which God had pronounced **“very good”**. Yet even though **“the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now”** (Rom. 8:22) it is still able to bear a convincing, if tarnished, testimony to its Creator. Moreover the unity of creation seen in the interdependence of its various parts and in the universality of its basic laws, evidences that it is the product of one great Mind.

How weighty are the words of Isaiah 44:24, **“I am the LORD that maketh ALL things; that stretcheth forth the heavens ALONE; that spreadeth abroad the earth BY MYSELF”**: Such unique glory (cf. Jer. 10:10-13; 14:22) demands the worship of all men (Psa. 33:6-9; Acts 14:15-17; 17:24-28; Rev. 14:7), and is the strong

confidence of all His people (Psa. 124:8; 146:5,6; Isa. 40:28-31). Creative power is the prerogative of Deity; all who lack it reveal that they are “no gods” (Jer. 10:11; Psa. 96:5; Isa. 40:18-26; 44:10-20).

2. He is the Only One Able to Foretell the Future

Herein lies the challenge of ch. 41:21-26. Such a skill is beyond the capacity of finite minds (Eccl. 8:6,7; 10:14), and is the clear evidence of an omniscient, i.e. a divine mind. In such passages as ch. 42:8,9; 44:6-9; 45:19-21; 46:8-10, the Lord calls Israel to bear witness of their past experiences of His predicting future events, and speaks plainly of that which was to befall them some two hundred years in the future. We have the advantage of being able to look back and see how accurately in their turn these words were fulfilled.

In addition, another line of prophecy which runs right through this wonderful book is that concerning the Messiah. How marvellously such scriptures as ch. 7:14, 15; 9:1-6; 49:1-9; 42:1-7; 61:1,2; ch. 53; 52:13-15 tell of the birth, life, ministry, death, burial and exaltation of the One whose coming lay seven hundred years in the future. To these might be added many more from all parts of the sacred word. Like the various pieces of a jigsaw puzzle the predictions of Scripture, given through many individuals, over many years, unite to produce the perfect portrait of the Christ who was to come, and in whose coming is thus given clearest testimony that one, great, all-seeing Mind is the Author of Scripture.

It is true that at times men make forecasts which are fulfilled (See e.g. Deut. 13:1-5). By projecting present processes into the future some idea may be gained of probable results; also Satan has access to the courts of God and may learn of matters which he may use to his own advantage in the delusion of men. In this however Scripture is unique, in that its predictions are not vague generalizations but specific and minutely detailed statements which leave little or no room for mere coincidence. Moreover they are not mixed with errors or absurdities but are infallible. Concerning the minute details of one of his predictions Isaiah throws out the