

Isaiah's Prophecy to Judah—Book of Comfort, Part 2 (c. 689 BC)

Isaiah 43:14–48:22

The New Exodus

- 43:14 Thus says Yahweh, your redeemer,
the holy one of Israel:
“For your sake I will send *to* Babylon,
and I will cause all of them to fall down *as* fugitives,
and the Chaldeans, their rejoicing on the ships.
- 15 I *am* Yahweh, your holy one,
the creator of Israel, your king.”
- 16 Thus says Yahweh, who makes a way in the sea
and a path in *the* mighty waters,
17 who brings out chariot and horse,
army and mighty one.
Together they lie down;
they cannot rise.
They are extinguished,
quenched like *a* wick.
- 18 “You must not remember *the* former things,
and you not must consider *the* former things.
- 19 Look! I *am* about to do a new thing! Now it sprouts!
Do you not perceive it?
Indeed, I will make a way in the wilderness,
rivers in *the* desert.
- 20 The animals of the field will honor me,
jackals and daughters of *the* ostrich,
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in *the* desert,
to give a drink *to* my chosen people,
21 this people whom I formed for myself,
so they might make known my praise.

Israel's Failure to Love God

- 22 But you did not call me, Jacob;
for you have become weary of me, Israel.
- 23 You have not brought me your sheep for a burnt offering
nor honored me *with* your sacrifice.
I have not made you serve with offerings,
nor have I made you weary with frankincense.
- 24 You have not bought me spice reed with money
or satisfied me *with* the fat of sacrifices.
But you have burdened me with your sins;
you have made me weary with your iniquities.
- 25 I, I am the one who blots out your transgressions for my sake,
and I will not remember your sins.
- 26 Take me to court; let us enter into judgment together.
You, make an account so that you may be in the right.
- 27 Your first ancestor sinned,
and your representatives transgressed against me.
- 28 And I profaned *the* princes of *the* sanctuary,
and I gave Jacob to destruction, and Israel to reviling.

Future Blessing for the Lord's Chosen

- 44:1 “But now hear, Jacob my servant,
and Israel, whom I have chosen.
- 2 Thus says Yahweh, who made you,
and who formed you in *the* womb and will help you:
you must not fear, my servant Jacob,

- and Jeshurun whom I have chosen.
3 For I will pour out water on a thirsty *land*
and streams on dry ground.
I will pour my spirit out on your descendants
and my blessing on your offspring.
4 And they shall sprout among *the* grass
like willows by a watercourse of water.
5 This *one* will say, 'I belong to Yahweh!'
And that *one* will be called by the name of Jacob,
and another will write *on* his hand 'Yahweh's'
and take the name of Israel."

The Folly of Idolatry

- 6 Thus says Yahweh, the king of Israel,
and its redeemer, Yahweh of hosts:
"I *am the* first, and I *am the* last,
and there is no god besides me.
7 And who *is* like me? Let him proclaim *it!*
And let him declare it and set it in order for me
since I established an eternal people and things that are to come,
and let them tell them *the things* that are coming.
8 You must not tremble,
and you must not be paralyzed with fear.
Have I not made you hear from of old
and declared *it*, and you *are* my witnesses?
Is there a god besides me?
And there is no rock! I know none!"
9 All those who form an idol *are* nothing,
and their delightful things do not profit.
And their witnesses do not see or know,
so they will be ashamed.
10 Who would form a god
and cast an image of *which* he cannot profit?
11 Look! all his companions shall be ashamed,
and *the* artisans *are* human!
Let all of them assemble;
let them stand up.
They shall tremble;
they shall be ashamed together.
12 *The* ironsmith works in the coals *with his* tool
and forms it with hammers.
And he makes it with his strong arm;
indeed, he becomes hungry, and he lacks strength;
he does not drink water, and he is faint.
13 *The* woodworker stretches out a line;
he makes an outline *of* it with *a* marker.
He makes it with *a* knife
and makes an outline *of* it with *a* compass.
He makes it like *the* image of a man,
like *the* beauty of a human, to dwell *in* a temple.
14 Cutting down cedars for himself,
he chooses a holm tree and an oak,
and he lets it grow strong for him among *the* trees of *the* forest.
He plants a cedar, and *the* rain makes *it* grow.
15 And it becomes fuel for a human,
and he takes some of it and grows warm;
also, he kindles a fire and bakes bread.
Also, he makes a god and bows in worship;

- he makes himself an image and bows down to it!
- 16 He burns half of it in *the* fire;
he eats meat over half of it;
he roasts a roast and is satisfied.
Also he grows warm and says, “Ah!
I am warm! I see *the* fire!”
- 17 And he makes the remainder of it into a god!
He bows down to his idol,
and he bows in worship and prays to him,
and he says, “Save me, for you *are* my god!”
- 18 They do not know,
and they do not understand,
for their eyes *are* besmeared so that they cannot see,
their minds so that they have no insight.
- 19 And no one takes it to heart, and *there is* no knowledge
and no understanding to say, “I burned half of it in *the* fire
and also I baked bread on its coals;
I roasted meat, and I have eaten.
And I shall make *the* rest of it into an abomination!
I shall bow down to a block of wood!”
- 20 *He* feeds *on* ashes; a deceived mind misleads him.
And he cannot save himself, and he cannot say,
“Is *this* not an illusion in my right hand?”
- 21 “Remember these things, Jacob,
and Israel, for you *are* my servant:
I formed you; you *are* my servant;
Israel, you will not be forgotten by me!
- 22 I have wiped your transgressions out like *a* cloud
and your sins like mist.
Return to me,
for I have redeemed you!”
- 23 Sing for joy, heavens, for Yahweh has done *it*!
Shout, depths of *the* earth!
Break forth, mountains, *in* rejoicing,
forest and every tree in it,
for Yahweh has redeemed Jacob,
and he will show his glory in Israel!

Judah's Restoration Through Cyrus

- 44:24 Thus says Yahweh, your redeemer,
and he who formed you in *the* womb:
“I *am* Yahweh, who made everything,
who stretched out *the* heavens alone,
who spread out the earth—who *was* with me?—
- 25 who frustrates *the* signs of oracle priests
and makes a fool of diviners,
who drives *the* wise men back
and makes their knowledge foolish,
- 26 who keeps the word of his servant
and carries out the plan of his messengers,
who says of Jerusalem, ‘It shall be inhabited,’
and of the cities of Judah, ‘They shall be rebuilt,
and I will restore its ruins’;
- 27 who says to the deep, ‘Dry up!
And I will cause your rivers to dry up’;
- 28 who says of Cyrus, ‘My shepherd,’
and he shall carry out all my wishes;
and saying of Jerusalem, ‘It shall be rebuilt,’

and *the* temple, 'It shall be founded.'"

Cyrus, God's Anointed

- 45:1 Thus says Yahweh to his anointed one,
to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped
to subjugate nations before him,
and I uncover *the* loins of kings
to open doors before him,
and *the* gates shall not be shut:
- 2 "I myself will go before you,
and I will level *the* mountains.
I will break *the* doors of bronze
and cut through *the* bars of iron.
- 3 And I will give you *the* treasures of darkness
and treasures of secret places
so that you may know that I *am* Yahweh,
the one who calls *you* by your name, the God of Israel,
- 4 for the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen one.
And I call you by your name;
I give you a name of honor, though you do not know me.
- 5 I *am* Yahweh, and there is none besides *me*;
besides me there is no god.
I gird you though you do not know me,
so that they may know from *the* rising of *the* sun
and from *the* west that *there is* none besides me;
I *am* Yahweh and there is none besides *me*.
- 7 I form light and I create darkness;
I make peace and I create evil;
I *am* Yahweh; I do all these *things*.
- 8 Trickle, O heavens, from above,
and let clouds trickle *with* righteousness;
let *the* earth open so that salvation may be fruitful,
and let it cause righteousness to sprout along with it.
I myself, Yahweh, have created it.
- 9 Woe *to the* one who strives with his maker,
a potsherd among potsherds of earth!
Does *the* clay say to the one who fashions it,
'What are you making?'
and 'Your work has no hands'?
- 10 Woe *to the* one who says to a father, 'What you are begetting?'
or to a woman, '*With* what are you in labor?'"

God the Creator Controls History

- 11 Thus says Yahweh, the holy one of Israel,
and its maker:
"Ask me of the things to come about my children,
and you command me about the work of my hands.
- 12 I myself made *the* earth,
and I created humankind upon it.
I, my hands, stretched out *the* heavens,
and I commanded all their host.
- 13 I myself have stirred him up in righteousness,
and I will make all his paths smooth.
He himself shall build my city,
and he shall set my exiles free,
not for price or a gift,"

says Yahweh of hosts.

Israel Saved by the Lord

- 14 Thus says Yahweh:
 “The acquisition of Egypt
 and the merchandise of Cush
 and the Sabians, tall men,
 shall pass over to you;
 they shall be yours,
 and they shall walk behind you.
 They shall pass over in chains,
 and they shall bow down to you;
 they will pray to you:
 ‘Surely God *is* with you, and there is no *other*.
 Besides *him there is no God.*’” [1 Cor 14:25]
- 15 Surely you *are* a God who keeps yourself hidden,
 God of Israel, *the* savior.
- 16 All of them are ashamed and indeed humiliated;
the craftsmen of idols go together in insult.
- 17 Israel is saved by Yahweh *with* everlasting salvation;
 you shall not be ashamed,
 and you shall not be humiliated to all eternity.

A Righteous God and a Savior

- 18 For thus says Yahweh, who created the heavens,
 he *is* God, who formed the earth
 and who made it.
 He himself established it;
 he did not create it *as* emptiness—
 he formed it for inhabiting.

“I *am* Yahweh and there is none besides *me*.

- 19 I have spoken not in secrecy, in a place, a land, of darkness,
 I have not said to the descendants of Jacob, ‘Seek me in vain!’
 I, Yahweh, *am* speaking righteousness,
 declaring uprightness.
- 20 Assemble and come;
 draw near together, survivors of the nations!
 They do not know, those who carry their wooden idols
 and pray to a god who cannot save.
- 21 Declare and present *your case*,
 also let them consult together!
 Who made this known from former times,
 declared it from of old?
 Was *it* not I, Yahweh?
 And there is no *other* god besides *me*,
 a righteous God besides me,
 and no savior besides me. [Mark 12:32; Acts 15:18]
- 22 Turn to me and be saved, all *the ends of the earth*,
 for I *am* God and there is none besides *me*.
- 23 I have sworn by myself;
 a word that shall not return has gone forth from my mouth *in* righteousness:
 ‘Every knee shall kneel down to me;
 every tongue shall swear.’ [Rom 14:11]
- 24 ‘Only in Yahweh,’ one shall say to me, ‘*are* righteousness and strength.’
 He shall come to him, and all those who were angry with him shall be ashamed.
- 25 In Yahweh all the offspring of Israel shall be in the right,

and they shall boast.”

The Babylonians Will Carry Their Gods Into Captivity

- 46:1 Bel bows down;
Nebo *is* stooping.
Their idols are on animals and on cattle;
your cargo is carried *as* a burden on weary *animals*.
- 2 They stoop;
they bow down together.
They are not able to save *the* burden,
but they themselves go in captivity.

But Israel Will be Carried by Their God

- 3 “Listen to me, house of Jacob,
and all the remnant of the house of Israel
who have been carried from *the* belly,
who have been carried from *the* womb:
- 4 Even to *your* old age I *am* he;
even to *your* advanced age I myself will support *you*.
I myself have made *you*,
and I myself will carry *you*,
and I myself will support *you*,
and I will save *you*.

Yahweh Cannot Be Compared to Other Gods

- 5 To whom will you liken me,
and count as equal,
and compare with me,
as though we were alike?
- 6 Those who lavish gold from *the* purse
and weigh out silver in the balance scales;
hire a goldsmith
and he makes him a god;
they bow down,
indeed they bow in worship.
- 7 They carry it on *their* shoulder;
they support it and they set it *in* its place,
and it stands in position.
It cannot be removed from its place;
even *when* he cries out to it, it does not answer.
It does not save him from his trouble.
- 8 Remember this and pluck up courage!
Call to mind, *you* transgressors!
- 9 Remember *the* former things from a long time ago,
for I *am* God and there is none besides *me*,
God and *there is* none like me,
who from *the* beginning declares *the* end,
and from before, *things* that have not been done,
who says, ‘My plan shall stand,’
and, ‘I will accomplish all my wishes,’
- 11 who calls a bird of prey from *the* east,
the man of his plan from a country from afar.
Indeed I have spoken; indeed I will bring it *to being*.
I have formed *it*; indeed I will do it.
- 12 Listen to me, strong of heart,
far from righteousness!
- 13 I bring my righteousness near; *it is* not far.
And my salvation will not delay;

and I will put salvation in Zion,
for Israel my glory.”

Babylon Will Be Dethroned

47:1 Come down and sit on *the* dust, virgin daughter of Babylon!
Sit on the ground without a throne, daughter of Chaldea!
For they shall no longer call you tender and delicate.

2 Take *the* pair of mill stones and grind flour!
Uncover your veil,
strip off *your* skirt,
uncover *your* thigh,
pass through *the* rivers!

3 Your nakedness shall be exposed;
indeed, your shame shall become visible.
I will take vengeance
and I will not spare a person.

4 Our redeemer, Yahweh of hosts *is* his name, the holy one of Israel.

Babylon's Greatness Will End

5 Sit silently and go into the darkness, daughter of Chaldea,
for they shall no longer call you mistress of kingdoms.

6 I was angry with my people;
I profaned my inheritance,
and I gave them into your hand.
You did not give them mercy;
on *the* aged you made your yoke very heavy.

7 And you said, “I shall be an eternal mistress forever!”
You did not set these *things* upon your heart;
you did not remember its end.

Impending Judgment

8 Therefore now hear this, luxuriant *one* who sits in security,
who says in her heart, “*I am*, and besides me *there is* no one.
I shall not sit *as* a widow,
and I shall not know *the* loss of children.”

9 And these two shall come to you *in* a moment, in one day:
the loss of children and widowhood shall come on you completely,
in spite of your many sorceries,
in spite of the power of your great enchantments.

10 And you felt secure in your wickedness;
you said, “No one sees me.”
Your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray,
and you said in your heart, “*I am*, and besides me *there is* no one.”

11 And evil shall come upon you, you will not know;
it will be on the lookout for her.
And disaster shall fall upon you; you will not be able to avert it.
And ruin shall come on you suddenly; you do not know.

No One Will Save Babylon

12 Stand, now, in your enchantments,
and in your many sorceries with which you have labored from your youth.
Perhaps you may be able to benefit;
perhaps you may scare away.

13 You struggle with your many consultations;
let them stand, now, and save you—
those who see the stars, divide *the* celestial sphere,
who inform by new moons—

- from *those things* that are coming upon you.
- 14 Look! They are like stubble;
the fire burns them completely.
They cannot deliver themselves from *the* power of *the* flame;
there is no coal for warming oneself,
no fire before which to sit.
- 15 So are to you *those with* whom you have labored,
your traders from your youth.
They wander, each to his side;
there is no one who can save you.

God Proves Himself by Predicting the Future

- 48:1 Hear this, house of Jacob,
who are called by the name of Israel
and came out from the waters of Judah,
who swear by the name of Yahweh,
and invoke the God of Israel,
but not in truth
and not in righteousness.
- 2 For they call themselves after the holy city,
and they lean on the God of Israel—
Yahweh of hosts *is* his name.
- 3 “I declared the former things from of old,
and they went out from my mouth.
And I announced them suddenly;
I acted, and they came *to pass*,
- 4 because I know that you *are* obstinate,
and your neck an iron sinew,
and your forehead bronze.
- 5 And I declared *them* to you from of old;
I announced *them* to you before they came *to pass*
so that you would not say, ‘My idol did them,
and my image and my cast image commanded them.’
- 6 You have heard; see it all.
And will you not declare *it*?
I announce new things to you from this time
and hidden things that you have not known.
- 7 Now they are created, and not from of old,
and before today, and you have not heard them
so that you could not say, “Look! I knew them.”
- 8 Neither have you heard, nor have you known,
nor from of old has your ear been opened.
For I knew you would deal treacherously, very treacherously,
and you *are* called a rebel from *the* womb.
- 9 For the sake of my name I refrain from my anger,
and *for* my praise I restrain *it* for you
so as not to cut you off.
- 10 Look! I have refined you, but not like silver;
I have chosen you in *the* furnace of misery.
- 11 For my own sake, for my own sake I do *it*;
for why should it be defiled?
And I will not give my glory to another.”

Babylon’s Destruction is Certain

- 12 “Listen to me, Jacob,
and Israel, whom I called:
I *am* he. I *am the* first;
also I *am the* last.

- 13 Indeed, my hand founded *the* earth,
and my right hand spread out *the* heavens;
when I summon them, they stand in position together.
- 14 Assemble, all of you, and hear!
Who among them declared these *things*?
Yahweh loves him;
he shall perform his wish against Babylon
and his arm *against* the Chaldeans.
- 15 I, I myself, I have spoken!
Indeed, I have called him.
I have brought him,
and he will be successful *in* his way.
- 16 Draw near to me; hear this! I have not spoken in secrecy from *the* beginning;
from *the* time it came to be, there I *have been*;
And now the Lord Yahweh has sent me and his Spirit.”
- 17 Thus says Yahweh, your redeemer, the holy one of Israel:

“I *am* Yahweh your God, who teaches you to profit,
leads you in *the* way you should go.
- 18 O that you had listened attentively to my commandments!

Then your prosperity would have been like *a* river,
and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.
- 19 And your offspring would have been like the sand,
and the descendants of your body like its grains.
It would not be cut off,
and its name would not be destroyed from my presence.”
- 20 Go out from Babylon!
Flee from Chaldea!
Proclaim *it* with a shout of rejoicing; proclaim this!
Send it forth to the end of the earth;
say, “Yahweh has redeemed his servant Jacob!”
- 21 And *when* he led them through the deserts, they were not thirsty;
he made water flow from *the* rock for them,
and he split *the* rock,
and *the* water gushed out.
- 22 “There is no peace,” says Yahweh, “for the wicked.”

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