

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 the LORD your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel,

“For your sake I have sent to Babylon,
And will bring them all down as fugitives,
Even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice.

15 “I am the LORD, your Holy One,
The Creator of Israel, your King.”

16 Thus says the LORD,

Who makes a way through the sea
And a path through the mighty waters,
17 Who brings forth the chariot and the horse,
The army and the mighty man
(They will lie down together *and* not rise again;
They have been quenched *and* extinguished like a wick):

18 “Do not call to mind the former things,
Or ponder things of the past.

19 “Behold, I will do something new,
Now it will spring forth;
Will you not be aware of it?
I will even make a roadway in the wilderness,
Rivers in the desert.

20 “The beasts of the field will glorify Me,
The jackals and the ostriches,
Because I have given waters in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert,
To give drink to My chosen people.

21 “The people whom I formed for Myself
Will declare My praise.

Israel's Failure to Love God

22 “Yet you have not called on Me, O Jacob;
But you have become weary of Me, O Israel.

23 “You have not brought to Me the sheep of your burnt offerings,
Nor have you honored Me with your sacrifices.
I have not burdened you with offerings,
Nor wearied you with incense.

24 “You have bought Me not sweet cane with money,
Nor have you filled Me with the fat of your sacrifices;
Rather you have burdened Me with your sins,
You have wearied Me with your iniquities.

25 “I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake,
And I will not remember your sins.

26 “Put Me in remembrance, let us argue our case together;
State your *cause*, that you may be proved right.

27 “Your first forefather sinned,
And your spokesmen have transgressed against Me.

28 “So I will pollute the princes of the sanctuary,
And I will consign Jacob to the ban and Israel to revilement.

Future Blessing for the Lord's Chosen

44:1 “But now listen, O Jacob, My servant,
And Israel, whom I have chosen:

2 Thus says the LORD who made you

And formed you from the womb, who will help you,

'Do not fear, O Jacob My servant;

And you Jeshurun whom I have chosen.

3 'For I will pour out water on the thirsty *land*

And streams on the dry ground;

I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring

And My blessing on your descendants;

4 And they will spring up among the grass

Like poplars by streams of water.'

5 "This one will say, 'I am the LORD's';

And that one will call on the name of Jacob;

And another will write *on* his hand, 'Belonging to the LORD,'

And will name Israel's name with honor.

The Folly of Idolatry

6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:

'I am the first and I am the last,

And there is no God besides Me.

7 'Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it;

Yes, let him recount it to Me in order,

From the time that I established the ancient nation.

And let them declare to them the things that are coming

And the events that are going to take place.

8 'Do not tremble and do not be afraid;

Have I not long since announced *it* to you and declared *it*?

And you are My witnesses.

Is there any God besides Me,

Or is there any *other* Rock?

I know of none."

9 Those who fashion a graven image are all of them futile, and their precious things are of no profit; even their own witnesses fail to see or know, so that they will be put to shame.

10 Who has fashioned a god or cast an idol to no profit?

11 Behold, all his companions will be put to shame, for the craftsmen themselves are mere men. Let them all assemble themselves, let them stand up, let them tremble, let them together be put to shame.

12 The man shapes iron into a cutting tool and does his work over the coals, fashioning it with hammers and working it with his strong arm. He also gets hungry and his strength fails; he drinks no water and becomes weary.

13 *Another* shapes wood, he extends a measuring line; he outlines it with red chalk. He works it with planes and outlines it with a compass, and makes it like the form of a man, like the beauty of man, so that it may sit in a house.

14 Surely he cuts cedars for himself, and takes a cypress or an oak and raises *it* for himself among the trees of the forest. He plants a fir, and the rain makes it grow.

15 Then it becomes *something* for a man to burn, so he takes one of them and warms himself; he also makes a fire to bake bread. He also makes a god and worships it; he makes it a graven image and falls down before it.

16 Half of it he burns in the fire; over *this* half he eats meat as he roasts a roast and is satisfied. He also warms himself and says, "Aha! I am warm, I have seen the fire."

17 But the rest of it he makes into a god, his graven image. He falls down before it and worships; he also prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god."

18 They do not know, nor do they understand, for He has smeared over their eyes so that they cannot see and their hearts so that they cannot comprehend.

19 No one recalls, nor is there knowledge or understanding to say, "I have burned half of it in the fire and also have baked bread over its coals. I roast meat and eat *it*. Then I make the rest of it into an abomination, I fall down before a block of wood!"

20 He feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside. And he cannot deliver himself, nor say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

21 "Remember these things, O Jacob,

And Israel, for you are My servant;

I have formed you, you are My servant,

- O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me.
 22 “I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud
 And your sins like a heavy mist.
 Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”
 23 Shout for joy, O heavens, for the LORD has done *it*!
 Shout joyfully, you lower parts of the earth;
 Break forth into a shout of joy, you mountains,
 O forest, and every tree in it;
 For the LORD has redeemed Jacob
 And in Israel He shows forth His glory.

Judah’s Restoration Through Cyrus

24 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb,

- “I, the LORD, am the maker of all things,
 Stretching out the heavens by Myself
 And spreading out the earth all alone,
 25 Causing the omens of boasters to fail,
 Making fools out of diviners,
 Causing wise men to draw back
 And turning their knowledge into foolishness,
 26 Confirming the word of His servant
 And performing the purpose of His messengers.
It is I who says of Jerusalem, ‘She shall be inhabited!’
 And of the cities of Judah, ‘They shall be built.’
 And I will raise up her ruins *again*.
 27 “*It is I* who says to the depth of the sea, ‘Be dried up!’
 And I will make your rivers dry.
 28 “*It is I* who says of Cyrus, ‘*He is My shepherd!*
 And he will perform all My desire.’
 And he declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built,’
 And of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.’”

Cyrus, God’s Anointed

- 45:1 Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed,
 Whom I have taken by the right hand,
 To subdue nations before him
 And to loose the loins of kings;
 To open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:
 2 “I will go before you and make the rough places smooth;
 I will shatter the doors of bronze and cut through their iron bars.
 3 “I will give you the treasures of darkness
 And hidden wealth of secret places,
 So that you may know that it is I,
 The LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.
 4 “For the sake of Jacob My servant,
 And Israel My chosen *one*,
 I have also called you by your name;
 I have given you a title of honor
 Though you have not known Me.
 5 “I am the LORD, and there is no other;
 Besides Me there is no God.
 I will gird you, though you have not known Me;
 6 That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun
 That there is no one besides Me.
 I am the LORD, and there is no other,
 7 The One forming light and creating darkness,
 Causing well-being and creating calamity;

- I am the LORD who does all these.
- 8 “Drip down, O heavens, from above,
And let the clouds pour down righteousness;
Let the earth open up and salvation bear fruit,
And righteousness spring up with it.
I, the LORD, have created it.
- 9 “Woe to *the one* who quarrels with his Maker—
An earthenware vessel 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?’
- 10 “Woe to him who says to a father, ‘What are you begetting?’
Or to a woman, ‘To what are you giving birth?’”

God the Creator Controls History

11 Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker:

- “Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons,
And you shall commit to Me the work of My hands.
- 12 “It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it.
I stretched out the heavens with My hands
And I ordained all their host.
- 13 “I have aroused him in righteousness
And I will make all his ways smooth;
He will build My city and will let My exiles go free,
Without any payment or reward,” says the LORD of hosts.

Israel Saved by the Lord

14 Thus says the LORD,

- “The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush
And the Sabeans, men of stature,
Will come over to you and will be yours;
They will walk behind you, they will come over in chains
And will bow down to you;
They will make supplication to you:
‘Surely, God is with you, and there is none else,
No other God.’” [\[1 Cor 14:25\]](#)
- 15 Truly, You are a God who hides Himself,
O God of Israel, Savior!
- 16 They will be put to shame and even humiliated, all of them;
The manufacturers of idols will go away together in humiliation.
- 17 Israel has been saved by the LORD
With an everlasting salvation;
You will not be put to shame or humiliated
To all eternity.

A Righteous God and a Savior

18 For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it *and* did not create it a waste place, *but* formed it to be inhabited),

- “I am the LORD, and there is none else.
- 19 “I have not spoken in secret,
In some dark land;
I did not say to the offspring of Jacob,
‘Seek Me in a waste place’;
I, the LORD, speak righteousness,
Declaring things that are upright.
- 20 “Gather yourselves and come;

- Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations;
They have no knowledge,
Who carry about their wooden idol
And pray to a god who cannot save.
- 21 “Declare and set forth *your case*;
Indeed, let them consult together.
Who has announced this from of old?
Who has long since declared it?
Is it not I, the LORD?
And there is no other God besides Me,
A righteous God and a Savior;
There is none except 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 no other.
- 23 “I have sworn by Myself,
The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness
And will not turn back,
That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance*. [[Rom 14:11](#)]
- 24 “They will say of Me, ‘Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.’
Men will come to Him,
And all who were angry at Him will be put to shame.
- 25 “In the LORD all the offspring of Israel
Will be justified and will glory.”

The Babylonians Will Carry Their Gods Into Captivity

- 46:1 Bel has bowed down, Nebo stoops over;
Their images are *consigned* to the beasts and the cattle.
The things that you carry are burdensome,
A load for the weary *beast*.
- 2 They stooped over, they have bowed down together;
They could not rescue the burden,
But have themselves gone into captivity.

But Israel Will be Carried by Their God

- 3 “Listen to Me, O house of Jacob,
And all the remnant of the house of Israel,
You who have been borne by Me from birth
And have been carried from the womb;
- 4 Even to *your* old age I will be the same,
And even to *your* graying years I will bear *you*!
I have done *it*, and I will carry *you*;
And I will bear *you* and I will deliver *you*.

Yahweh Cannot Be Compared to Other Gods

- 5 “To whom would you liken Me
And make Me equal and compare Me,
That we would be alike?
- 6 “Those who lavish gold from the purse
And weigh silver on the scale
Hire a goldsmith, and he makes it *into* a god;
They bow down, indeed they worship it.
- 7 “They lift it upon the shoulder *and* carry it;
They set it in its place and it stands *there*.
It does not move from its place.
Though one may cry to it, it cannot answer;
It cannot deliver him from his distress.
- 8 “Remember this, and be assured;
Recall it to mind, you transgressors.

- 9 “Remember the former things long past,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,
- 10 Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, ‘My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’;
- 11 Calling a bird of prey from the east,
The man of My purpose from a far country.
Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass.
I have planned *it*, *surely* I will do it.
- 12 “Listen to Me, you stubborn-minded,
Who are far from righteousness.
- 13 “I bring near My righteousness, it is not far off;
And My salvation will not delay.
And I will grant salvation in Zion,
And My glory for Israel.

Babylon Will Be Dethroned

- 47:1 “Come down and sit in the dust,
O virgin daughter of Babylon;
Sit on the ground without a throne,
O daughter of the Chaldeans!
For you shall no longer be called tender and delicate.
- 2 “Take the millstones and grind meal.
Remove your veil, strip off the skirt,
Uncover the leg, cross the rivers.
- 3 “Your nakedness will be uncovered,
Your shame also will be exposed;
I will take vengeance and will not spare a man.”
- 4 Our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is His name,
The Holy One of Israel.

Babylon’s Greatness Will End

- 5 “Sit silently, and go into darkness,
O daughter of the Chaldeans,
For you will no longer be called
The queen of kingdoms.
- 6 “I was angry with My people,
I profaned My heritage
And gave them into your hand.
You did not show mercy to them,
On the aged you made your yoke very heavy.
- 7 “Yet you said, ‘I will be a queen forever.’
These things you did not consider
Nor remember the outcome of them.

Impending Judgment

- 8 “Now, then, hear this, you sensual one,
Who dwells securely,
Who says in your heart,
‘I am, and there is no one besides me.
I will not sit as a widow,
Nor know loss of children.’
- 9 “But these two things will come on you suddenly in one day:
Loss of children and widowhood.
They will come on you in full measure
In spite of your many sorceries,

- In spite of the great power of your spells.
 10 “You felt secure in your wickedness and said,
 ‘No one sees me,’
 Your wisdom and your knowledge, they have deluded you;
 For you have said in your heart,
 ‘I am, and there is no one besides me.’
 11 “But evil will come on you
 Which you will not know how to charm away;
 And disaster will fall on you
 For which you cannot atone;
 And destruction about which you do not know
 Will come on you suddenly.

No One Will Save Babylon

- 12 “Stand *fast* now in your spells
 And in your many sorceries
 With which you have labored from your youth;
 Perhaps you will be able to profit,
 Perhaps you may cause trembling.
 13 “You are wearied with your many counsels;
 Let now the astrologers,
 Those who prophesy by the stars,
 Those who predict by the new moons,
 Stand up and save you from what will come upon you.
 14 “Behold, they have become like stubble,
 Fire burns them;
 They cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame;
 There will be no coal to warm by
Nor a fire to sit before!
 15 “So have those become to you with whom you have labored,
 Who have trafficked with you from your youth;
 Each has wandered in his own way;
 There is none to save you.

God Proves Himself by Predicting the Future

- 48:1 “Hear this, O house of Jacob, who are named Israel
 And who came forth from the loins of Judah,
 Who swear by the name of the LORD
 And invoke the God of Israel,
But not in truth nor in righteousness.
 2 “For they call themselves after the holy city
 And lean on the God of Israel;
 The LORD of hosts is His name.
 3 “I declared the former things long ago
 And they went forth from My mouth, and I proclaimed them.
 Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.
 4 “Because I know that you are obstinate,
 And your neck is an iron sinew
 And your forehead bronze,
 5 Therefore I declared *them* to you long ago,
 Before they took place I proclaimed *them* to you,
 So that you would not say, ‘My idol has done them,
 And my graven image and my molten image have commanded them.’
 6 “You have heard; look at all this.
 And you, will you not declare it?
 I proclaim to you new things from this time,
 Even hidden things which you have not known.
 7 “They are created now and not long ago;

- And before today you have not heard them,
So that you will not say, 'Behold, I knew them.'
- 8 "You have not heard, you have not known.
Even from long ago your ear has not been open,
Because I knew that you would deal very treacherously;
And you have been called a rebel from birth.
- 9 "For the sake of My name I delay My wrath,
And *for* My praise I restrain *it* for you,
In order not to cut you off.
- 10 "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.
- 11 "For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act;
For how can *My name* be profaned?
And My glory I will not give to another.

Babylon's Destruction is Certain

- 12 "Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called;
I am He, I am the first, I am also the last.
- 13 "Surely My hand founded the earth,
And My right hand spread out the heavens;
When I call to them, they stand together.
- 14 "Assemble, all of you, and listen!
Who among them has declared these things?
The LORD loves him; he will carry out His good pleasure on Babylon,
And His arm *will be against* the Chaldeans.
- 15 "I, even I, have spoken; indeed I have called him,
I have brought him, and He will make his ways successful.
- 16 "Come near to Me, listen to this:
From the first I have not spoken in secret,
From the time it took place, I was there.
And now the Lord GOD has sent Me, and His Spirit."
- 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.
- 18 "If only you had paid attention to My commandments!
Then your well-being would have been like a river,
And your righteousness like the waves of the sea.
- 19 "Your descendants would have been like the sand,
And your offspring like its grains;
Their name would never be cut off or destroyed from My presence."
- 20 Go forth from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans!
Declare with the sound of joyful shouting, proclaim this,
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 the water flow out of the rock for them;
He split the rock and the water gushed forth.
- 22 "There is no peace for the wicked," says the LORD.