

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

Isaiah 43:14–48:22

The New Exodus

- 43:14 This is what the LORD says,
 your protector, the Holy One of Israel:
 “For your sake I send to Babylon
 and make them all fugitives,
 turning the Babylonians’ joyful shouts into mourning songs.
- 15 I am the LORD, your Holy One,
 the one who created Israel, your king.”
- 16 This is what the LORD says,
 the one who made a road through the sea,
 a pathway through the surging waters,
 the one who led chariots and horses to destruction,
 together with a mighty army.
 They fell down, never to rise again;
 they were extinguished, put out like a burning wick:
- 18 “Don’t remember these earlier events;
 don’t recall these former events.
- 19 “Look, I am about to do something new.
 Now it begins to happen!
 Do you not recognize it?
 Yes, I will make a road in the desert
 and paths in the wilderness.
- 20 The wild animals of the desert honor me,
 the jackals and ostriches,
 because I put water in the desert
 and streams in the wilderness,
 to quench the thirst of my chosen people,
 the people whom I formed for myself,
 so they might praise me.”

Israel's Failure to Love God

- 22 “But you did not call for me, O Jacob;
 you did not long for me, O Israel.
- 23 You did not bring me lambs for your burnt offerings;
 you did not honor me with your sacrifices.
 I did not burden you with offerings;
 I did not make you weary by demanding incense.
- 24 You did not buy me aromatic reeds;
 you did not present to me the fat of your sacrifices.
 Yet you burdened me with your sins;
 you made me weary with your evil deeds.
- 25 I, I am the one who blots out your rebellious deeds for my sake;
 your sins I do not remember.
- 26 Remind me of what happened! Let’s debate!
 You, prove to me that you are right!
- 27 The father of your nation sinned;
 your spokesmen rebelled against me.
- 28 So I defiled your holy princes,
 and handed Jacob over to destruction,
 and subjected Israel to humiliating abuse.”

Future Blessing for the Lord's Chosen

- 44:1 “Now, listen, Jacob my servant,
 Israel whom I have chosen!”
- 2 This is what the LORD, the one who made you, says—
 the one who formed you in the womb and helps you:

“Don’t be afraid, my servant Jacob,
Jeshurun, whom I have chosen!

3 For I will pour water on the parched ground
and cause streams to flow on the dry land.

I will pour my spirit on your offspring
and my blessing on your children.

4 They will sprout up like a tree in the grass,
like poplars beside channels of water.

5 One will say, ‘I belong to the LORD,’
and another will use the name ‘Jacob.’
One will write on his hand, ‘The LORD’s,’
and use the name ‘Israel.’”

The Folly of Idolatry

6 This is what the LORD, Israel’s king, says,
their protector, the LORD who commands armies:

“I am the first and I am the last,
there is no God but me.

7 Who is like me? Let him make his claim!
Let him announce it and explain it to me—
since I established an ancient people—
let them announce future events!

8 Don’t panic! Don’t be afraid!
Did I not tell you beforehand and decree it?
You are my witnesses! Is there any God but me?
There is no other sheltering rock; I know of none.

9 All who form idols are nothing;
the things in which they delight are worthless.
Their witnesses cannot see;
they recognize nothing, so they are put to shame.

10 Who forms a god and casts an idol
that will prove worthless?

11 Look, all his associates will be put to shame;
the craftsmen are mere humans.
Let them all assemble and take their stand!
They will panic and be put to shame.

12 A blacksmith works with his tool
and forges metal over the coals.
He forms it with hammers;
he makes it with his strong arm.
He gets hungry and loses his energy;
he drinks no water and gets tired.

13 A carpenter takes measurements;
he marks out an outline of its form;
he scrapes it with chisels,
and marks it with a compass.
He patterns it after the human form,
like a well-built human being,
and puts it in a shrine.

14 He cuts down cedars
and acquires a cypress or an oak.
He gets trees from the forest;
he plants a cedar and the rain makes it grow.

15 A man uses it to make a fire;
he takes some of it and warms himself.
Yes, he kindles a fire and bakes bread.
Then he makes a god and worships it;
he makes an idol and bows down to it.

- 16 Half of it he burns in the fire—
over that half he cooks meat;
he roasts a meal and fills himself.
Yes, he warms himself and says,
'Ah! I am warm as I look at the fire.'
- 17 With the rest of it he makes a god, his idol;
he bows down to it and worships it.
He prays to it, saying,
'Rescue me, for you are my god!'
- 18 They do not comprehend or understand,
for their eyes are blind and cannot see;
their minds do not discern.
- 19 No one thinks to himself,
nor do they comprehend or understand and say to themselves:
'I burned half of it in the fire—
yes, I baked bread over the coals;
I roasted meat and ate it.
With the rest of it should I make a disgusting idol?
Should I bow down to dry wood?'
- 20 He feeds on ashes;
his deceived mind misleads him.
He cannot rescue himself,
nor does he say, 'Is this not a false god I hold in my right hand?'
- 21 Remember these things, O Jacob,
O Israel, for you are my servant.
I formed you to be my servant;
O Israel, I will not forget you!
- 22 I remove the guilt of your rebellious deeds as if they were a cloud,
the guilt of your sins as if they were a cloud.
Come back to me, for I protect you."
- 23 Shout for joy, O sky, for the LORD intervenes;
shout out, you subterranean regions of the earth.
O mountains, give a joyful shout;
you too, O forest and all your trees!
For the LORD protects Jacob;
he reveals his splendor through Israel.

Judah's Restoration Through Cyrus

- 24 This is what the LORD, your protector, says,
the one who formed you in the womb:
"I am the LORD, who made everything,
who alone stretched out the sky,
who fashioned the earth all by myself,
25 who frustrates the omens of the empty talkers
and humiliates the omen readers,
who overturns the counsel of the wise men
and makes their advice seem foolish,
26 who fulfills the oracles of his prophetic servants
and brings to pass the announcements of his messengers,
who says about Jerusalem, 'She will be inhabited,'
and about the towns of Judah, 'They will be rebuilt, her ruins I will raise up,'
27 who says to the deep sea, 'Be dry!
I will dry up your sea currents,'
28 who commissions Cyrus, the one I appointed as shepherd
to carry out all my wishes
and to decree concerning Jerusalem, 'She will be rebuilt,'
and concerning the temple, 'It will be reconstructed.'"

Cyrus, God's Anointed

- 45:1 This is what the LORD says to his chosen one,
to Cyrus, whose right hand I hold
in order to subdue nations before him,
and disarm kings,
to open doors before him,
so gates remain unclosed:
- 2 "I will go before you
and level mountains.
Bronze doors I will shatter
and iron bars I will hack through.
- 3 I will give you hidden treasures,
riches stashed away in secret places,
so you may recognize that I am the LORD,
the one who calls you by name, the God of Israel.
- 4 For the sake of my servant Jacob,
Israel, my chosen one,
I call you by name
and give you a title of respect, even though you do not recognize me.
- 5 I am the LORD, I have no peer,
there is no God but me.
I arm you for battle, even though you do not recognize me.
- 6 I do this so people will recognize from east to west
that there is no God but me;
I am the LORD, I have no peer.
- 7 I am the one who forms light and creates darkness;
the one who brings about peace and creates calamity.
I am the LORD, who accomplishes all these things.
- 8 O sky, rain down from above!
Let the clouds send down showers of deliverance!
Let the earth absorb it so salvation may grow,
and deliverance may sprout up along with it.
I, the LORD, create it.
- 9 One who argues with his creator is in grave danger,
one who is like a mere shard among the other shards on the ground!
The clay should not say to the potter,
"What in the world are you doing?
Your work lacks skill!"
- 10 Danger awaits one who says to his father,
"What in the world are you fathering?"
and to his mother,
"What in the world are you bringing forth?"

God the Creator Controls History

- 11 This is what the LORD says,
the Holy One of Israel, the one who formed him,
concerning things to come:
"How dare you question me about my children!
How dare you tell me what to do with the work of my own hands!
- 12 I made the earth,
I created the people who live on it.
It was me—my hands stretched out the sky,
I give orders to all the heavenly lights.
- 13 It is me—I stir him up and commission him;
I will make all his ways level.
He will rebuild my city;
he will send my exiled people home,
but not for a price or a bribe,"

says the LORD who commands armies.

Israel Saved by the Lord

- 14 This is what the LORD says:
“The profit of Egypt and the revenue of Ethiopia,
along with the Sabeans, those tall men,
will be brought to you and become yours.
They will walk behind you, coming along in chains.
They will bow down to you and pray to you:
‘Truly God is with you; he has no peer;
there is no other God!’” [\[1 Cor 14:25\]](#)
- 15 Yes, you are a God who keeps hidden,
O God of Israel, deliverer!
- 16 They will all be ashamed and embarrassed;
those who fashion idols will all be humiliated.
- 17 Israel will be delivered once and for all by the LORD;
you will never again be ashamed or humiliated.

A Righteous God and a Savior

- 18 For this is what the LORD says,
the one who created the sky—
he is the true God,
the one who formed the earth and made it;
he established it,
he did not create it without order,
he formed it to be inhabited—
“I am the LORD, I have no peer.
- 19 I have not spoken in secret,
in some hidden place.
I did not tell Jacob’s descendants,
‘Seek me in vain!’
I am the LORD, the one who speaks honestly,
who makes reliable announcements.
- 20 Gather together and come!
Approach together, you refugees from the nations!
Those who carry wooden idols know nothing,
those who pray to a god that cannot deliver.
- 21 Tell me! Present the evidence!
Let them consult with one another!
Who predicted this in the past?
Who announced it beforehand?
Was it not I, the LORD?
I have no peer, there is no God but me,
a God who vindicates and delivers;
there is none but me. [\[Mark 12:32; Acts 15:18\]](#)
- 22 Turn to me so you can be delivered,
all you who live in the earth’s remote regions!
For I am God, and I have no peer.
- 23 I solemnly make this oath—
what I say is true and reliable:
‘Surely every knee will bow to me,
every tongue will solemnly affirm; [\[Rom 14:11\]](#)
- 24 they will say about me,
“Yes, the LORD is a powerful deliverer.””
All who are angry at him will cower before him.
- 25 All the descendants of Israel will be vindicated by the LORD
and will boast in him.

The Babylonians Will Carry Their Gods Into Captivity

- 46:1 Bel kneels down,
Nebo bends low.
Their images weigh down animals and beasts.
Your heavy images are burdensome to tired animals.
- 2 Together they bend low and kneel down;
they are unable to rescue the images;
they themselves head off into captivity.

But Israel Will be Carried by Their God

- 3 “Listen to me, O family of Jacob,
all you who are left from the family of Israel,
you who have been carried from birth,
you who have been supported from the time you left the womb.
- 4 Even when you are old, I will take care of you,
even when you have gray hair, I will carry you.
I made you and I will support you;
I will carry you and rescue you.

Yahweh Cannot Be Compared to Other Gods

- 5 To whom can you compare and liken me?
Tell me whom you think I resemble, so we can be compared!
- 6 Those who empty out gold from a purse
and weigh out silver on the scale
hire a metalsmith, who makes it into a god.
They then bow down and worship it.
- 7 They put it on their shoulder and carry it;
they put it in its place and it just stands there;
it does not move from its place.
Even when someone cries out to it, it does not reply;
it does not deliver him from his distress.
- 8 Remember this, so you can be brave!
Think about it, you rebels!
- 9 Remember what I accomplished in antiquity!
Truly I am God, I have no peer;
I am God, and there is none like me,
- 10 who announces the end from the beginning
and reveals beforehand what has not yet occurred,
who says, ‘My plan will be realized,
I will accomplish what I desire,’
- 11 who summons an eagle from the east,
from a distant land, one who carries out my plan.
Yes, I have decreed,
yes, I will bring it to pass;
I have formulated a plan,
yes, I will carry it out.
- 12 Listen to me, you stubborn people,
you who distance yourself from doing what is right.
- 13 I am bringing my deliverance near, it is not far away;
I am bringing my salvation near, it does not wait.
I will save Zion; I will adorn Israel with my splendor.”

Babylon Will Be Dethroned

- 47:1 “Fall down! Sit in the dirt,
O virgin daughter Babylon!
Sit on the ground, not on a throne,
O daughter of the Babylonians!
Indeed, you will no longer be called delicate and pampered.

- 2 Pick up millstones and grind flour!
Remove your veil,
strip off your skirt,
expose your legs,
cross the streams!
- 3 Let your private parts be exposed!
Your genitals will be on display!
I will get revenge;
I will not have pity on anyone,”
- 4 says our protector—
the LORD who commands armies is his name,
the Holy One of Israel.

Babylon's Greatness Will End

- 5 “Sit silently! Go to a hiding place,
O daughter of the Babylonians!
Indeed, you will no longer be called ‘Queen of kingdoms.’
- 6 I was angry at my people;
I defiled my special possession and handed them over to you.
You showed them no mercy;
you even placed a very heavy burden on old people.
- 7 You said,
‘I will rule forever as permanent queen!’
You did not think about these things;
you did not consider how it would turn out.

Impending Judgment

- 8 So now, listen to this,
O one who lives so lavishly,
who lives securely,
who says to herself,
‘I am unique! No one can compare to me!
I will never have to live as a widow;
I will never lose my children.’
- 9 Both of these will come upon you
suddenly, in one day!
You will lose your children and be widowed.
You will be overwhelmed by these tragedies,
despite your many incantations
and your numerous amulets.
- 10 You were complacent in your evil deeds;
you thought, ‘No one sees me.’
Your self-professed wisdom and knowledge lead you astray,
when you say, ‘I am unique! No one can compare to me!’
- 11 Disaster will overtake you;
you will not know how to charm it away.
Destruction will fall on you;
you will not be able to appease it.
Calamity will strike you suddenly,
before you recognize it.

No One Will Save Babylon

- 12 Persist in trusting your amulets
and your many incantations,
which you have faithfully recited since your youth!
Maybe you will be successful—
maybe you will scare away disaster.
- 13 You are tired out from listening to so much advice.

Let them take their stand—
 the ones who see omens in the sky,
 who gaze at the stars,
 who make monthly predictions—
 let them rescue you from the disaster that is about to overtake you!

- 14 Look, they are like straw,
 which the fire burns up;
 they cannot rescue themselves
 from the heat of the flames.
 There are no coals to warm them,
 no firelight to enjoy.
- 15 They will disappoint you,
 those you have so faithfully dealt with since your youth.
 Each strays off in his own direction,
 leaving no one to rescue you.”

God Proves Himself by Predicting the Future

- 48:1 Listen to this, O family of Jacob,
 you who are called by the name ‘Israel,’
 and are descended from Judah,
 who take oaths in the name of the LORD,
 and invoke the God of Israel—
 but not in an honest and just manner.
- 2 Indeed, they live in the holy city;
 they trust in the God of Israel,
 whose name is the LORD who commands armies.
- 3 “I announced events beforehand,
 I issued the decrees and made the predictions;
 suddenly I acted and they came to pass.
- 4 I did this because I know how stubborn you are.
 Your neck muscles are like iron
 and your forehead like bronze.
- 5 I announced them to you beforehand;
 before they happened, I predicted them for you,
 so you could never say,
 ‘My image did these things,
 my idol, my cast image, decreed them.’
- 6 You have heard; now look at all the evidence!
 Will you not admit that what I say is true?
 From this point on I am announcing to you new events
 that are previously unrevealed and you do not know about.
- 7 Now they come into being, not in the past;
 before today you did not hear about them,
 so you could not say,
 ‘Yes, I know about them.’
- 8 You did not hear,
 you do not know,
 you were not told beforehand.
 For I know that you are very deceitful;
 you were labeled a rebel from birth.
- 9 For the sake of my reputation I hold back my anger;
 for the sake of my prestige I restrain myself from destroying you.
- 10 Look, I have refined you, but not as silver;
 I have purified you in the furnace of misery.
- 11 For my sake alone I will act,
 for how can I allow my name to be defiled?
 I will not share my glory with anyone else!

Babylon's Destruction is Certain

- 12 Listen to me, O Jacob,
Israel, whom I summoned!
I am the one;
I am present at the very beginning
and at the very end.
- 13 Yes, my hand founded the earth;
my right hand spread out the sky.
I summon them;
they stand together.
- 14 All of you, gather together and listen!
Who among them announced these things?
The LORD's ally will carry out his desire against Babylon;
he will exert his power against the Babylonians.
- 15 I, I have spoken—
yes, I have summoned him;
I lead him and he will succeed.
- 16 Approach me! Listen to this!
From the very first I have not spoken in secret;
when it happens, I am there.”
So now, the sovereign LORD has sent me, accompanied by his spirit.
- 17 This is what the LORD, your protector, says,
the Holy One of Israel:
“I am the LORD your God,
who teaches you how to succeed,
who leads you in the way you should go.
- 18 If only you had obeyed my commandments,
prosperity would have flowed to you like a river,
deliverance would have come to you like the waves of the sea.
- 19 Your descendants would have been as numerous as sand,
and your children like its granules.
Their name would not have been cut off
and eliminated from my presence.
- 20 Leave Babylon!
Flee from the Babylonians!
Announce it with a shout of joy!
Make this known!
Proclaim it throughout the earth!
Say, “The LORD protects his servant Jacob.
- 21 They do not thirst as he leads them through dry regions;
he makes water flow out of a rock for them;
he splits open a rock and water flows out.’
- 22 There will be no prosperity for the wicked,”
says the LORD.

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