

# Isaiah 46-48

Bible Study

## Review

Chapter 44—Israel's Redeemer (Theme)  
Israel will be revived spiritually in the kingdom

Section: God calls out idolatry (it has plagued Israel throughout its history)

Prophecy regarding Cyrus of Persia (Conquers ancient Babylon)

- The prophecy continues in chapter 45

Chapter 45—Prophecy of ancient and future deliverance from Babylon

- Deliverance of the Jews by Cyrus' decree/and future deliverance by Christ

Section: God is in control of everything and the events of mankind

In the future Israel and the world will be taught who the true God really is

## Chapter 46

### Prophecy of deliverance—ancient and future (Ch. 46-48) Babylon falls...deliverance of God's people

<sup>1</sup> Bel bows down, Nebo stoops; Their idols were on the beasts and on the cattle. Your carriages were heavily loaded, A burden to the weary beast.

<sup>2</sup> They stoop, they bow down together; They could not deliver the burden, But have themselves gone into captivity.

v. 1 Bel and Nebo were Babylonian gods

(Parallel Com.) “Bel is a derivative of Baal and signifies Marduk, the patron deity of Babylon. Nebo was the son of Bel/Marduk.”

- The gods of Babylon were indeed brought down.

v.1 [mid. part] “Your carriages”—the idols carried in a religious procession

v. 2 “They could not deliver the burden”—the gods of Babylon could not deliver them from defeat at Cyrus’ hands

- Points to the false religion of Babylon to be destroyed at Christ’s return (Rev. 17-18)

v. 2 [last part] “have themselves gone into captivity”—idols get taken away by conquering nations

## The lesson for God's people Israel—future

3 "Listen to Me, O house of Jacob, And all the remnant of the house of Israel, Who have been upheld by Me from birth, Who have been carried from the womb

4 Even to your old age, I am He, And even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; Even I will carry, and will deliver you.

v. 3 [mid. Part] "the remnant of the house of Israel"—modern descendants of Israel

- God is watching over them and will rescue them from the time of trouble

v. 4 [last part] "I will carry, and will deliver you"

In contrast to the pagan gods who must be carried, God carries and upholds His people

- God shaped and planned for Israel's future...they will be delivered at Christ's return

5 “To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal And compare Me, that we should be alike?

6 They lavish gold out of the bag, And weigh silver on the scales; They hire a goldsmith, and he makes it a god; They prostrate themselves, yes, they worship.

7 They bear it on the shoulder, they carry it And set it in its place, and it stands; From its place it shall not move. Though one cries out to it, yet it cannot answer Nor save him out of his trouble.

God is incomparable to any of the gods that are formed by men and must be carried around, then are set in a place where it cannot move nor save one who is in trouble

v. 8-9 Addressing Israel who has transgressed...

➤ Only God can predict the future

8 “Remember this, and show yourselves men; Recall to mind, O you transgressors. (Israel)

9 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me,

10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,’

v.9-10 God has the power to bring things about according to His design and His plan

v. 10 “Declaring the end from the beginning”

v. 10 God declares what will happen in the future, and He proves that with the prophecy of Cyrus



(KJV) “ravenous bird”

11 Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it.

12 “Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, Who are far from righteousness:

13 I bring My righteousness near, it shall not be far off; My salvation shall not linger. And I will place salvation in Zion, For Israel My glory.

v. 11 “a bird of prey from the east, the man who executes My counsel”—Cyrus who fulfills God’s plan to release the Jews from their captivity (Anciently)

- A type of Christ coming in power to redeem His people (Future)

v. 12 another call to Israel--“you stubborn-hearted”

- Israel has been stubbornly against God through the ages and not obedient

v. 13 “My righteousness near”... “My salvation shall not linger”— the future

- With the return of Jesus Christ to rule righteously...and salvation shall be near to Israel

## Chapter 47

### Prophecy concerning Babylon—its fall: Dual prophecy

- 1) its fall to Cyrus anciently
- 2) And the fall of end time Babylon (Rev. 17-18)

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 more be called Tender and delicate.

2 Take the millstones and grind meal. Remove your veil, Take off the skirt, Uncover the thigh, Pass through the rivers.

3 Your nakedness shall be uncovered, Yes, your shame will be seen; I will take vengeance, And I will not arbitrate with a man."

v. 1 "daughter of Babylon"—a descendant (future) primarily end time Babylon

Babylon is personified with theological implications...its going to fall

v.2 A figure of a slave girl being shamed and indecent exposure

- Babylon to lose its status as ruling over the nations

v. 3 "Your nakedness shall be uncovered"—spiritual nakedness

"I will take vengeance"—God's vengeance on the captors of His people (anciently and future)

4 As for our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is His name, The Holy One of Israel.

5 "Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; For you shall no longer be called The Lady of Kingdoms.

6 I was angry with My people; I have profaned My inheritance, And given them into your hand. You showed them no mercy; On the elderly you laid your yoke very heavily.

v. 4 Isaiah using divine titles: "Redeemer...Lord of hosts...The Holy One of Israel"

"Our redeemer"—intervention by God for His people...anciently and future upon seeing Babylon's defeat

v. 5 "go into darkness"—God's judgment upon Babylon...no longer called "Lady of the Kingdoms"

(Companion Bible) "Lady of the kingdoms"= "mistress of the kingdoms. The king of Babylon called himself 'the king vicar', so the popes call themselves and are so addressed when crowned"

v. 6 God allowed Babylon to conquer Judah anciently (My inheritance)...but they treated the elderly captives harshly

## Babylon's pride

7 And you said, 'I shall be a lady forever,' So that you did not take these things to heart, Nor remember the latter end of them.

8 "Therefore hear this now, you who are given to pleasures, Who dwell securely, Who say in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, Nor shall I know the loss of children';

v.7 "I shall be a lady forever"—Babylon did not consider defeat, but to be an eternal queen of kingdoms

v. 8 "dwell securely"—so overconfident it would not lose its power  
"I am, and there is no one else beside me"—thought of herself as God...but she is wrong

9 But these two things shall come to you In a moment, in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness Because of the multitude of your sorceries, For the great abundance of your enchantments.

v. 9 “in one day”—very quickly to be defeated...

- “loss of children and widowhood”—figurative of desolation from defeat  
Sorceries and enchantments—Babylon prided itself in their use...God will judge



Rev. 18: 7-8

7 In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’

8 Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

“10 For you have trusted in your wickedness; You have said, ‘No one sees me’; Your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you; And you have said in your heart, ‘I am, and there is no one else besides me.’

11 Therefore evil shall come upon you; You shall not know from where it arises. And trouble shall fall upon you; You will not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly, Which you shall not know.

v. 10 The Babylonian system—wickedness...proudful attitude

- The people trust it to give them protection and to guide them and predict the future

v. 11 Sudden destruction comes upon them, despite their sorcery and pride in their predictions

v. 12-15 False religion and sorcery

12 Stand now with your enchantments And the multitude of your sorceries, In which you have labored from your youth— Perhaps you will be able to profit, Perhaps you will prevail.

13 You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, And the monthly prognosticators Stand up and save you From what shall come upon you.

v. 12- 13 God mocks their sorceries—“Perhaps you will prevail”



v. 13 “Stand up and save you”  
See if they can help as destruction comes

14 Behold, they shall be as stubble, The fire shall burn them; They shall not deliver themselves From the power of the flame; It shall not be a coal to be warmed by, Nor a fire to sit before!

15 Thus shall they be to you With whom you have labored, Your merchants from your youth; They shall wander each one to his quarter. No one shall save you.

v. 14 “The fire shall burn them”—end time Babylon will be destroyed by fire

- Babylon conquered by Cyrus did not burn
  - Future Babylon will burn



Revelation 18: 8-9

8 Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

9 The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning,

v. 15 “Your merchants”—the tie in to end-time Babylon (Rev. 18:11)  
“No one shall save you”

## Chapter 48

v. 1-11 Israel exhorted to remember God's prophecies

Call to "hear/ listen" four times: v. 1, 12, 14, 16

v. 1-8 Sinfulness of Israel

1 Hear this, O house of Jacob, Who are called by the name of Israel, And have come forth from the wellsprings of Judah; Who swear by the name of the Lord, And make mention of the God of Israel, But not in truth or 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:

v. 1 Both Israel and Judah who took oaths in God's name, are hypocrites, because they have not followed in truth or righteousness

v. 2 They call themselves citizens of Jerusalem and call on God's name

3 I have declared the former things from the beginning; They went forth from My mouth, and I caused them to hear it. Suddenly I did them, and they came to pass.

4 Because I knew that you were obstinate, And your neck was an iron sinew, And your brow bronze,

5 Even from the beginning I have declared it to you; Before it came to pass I proclaimed it to you, Lest you should say, 'My idol has done them, And my carved image and my molded image Have commanded them.'

v. 3 God through His prophets declared to His people what would happen for disobedience, and they came to pass  
➤ The captivities of Israel (721 BC) and Judah (585 BC)

v. 4 But the people even though they heard the prophecies, they refused to repent and change

v. 5 God emphasizes that He brings about the prophecies

"Lest you should say, My idol has done them—they can't declare that their idols bring them about

6 You have heard; See all this. And will you not declare it? I have made you hear new things from this time, Even hidden things, and you did not know them.

7 They are created now and not from the beginning; And before this day you have not heard them, Lest you should say, 'Of course I knew them.'

8 Surely you did not hear, Surely you did not know; Surely from long ago your ear was not opened. For I knew that you would deal very treacherously, And were called a transgressor from the womb.

v. 6-7 God says He is giving new prophecies, ones that have not been heard before, nor have they anticipated them

- It was through the prophecies of Isaiah that it was revealed **how** they would be delivered

v. 8 Israel would not listen because they were treacherous and rebellious

"a transgressor from the womb"—from the start as a nation, even before they left Egypt  
(Ezekiel 20: 7) They defiled themselves with the idols of Egypt

9 For My name's sake I will defer My anger, And for My praise I will restrain it from you, So that I do not 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 do it; For how should My name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another.

- v. 9-11 God would not destroy the people completely...

- The exile/captivity is compared to being in a furnace to test/try them

v. 11 “I will do it”

- God would not go back on the prophecies or His name would be defamed

Israel called to listen

God's plan to redeem Israel

12 "Listen to Me, O Jacob, And Israel, My called: I am He, I am the First, I am also the Last.

13 Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together.

14 All of you, assemble yourselves, and hear! Who among them has declared these things? The Lord loves him; He shall do His pleasure on Babylon, And His arm shall be against the Chaldeans.

v. 12 God identifies Himself as the One who became Jesus Christ  
Rev. 1: 17 [last part] I am the First and the Last.

v. 13 (Col. 1: 16) "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him."

v. 14 "The Lord loves him"-- (NIV) "The Lord's chosen ally"—Cyrus used by God to conquer Babylon

- Christ will conquer future Babylon at His return

15 I, even I, have spoken; Yes, I have called him, I have brought him, and his way will prosper.

16 Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit Have sent Me.”

v. 15 God allowed Cyrus to prosper/conquer as a way to redeem Judah

➤ Cyrus a type of Christ who will redeem His people at His return

v. 16 The Servant speaking  
“hear this”—His plan which has been in place from the beginning

v. 16 [last part] “”And now the Lord God and His Spirit Have sent Me”

➤ Christ directly speaking as having been sent by the Father through the Holy Spirit

## God's desire for Israel

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 by the way you should go.



18 Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

19 Your descendants also would have been like the sand, And the offspring of your body like the grains of sand; His name would not have been cut off Nor destroyed from before Me.”

v. 17 “Who leads you by the way you should go”—God leads His people according to His plan for them

v. 18 If Israel would have obeyed it would have gone better for them in their history

v. 19 “would have been like the sand”—great numbers could have been

Because of their disobedience they will be cut off—refers to the destruction of Jacob's descendants in the great tribulation

## The redemption is coming

20 Go forth from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans! With a voice of singing, Declare, proclaim this, Utter it to the end of the earth; Say, “The Lord has redeemed His servant Jacob!”

21 And they did not thirst When He led them through the deserts; He caused the waters to flow from the rock for them; He also split the rock, and the waters gushed out.

22 “There is no peace,” says the Lord, “for the wicked.”

v. 20 The message to come out of Babylon is to be proclaimed all over the earth...as part of the message that God has planned to redeem His people

v. 21 God's people should reflect upon His mighty past acts for them, as they are on their way to redemption

v. 22 “no peace for the wicked”—in Israel  
The message to Israel—once deliverance takes place, they must not go back to their former ways

## Lessons

“I will carry you...Even I will carry and deliver you”



God will help and deliver His faithful people, those who fear and obey Him

God called out Israel and Judah who make mention of God's name (lip service), But not in truth and righteousness



Truth and righteousness should mark our way of life, lights and examples of God's way