

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

Part LIV: God's Predicted Judgment On Babylon For Abusing His People (Isaiah 47:1-15)

I. Introduction

- A. God expects human beings always to treat other humans honorably, for all exist in His image, Genesis 1:27.
- B. However, we all know that man often sinfully abuses his fellow man opposite God's will and righteousness.
- C. Isaiah 47:1-15 predicts God's judgment on Babylon for abusing His people when He would give them into her hand in discipline in Israel's future Babylonian Captivity, and this passage provides insight for us (as follows):

II. God's Predicted Judgment On Babylon For Abusing His People, Isaiah 47:1-15.

- A. Over 150 years before Babylon fell to Persia, Isaiah 47:1-15 predicted this event, B. K. C., O. T., p. 1101.
- B. In his description of that event, Isaiah clarified God's reasons behind this judgment on Babylon (as follows):
 - 1. Isaiah 47:1-5 introduces God's severe, shocking future judgment on Babylon:
 - a. God prophetically called in Isaiah 47:1a for Babylon to come down from a lofty position of prominence and dominance to sit in humiliation in the dust of the ground. The nation is personified as a virgin daughter, a young, innocent girl, possibly meaning the city's walls had never been breached, but would now be invaded and overcome by foreign invaders, Isaiah 47:1b; Ibid.
 - b. In that position, Babylon like a delicate virgin is described as having to do slave labor in captivity, to be horrifically physically exposed and ravaged in divine vengeance, with God's sparing no one, Isaiah 47:2-3.
 - c. The prophet Isaiah inserted that Israel's Redeemer, the Lord Almighty, the Holy One of Israel, was the One Who would exact this vengeance upon Babylon for what she had done to Israel, Isaiah 47:4. Babylon would thus sit in silence and go into darkness, no longer called the queen of the kingdoms, Isaiah 47:5.
 - 2. God explained His severe vengeance on Babylon would occur for her arrogant abuse of Israel, Isa. 47:6-7:
 - a. The Lord explained that He would have given Israel into Babylon's hand out of anger for her sin, thus desecrating His inheritance, but Babylon would have abused them (Isaiah 47:6): (1) Babylon would have shown Israel no *rahamim*, a noun formed from the word *raham* that means "soft, gentle," leaving *rahamim* to mean "motherly feeling, compassion," B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 933, so God would show the Babylonians no motherly compassion, Isaiah 47:6b; (2) even toward the elderly who were culturally respected in the Ancient Near East, the Babylonians would have violated all ethics in subjecting even them to forced labor (Isaiah 47:6c), so God would subject the Babylonians in turn to very hard labor.
 - b. The cause of this abuse would arise from Babylon's lack of a sense of accountability to anyone as a ruling queen of the nations, giving no thought to her abusing Israel, Isaiah 47:7.
 - 3. Accordingly, the Lord called Babylon in her arrogant pride that lounged in false security, believing that she would never suffer loss in war (Isaiah 47:8) that in a single day, she would suffer widowhood and a loss of children in full measure in spite of her sorceries and magic spells to the contrary, Isaiah 47:9. Babylon's false trust in her wickedness, her false wisdom and lack of a sense of accountability would result in God's judging her with disaster that she could not foresee or ward off with sorcery, Isaiah 47:10-11.
 - 4. God then challenged Babylon's astrologers and magicians to try their best magic to see if it will help save her from His judgment (Isaiah 47:12-13) but that such an effort would only wear them out (v. 13a), for the fire of divine judgment would burn up the sorcerers themselves so they could not even save themselves, Isaiah 47:14. Indeed, such men of wickedness with which the Babylonians would have trafficked since childhood would only go on in their error with none of them being able to save the nation, Isaiah 47:15.

Lesson: *Since the Babylonians would have become arrogantly self-sufficient in relying on their sorcerers to retain great power over other nations, she would lack a sense of accountability to God, and so abuse His people once she captured them. Accordingly, God would severely judge Babylon, exacting vengeance on her for the wrongs she had committed against Israel's people, devastating the nation and giving her the mistreatment she had doled out.*

Application: *(1) May we sense our accountability to God always humbly to avoid abusing others. (2) Even if we are called of the Lord to exact discipline on another party, may we always show gentle compassion and respect even to those disciplined. (3) God's promise to take vengeance on Babylon, given around 80 years before Babylon even captured Israel, shows His keen awareness of and His great hatred of abuse, so we must avoid abusing others. (4) If we have been abused, may we let God take vengeance for us versus taking it ourselves! (Rom. 12:19)*