

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

Part LVI: God's Call For Israel To Leave Babylon Under Cyrus To Know His Peace (Isaiah 48:12-22)

I. Introduction

- A. Trusting God in one's spiritual walk is absolutely necessary to please God, Hebrews 11:6. However, living by faith is also absolutely necessary toward knowing God's surpassing peace in the Christian life, Philippians 4:7.
- B. Isaiah 48:12-22 presents this timeless and critically important lesson on finding God's peace in life as follows:

II. God's Call For Israel To Leave Babylon Under Cyrus To Know His Peace, Isaiah 48:12-22.

- A. Since God through His prophetic messenger Isaiah was about to call Israel in Babylon to go out from that nation, to flee from it when liberated to go under Persia's king Cyrus (Isaiah 48:20 ESV), He knew that the people of Israel would be hesitant to return to a homeland that had been devastated by war seventy years before and that had little human security as proved to be the case in Nehemiah's experience. (Nehemiah 1:1-4)
- B. Thus, God reminded Israel of His great divine sovereignty as the **ONLY** Almighty God that He might encourage her to step out in faith in Him to return from Babylon to Israel, Isaiah 48:12-19:
 1. God directed His people to listen to Him, to heed His command, for He Who had called her unto her mission as a nation was the first and the last (Isaiah 48:12), recalling Isaiah 44:6 that uses the same concept to show that there existed no other God but Israel's God Himself.
 2. The Lord reminded Israel that He had created the heavens and the earth, laying the foundation of the earth and spreading out the stellar universe with His right hand of power, so He was totally sovereign over all that Israel faced and all that would be of concern to her, Isaiah 48:13.
 3. This Sole, Almighty Creator of the universe then again reminded Israel of His unique capacity to predict the future unlike any false god, and specifically, God had in mind His prediction of raising up Cyrus in the future to achieve His will in defeating Babylon, and predicting this openly, not in secret, Isaiah 48:14-16.
 4. God as Israel's All-Sufficient Lord, Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel and Lord her God, would teach her to profit and lead her in the way she should go for blessing, Isaiah 48:17.
 5. Indeed, God recalled that had Israel heeded Him in her past, instead of captivity, she would have known peace like an abundantly flowing river and righteousness like the waves of the sea, with her offspring being like the sand on the shore that would not have been cut off or destroyed, Isaiah 48:18-19.
- C. Based on this description of His great Sovereignty, God then called Israel to leave Babylon, to flee from the Chaldeans, declaring with a joyful shout to the end of the earth that God had redeemed His servant Jacob, Isa. 48:20. Like Israel had long before been redeemed from Egypt in the first Exodus, this was a second Exodus, a second national redemption from bondage, but this time from Babylon, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1103.
- D. In view of the need for Israel to trust the Lord in making this transition to Israel and rebuilding it from its broken state following the Babylonian invasion 70 years before, God called Israel to recall how her forefathers in the Exodus from Egypt did not thirst when He led them through the deserts, for He made water come for them from the rock, splitting it and making the water miraculously run out of it, Isaiah 48:21. God thus called Israel in Babylon to trust His livelihood provision as she left the established nation of her captivity to head back into an unknown future, returning to a land in need of reconstruction and stability.
- E. However, knowing some would fail to heed this call by failing to trust the Lord, God announced that there would no peace for them since they were wicked (Isaiah 48:22; Ibid.; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Isaiah 48:20-22). The Hebrew word for "peace," *shalom* (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 677) here means "completion, fulfillment, a state of wholeness" (H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. O. T., 1980, v. II, p. 930), so spiritual fulfillment would come only to those who obeyed God's call to live by faith and heed His Word by leaving Babylon.

Lesson: *For the people of Israel in Babylonian Captivity to know God's peace, they would need to trust God's absolute sovereignty and willingness to provide for their livelihood needs like He did for their forefathers in the Exodus when they were given opportunity to leave Babylon under Cyrus to return to the land of Israel in need of repair. Staying in the relative security of Babylon in the wickedness of unbelief would bring a lack of God's peace.*

Application: *If given the choice between trusting God future blessing or sticking to a humanly comfortable route that does not rely on Him, may we recall the Lord's great sovereignty and past record of faithfulness that we trust Him so as to enjoy His great peace versus staying in the way of wicked unbelief and thus knowing only unrest.*