

- 12 Stand fast in your enchantments
and your many sorceries,
with which you have labored from your
youth;
perhaps you may be able to succeed;
perhaps you may inspire terror.
- 13 You are wearied with your many counsels;
let them stand forth and save you,
those who divide the heavens,
who gaze at the stars,
who at the new moons make known
what shall come upon you.
- 14 **Behold**, they are like stubble;
the fire consumes them;
they cannot deliver themselves
from the power of the flame.
No coal for warming oneself is this,
no fire to sit before!
- 15 Such to you are those with whom you have
labored,
who have done business with you from your
youth;
they wander about, each in his own direction;
there is no one to save you.

Israel Refined for God's Glory

48 Hear this, O house of Jacob,
who are called by the name of Israel,
and who came from the waters of Judah,

(12-15) THE BABYLONIANS are told to call on their gods, sorcers, knowledge
to deliver them. This taunt is to show there is no hope in any of these.

- (12) They are told to keep calling on their potions and sorcers as they
all ways have. This 'perhaps' is just pouring salt on the wound. It
is designed to make defeat and the silence of their idols hurt all the more.
- (13) Here all the advice cannot save them, but go ahead gather a
committee to figure it out. All the opinions of all their wise men will
not change the fact of what is happening. Sorcery, Astrology, fortune
tellers ask them to show you the answers. See if they will say
something different than the God of ISRAEL.

(14) **Behold** is used like looking behind the magic trick to see what
is really happening. When examined all their wisdom, knowledge, religions
are nothing. Consumed easily by flames. Leaving nothing. These
false teachers disappear quickly when confronted by others who
are not restrained by false beliefs. Nothing will be left to hold
on to or warm them. THE picture of fire here is about destruction.
Isaiah often uses fire to demonstrate judgment and destruction.
(cf. 34:9ff; 50:11; 66:16, 24) Jesus also uses fire as a picture
of judgment (see Mt 8:18 & 25:41 see also Jude 1, 7).

- (15) Though they have always relied on Astrologers, Sorcerers and the
such those will be of no value now. There is no one, no god,
no idol, no prophecy, no sign, no sacrifice they can make that will
stop the coming judgment of the God of JACOB/ISRAEL. HE is
their Redeemer and He has spoken of what will happen to
BABYLON.

AGAIN speaks to His people. He clearly identifies them. THE 1st
line is a play on word showing how they are seen by God. THEY
are the "house of Jacob." Jacob was the deceiver/lister who always
was in trouble. THESE people call themselves 'Israel' or 'God
prosper or serves.' Judah is seen as the primary TRIBE in the
O.T. King David was from Bethlehem in Judah, as was Jesus the
promised Messiah. This coming from or birth is symbolic of
the beginning & later w/Jesus a new (covenant) beginning.

who swear by the name of the LORD
and confess the God of Israel,
but not in truth or right.

2 For they call themselves after the holy city,
and stay themselves on the God of Israel;
the LORD of hosts is his name.

3 "The former things I declared of old;
they went out from my mouth, and I announced
them;

then suddenly I did them, and they came to pass.

4 Because I know that you are obstinate,
and your neck is an iron sinew
and your forehead brass,

5 I declared them to you from of old,
before they came to pass I announced them
to you,

lest you should say, 'My idol did them,
my carved image and my metal image
commanded them.'

6 "You have heard; now see all this;
and will you not declare it?
From this time forth I announce to you new things,
hidden things that you have not known.

7 They are created now, not long ago;
before today you have never heard of them,
lest you should say, 'Behold, I knew them.'

8 You have never heard, you have never known,
from of old your ear has not been opened.

1b) these people called by his name, with a strong historical link swear/proclaim to live for God and His holy name are exposed here by God through His prophet as liars.

2) They are themselves the voice speaking these things, but God is not in agreement. You can call yourself whatever you wish, but that does not make it true. To lie about knowing God and to serving Him will lead to nothing Good.

3) Israel is called on to remember that God announced in advance what He was going to do. Then exactly what God said "come to pass." This may include things fulfilled and those that will be fulfilled. God is showing He is a real God w/foreknowledge. It is not only that He knows but that He causes them to happen.

4) God was aware of their nature. He had seen what they did, how they ignored Him and served false Gods. The expression about their neck and forehead are equivalent to saying someone is hardheaded.

5) God had a reason to tell them what was going to happen. This, even though it would change nothing. He wanted them to know unlike idols He knows the future, in fact He is in control. He wanted to be sure He got the credit and not some manmade idol. The mental image is in reference to human knowledge & wisdom.

6) Because God predicted it, they now see it unfolding. God is going to make new predictions/prophesies that up to now had been hidden from them.

7) Here God declares that these new prophecies are created. Before they did not exist. Because God creates them now they are real and new. Much like Gen 1.1 here God is creating the future by declaring what is coming and what He will do. No one can say "I knew that," because that cannot be of a newly created 'God' truth. Even though it will be 700 years till those happen at the earliest, here God is revealing this New Truth for the 1st Time.

8) This is not to say God did not know these. This is just the first time He is sharing it. He knew they would misuse the truth so He withheld it. God says they have from the start they were a problem. God only told them enough to know He knew in advance but not enough so they could abuse it to their benefit.

For I knew that you would surely deal treacherously,
and that from before birth you were called a rebel.

- 9 "For my name's sake I defer my anger;
for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you,
that I may not cut you off.
- 10 Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tried you in the furnace of affliction.
- 11 For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it,
for how should my name be profaned?
My glory I will not give to another.

The LORD's Call to Israel

- 12 "Listen to me, O Jacob,
and Israel, whom I called!
I am he; I am the first,
and I am the last.
- 13 My hand laid the foundation of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens;
when I call to them,
they stand forth together.
- 14 "Assemble, all of you, and listen!
Who among them has declared these things?
The LORD loves him;
he shall perform his purpose on Babylon,
and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans.
- 15 I, even I, have spoken and called him;
I have brought him, and he will prosper in
his way.

- 9 God has every reason to be angry with them, yet he has held back because when they look bad it makes him look bad. He has not acted because what they deserve is to be totally cut off.
- 10 The refining process God uses is affliction. Silver was refined by using heat to burn off the impurities. God has replaced heat w/ affliction of defeat, captivity, deprivation of freedom.
- 11 The dual purpose is stated. He wants to restore the people and by this restore His name. Their sins are a reflection on God whom they claim to serve. He has a purpose for them (Christ) and it must be completed.
- LISTEN God has a new message for them. He wants them to pay attention. He establishes His message by establishing His presence in eternity.
- 12-13 He is THE God of creation. He is not part of the created, but the one who laid it all out bit by bit. He wants them to remember who He is and what He has done and by extension "can do."

- 14 This is not an actual call to assemble but for everyone to hear this message. It appears to be universal or to both Jews & Gentiles. The second line "The LORD loves him," is most likely about Cyrus who God has selected to deal w/ Babylon & the Chaldeans. Here God is restating His intention to punish Babylon for their sinful ways.
- 15 God wants it to be clear Cyrus is doing God's will & He deals w/ the Babylonian Empire. Cyrus will prosper in doing God's will even if he is unaware it is God's will.

- 16 Draw near to me, hear this:
 from the beginning I have not spoken in secret,
 from the time it came to be I have been there."
 And now the Lord GOD has sent me, and his Spirit.
 (clear reference to TRINITY)
- 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 Oh that you had paid attention to my
commandments!
 Then your peace would have been like a river,
 and your righteousness like the waves of
 the sea;
- 19 your offspring would have been like the sand,
 and your descendants like its grains;
 their name would never be cut off
 or destroyed from before me."
- 20 Go out from Babylon, flee from Chaldea,
 declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it,
 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 water flow for them from the rock;
 he split the rock and the water gushed out.
- 22 "There is no peace," says the LORD, "for the wicked." !!!

16 baffles all translators. Is Isaiah speaking, is God speaking, is Cyrus?
 Are there 2 speakers? what does it mean? The 3 distinct clauses are
 each a paradox to each other in meaning and intent.

- 17 God reminds them He is their redeemer and will pay the price to
 restore them. He is also Holy and by implication why they need to be
 redeemed. He wants to instruct them for their benefit. He wants to
 go before them and have them follow. He visibly led the Hebrews
 w/ Moses by fire and smoke. Jesus wants to lead us and taught His
 disciples to follow Him.
- 18 God reminds them that things could have been much different if they
 had be obedient. He paints a picture showing that different choices
 would have had a different response from God. Peace instead of war;
 righteousness instead of idol worship.
- 19 Instead of counting the number who HAD DIED you would count their
 descendants. He would have protected them from the Babylonians and
 all others who came against them.
- 20 Even as we see what might have been in the preceding verses, here
 we see the punishment by the Babylonians & Chaldeans followed by
 the assurance of their redemption by God.
- 21 Even as God delivered the Hebrews from Egypt He will also deliver
 Israel from Babylon. The path He has chosen is clear and will be
 blessed. As He provided for the Hebrews He will provide for them.
 Ezra 1:1-4 shows the provisions for the king to restore the temple
 and the nation. THE LAST place you expect to get water from
 is a rock, and the last place you expect to get the materials to
 rebuild Jerusalem and the temple is a Heathen King.
- 22 In direct contrast to the blessings God has prepared for His
 restored people God always deals w/ the wicked in the same way.
 They are tormented by their deeds. Titus 1:15-16 points to the lives
 of the wicked, including deny my God. Such people cannot find
 peace in this world or in the one to come.