

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 112

Isaiah Chapter 48

Chapter 48 is the **climax** in this section of Isaiah: chapters 40-48. It is the summing up of what has come before, in chapters 40-47. Everything has pointed to the coming day of deliverance. The *overall message* of chapters 40-48 is **the greatness and the glory of God compared to the uselessness of idols**.

Chapter 48 has three sections:

	Marker	Message
Verses 1-11	"Hear this, O house of Jacob"	"For the sake of My name, I delay My wrath" (verse 9).
Verse 12-16	"Listen to Me, O Jacob	The LORD shall carry out His good pleasure on Babylon (verse 14).
Verses 17-22	"Thus says the Lord"	"Say, 'The LORD has redeemed His servant Jacob'" (verse 20)

Verse-by-verse

Verses 1-2: Isaiah cleverly draws out the utter hypocrisy of the leaders of Israel.

Verses 3-5: Here in verses 3-5, the Lord speaks. He begins His closing argument. His first argument on His behalf is His unique ability to **foretell the future**.

Verses 6-8: In light of all this evidence, the Lord exhorts Judah to admit the obvious: **Yahweh is the Lord and there is no other**.

He is now going to **proclaim new things** that they have never heard before. Including:

the deliverance of Israel from Babylon by the Gentile ruler Cyrus (Isaiah 43:18-20, 45:11-17; 48:14-15, 20).
the deliverance of the human race from sin by the Suffering Servant, the Lord Jesus Christ (Isaiah 49:5-7).
the creation of the new heavens and the new earth (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22).

Verses 9-11: So there is nothing good about the nation of Judah that would cause the Lord to delay His wrath. They are full of unrighteousness and lies. So now He must act on His own behalf.

Verses 12-16: The Lord now makes His second argument: He is **the Creator of all things**.

Verse 16 is one of the few OT passages which describe the Trinity.

Verses 17-22: The Lord continues to speak. Only now He addresses the **future exiles in Babylon**. First, He laments their past disobedience (in verses 17-19). Then suddenly, the Lord rescues them! He implores them to leave Babylon, and to joyfully declare to the whole world that the Lord has redeemed them!

In **verse 17**, the Lord tells the Jews that He is (1) their Redeemer, (2) the Holy One of Israel, (3) their God, (4) their teacher, and (5) their leader.....NOT their idols! (Isaiah 49:9-10).

In **verses 18 and 19**, the Lord looks back to all of the generations of Israel who rejected His word and disobeyed His commands (Deuteronomy 5:29). If only Psalm 81:8-16.

“well -being” see **Isaiah 32:15-20; 66:12**. “righteousness” see **Isaiah 61:10-11; 62:1-2; Amos 5:24**.

“name” see **Isaiah 66:22**. Their descendants as the sands of the sea - the promise that the Lord made to Abraham (**Genesis 22:17**).

But now, because of their disobedience, their name has been cut off and Jerusalem has been destroyed. The blessings won't come to pass until the Messianic Kingdom comes.

So the promise to Abraham won't be fulfilled until the Kingdom Reign of Christ. The Lord's promises to David will also be fulfilled at that time. See **Isaiah 44:3-4; 54:1-4; Jeremiah 33:22**.

In **verse 20**, we reach the climax of this chapter and all of chapters 40-48. This is a summons beforehand to the Jews who would be captives in 539 BC.

The moment has arrived. The Lord's agent, Cyrus, has defeated the Babylonians. The Lord issues the command: move out! See **Jeremiah 51:6; Zechariah 2:6-7**.

Take advantage of **the edict of Cyrus!** Cyrus issued a decree in 538 allowing the Jews to return to their homeland. About 50,000 returned under the leadership of Zerubbabel (**Ezra 1:1-4; 2:1-2, 64-67**).

And return in **joy** to Judah. Tell the Gentiles about the Lord's grace and power. (**Psalm 126**).

In **verse 21**, Isaiah harkens back to the Exodus from Egypt. He is asking the Jews to recall the Lord's mercy and provision then. The Lord provided water in the desert and water out of the rock. He did so in the former times (**Exodus 17:6-7 – Meribah; Psalm 78:15-16,20**; He would do so again. See **Isaiah 35:6-7; 41:17-20; 43:19-20 – the rescue from Babylon; Isaiah 49:10 – Messianic Kingdom**).

Verse 22 is a somewhat surprising ending, until you realize that the disobedience of the Jews would not end with the end of the Babylonian Captivity but would continue unabated. Only a minority would flee to Zion.

Military deliverance is one thing. But they (and all men) need to be redeemed from their sins. This sets the stage for the arrival of the Suffering Servant - our Lord Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.

Next time we begin the second section of Isaiah 40-66: chapters 49-57. This section will end with the same statement as Isaiah 48:22. See **Isaiah 57:21**.

Application

1. We have been freed from condemnation, the burden of the Law, slavery to sin, and the fear of death. How are we to respond? How are we to use our freedom? For help, see Romans 6:6-7,11-14; 7:4,6; 8:1-4; Galatians 3:10-14; 5:1,13-15.