

**Is. 48:1** Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, *but not in truth, nor in righteousness.*

**Is. 48:2** For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts *is his name.*

The prophet is rebuking the people of God in these two verses as a people who like to use God's name, but not in a worshipful, reverential acknowledgement of God as LORD. They had become prideful of their unique position as a nation before God, but had long since ceased serving Him in fear and obedience. Isaiah's audience was composed predominantly of the kingdom of Judah, but his message was applicable to the whole nation of Israel. God is reminding His people that He is the Lord of hosts. The name they so glibly throw about represents God Almighty, the God of Israel. Their disobedience and rebellion have not changed God's purposes for them. Jerusalem was still the place that God had chosen as precious to Him on planet earth.

*1Kings 11:36* And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.

Though the fight continues to completely change America's identity as a "Christian" nation, the comparison between Judah and America in this regard is obvious.

**Is. 48:3** I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did *them* suddenly, and they came to pass.

God is continually pointing out to his people the unique proof He has given them that He is GOD. He has over and over again told them things that would come to pass in the future, and all had come to pass just as He said. In fact, when events came to pass as foretold, it was obviously the hand of the YHWH at work.

**Is. 48:4** Because I knew that thou *art* obstinate, and thy neck *is* an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

**Is. 48:5** I have even from the beginning declared *it* to thee; before it came to pass I shewed *it* thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.

One of the reasons God has been so diligent to prove Himself by declaring the future—often many, many years in advance—is because He understands how stubborn and hardhearted His people are. They would rather attribute works to an idol than acknowledge God as their Lord and Master and serve Him in righteousness and truth. False religions always cater to the desires of the flesh. Only God has the ability to empower us to live contrary to and in victory over the flesh if we would but submit to Him in faith.

**Is. 48:6** Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare *it*? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

**Is. 48:7** They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.

Although God had proven His position as “the I AM” to His people over and over in the past through His declarations of the future and their subsequent fulfillment, God’s people had evidently rejected or conveniently forgotten those proofs. God, in His faithfulness despite their rebellion, is now going to declare new prophecies for the future. They are things that He has kept *hidden* from them up until this time. This means that they have always been a part of His plan, but not part of His revelation to man. God in His omniscience and wisdom has chosen the appropriate time for revelation of His plans to man. One of the reasons He chose to reveal His plans in part and at specific times in history was to provide new evidence to His hardhearted, rebellious people that HE IS, and He means what He says and says what He means. One of the “new” things that He was revealing at this time was the judgment to come upon His people from Babylon. Another was that He would use Cyrus to judge Babylon and to see that His people returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and the walls of the city.

**Is. 48:8** Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time *that* thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

God is never surprised by the actions of His people. He has known ALL from before the foundations of the earth. This verse is speaking of the nation of Israel as a whole, but the truth is applicable to every individual. We are all born under the curse of sin and unless we turn to God in faith are destined to continue as *transgressors* from the womb until death. A transgression is a willful act of disobedience. God had set apart the nation of Israel as His chosen people. From the moment He set them apart, He knew that they would choose to be unfaithful to Him. Even as He carefully set out commands, parameters and guidelines for their provision and protection, He knew they would rebel against His authority.

*Deuteronomy 31:16-21* “And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us? And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods. Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swore unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant. And it shall come to pass, when many evils and

*troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swear."*

**Is. 48:9 For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.**

God's mercy toward the nation of Israel in constantly preserving a remnant was in consideration of His name (honor, character) before the nations and His promises to Abraham and his Seed, Jesus, the Messiah, His Son.

*Galatians 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*

**Is. 48:10 Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.**

My first thought upon reading this verse, was "Why not with silver." The Complete Jewish Bible reads "but not (as severely) as silver." Again, I decided to look on the internet regarding how silver is refined. The second item on the list was so applicable that I decided to include it here. As I continued to look, I found that the information was listed at several sites.

Malachi 3:3 says: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."

This verse puzzled some women in a Bible study and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible Study.

That week, the woman called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver.

As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest as to burn away all the impurities.

The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot then she thought again about the verse that says: "He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver." She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?"

He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy - when I see my image in it."

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has His eye on you and will keep watching you until He sees His image in you.

God knows just how much “fire” is needed to accomplish His purposes for His people. At this time, the refining of Israel was not to be with silver. The time for Israel to be refined with silver will be the coming tribulation. At the end of that seven years the Jewish people will finally reflect the image of God in their lives for all to see. This is the time spoken of by the prophet Zechariah.

*Zechariah 13:9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.*

**Is. 48:11 For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.**

Why does God even bother to continue working in the lives of His rebellious people? Because He is jealous for His own honor. The value of His Word is precious to Him.

*Psalms 138:2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*

He has made promises and prophecies that must be guarded and brought to pass. To fail in even one promise would *pollute* (profane, defile, dishonor) His name. In the eyes of the nations this would make Him just another “god.” He will never allow that to happen.

**Is. 48:12 Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last.**

God continues to try and get the attention of His people through the prophet. He continues to remind them of their beginnings in **Jacob** (the deceitful manipulator) and encourage them to grow to reflect the character of **Israel** (one who prevails with God). I think God is reiterating to His people that they have been called out from among the nations as a special people for God’s purposes whether they are obedient or not. He has not changed; He is the same YHWH He has always been. He is the first and the last; there was nothing before God and there will be nothing after God. He is the Creator of all things and will be the sustainer for eternity.

**Is. 48:13 Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.**

This is an easy verse to read over and entirely miss the amazing truth stated here. God used one hand to put the foundations of earth into place. He specifically used His right hand to put all of the heavens into place. The word “span” is defined by Webster as “The space from the thumb to the end of the little finger when extended.” I am one who loves to contemplate the heavens. To know that he used one hand to establish the earth is one thing, but to look at the heavens and know what science has established about the vastness involved and realize

that God just stretched out His hand to determine that size is beyond comprehension. This is the God that I call Father; the God that loves me and calls me His child; the God that lives in me through the Holy Spirit. All He had to do was speak the word and the heavenly bodies operate in unison with one another according to His purpose. There just are no words that express how awesome and amazing our God is!

**Is. 48:14 All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these *things*? The LORD hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm *shall be on the Chaldeans*.**

This whole chapter has been a statement of truth concerning YHWH as compared to the useless idols worshipped by the nations—and now even God’s chosen people. The Lord is calling His people to assembly; He wants them to speak out right now if they have heard any of these new predictions concerning the coming judgment of Babylon and the rise of Cyrus. Obviously, no one could step forward.

YHWH has chosen Cyrus to accomplish His purposes in judging Babylon. The last phrase is a poetic repetition of the first. The word “arm” is a reference to its being stretched out in judgment.

As I continue to meditate on Cyrus, He is obviously a type of Jesus. During the tribulation period, the time of Jacob’s trouble, Jesus will be the chosen One to judge the nation of Babylon once and for all. When He comes back to rule as King of kings, He will be the power behind the rebuilding of the temple and establishing the safety and security of Jerusalem.

**Is. 48:15 I, *even I*, have spoken; yea, I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.**

Throughout my Christian life I’ve often heard the phrase, “God’s call is God’s enablement.” That is basically what the Lord is saying here. I have called Cyrus for a specific purpose, and I will ensure that he is successful. There is absolutely no chance that he will fail.

That is a wonderful truth for the child of God. God never puts us in position to fail. If we will but recognize our purpose before God, as Cyrus did, we will succeed just by being obedient and trusting Him to work in and through us.

*Ezra 1:2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.*

**Is. 48:16 Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there *am I*: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.**

Again, God makes declaration regarding His position of Authority and Power in the universe. What He has chosen to reveal to man, He has revealed openly and boldly before all creation. Jesus makes this same claim in the gospel of John.

*John 18:19-20* The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

I have assumed the speaker in this chapter to be God the Father. This verse definitely denotes a change if that is the case, since this speaker has been sent by the Lord God (YHWH) and His Spirit (the Holy Spirit). The wording of this verse prohibits the speaker from being Isaiah. The speaker of this verse has been in existence "from the beginning." The only one that fits the criteria is The Son, Jesus the Messiah. We know that the Son was the person of God singled out to be the Creator (v13).

*John 1:1-3 & 14* In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. **All things were made by him;** and without him was not any thing made that was made....And **the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,** (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

*Colossians 1:13-17* Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of **his dear Son:** In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: **For by him were all things created,** that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

**Is. 48:17** Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; **I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.**

Once we identify the speaker of the previous verse as Jesus, this verse reads in easy succession. Jesus is the One who redeemed us by His blood.

*Revelation 5:5 & 7-9* And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof....And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: **for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God** by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation....

*Galatians 3:13* Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree....

The triunity of God is a hard but wonderful truth of scripture. They are so unified that whatever is said about One is true of the other, yet they are individual participants of the whole. I just finished reading a wonderful book called "The Secret of the Universe," by Nathan Wood. It is an amazing read from a scientific perspective of how the universe reflects the triune nature of God, the Creator. It's tempting to digress at this point, but I won't.

YHWH always teaches His children in ways that will profit them. He always leads His children in the way that will be of benefit and value to them (from the Hebrew for *profit*). Sometimes that means that He will lead us through the fire (v10). Why?

*Hebrews 12:6 & 9-10 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth....Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.*

**Is. 48:18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:**

**Is. 48:19 Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.**

"peace" = safe, i.e. (figuratively) well, happy, friendly; also (abstractly) welfare, i.e. health, prosperity

"righteousness" = rightness, moral virtue, prosperous, justice

The times of chastening would not be necessary if God's people were always obedient. Obedience results in peace and righteousness.

Peace like a river paints a picture to me of life flowing with serenity and beauty.

Righteousness like the waves of the sea paints a picture to me of life that continually pulsates with good things, strong character and happiness.

To the people of Israel in particular, their obedience was promised to result in progeny that numbered as the sand of the sea. The second phrase is poetic emphasis to the first (though it doesn't sound very poetic to me).

"his name....before me" – I'm not sure about this phrase. It seems to be referencing the name of Israel in verse 17. The nation of Israel was basically cut off from among the nations during the Babylonian captivity. When they returned from captivity and again established themselves as a national entity, they were under continuous servitude until the time they were finally dispersed by the Romans after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and his legions. Since then, there had been no nation of Israel until recent times—the year 1948 to be

exact. This time of judgment and dispersal would never have been necessary had they been obedient to the commands of God.

**Is. 48:20** *Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob.*

This verse is speaking from the viewpoint of having been released from the Babylonian captivity and given the mandate and permission of Cyrus to go back and rebuild the city of Jerusalem. In my mind the wording actually speaks of their final deliverance from Babylon as described in the book of Revelation (chapters 17-18). At that time "his servant Jacob" (the nation of Israel) will be redeemed once for all.

**Is. 48:21** *And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.*

I think this verse is continuing to speak of God's miraculous deliverance and provision of His people during the time of Jacob's trouble.

*Revelation 12:5-6* *And she (the nation of Israel) brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*  
[parenthesis mine]

The wording is again a reminder of God's deliverance and provision for Israel in the past. Just as He delivered them from Egypt and provided water from a rock when needed, He will do so again in the future as they wait to enter the Promised Land for good.

**Is. 48:22** *There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.*

The Hebrew for the word *wicked* references one who does wrong—in other words, one who is disobedient. This is a statement of the flip side to verse 18. Obedience = peace; disobedience = no peace.

This is a statement of fact by YHWH. Though people may be able to put on a front for the world to see, you can bank on the fact that those who have rejected the Lord do not experience the peace promised to those who obey the Lord. They may have material wealth, but they do not have spirit health.