Let God Be True!

Isaiah – Chapter 48

March 1, 2020 · AM · https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/2020/isaiah-chapter-48/

Theme: Israel sinned against Jehovah's divine proofs and lost blessings, but God would save for Himself.

Outline:

1-8 God Rebuked Israel's Sins By Fulfilled Prophecies

9-11 God Would End Their Chastening for Himself

12-15 God Proved Love for Israel By Sending Cyrus

16-19 Israel's Disobedience Forfeited God's Blessings

20-22 Cyrus Brought Peace But Not to Wicked Jews

Preparatory Reading: Isaiah chapters 13-14, 19, 39, 41, 43-47; Jeremiah 25, 27, 50-51; Daniel 2, 5, 7.

Related Links:

1. Exposition of Isaiah 13 *(Babylon beat)*.
2. Exposition of Isaiah 14 *(Belshazzar)*
3. Exposition of Isaiah 41 *(Cyrus foretold)*.
4. Exposition of Isaiah 43 *(Babylon beat)*.
5. Exposition of Isaiah 44 *(Cyrus called)*.
6. Exposition of Isaiah 45 *(Cyrus called)*.
7. Exposition of Isaiah 46 *(Idols defeated)*.
8. Exposition of Isaiah 47 *(Satan defeated)*.
9. Babylon: History-Prophecy.
10. Glory of Fulfilled Prophecy.
11. Cyrus Decree to Rebuild.
12. Boasting of God – Isaiah.

Introduction:

A. This chapter, ninth in Isaiah's comfort section, warns about sin and lost blessings to exalt God's glory.
   1. **Comfort**. To strengthen (morally or spiritually); to encourage, hearten, inspirit, incite. To minister delight or pleasure to; to gladden, cheer, please, entertain.
   2. Isaiah 41 had God mocking idolatrous nations about the rise of Cyrus to save and promote Israel.
   3. Isaiah 43 had God mocking idolatrous nations about His defeat and sacrifice of Babylon for Jews.
   4. Isaiah 44 had God naming Cyrus and exalting fulfilled prophecies over the insanity of idolaters.
   5. Isaiah 45 had God naming Cyrus and guaranteeing his success for God's universal glory and praise.

6. Isaiah 46 had God comforting Israel by His superiority to idols in care, nature, prophecy, salvation.
7. Isaiah 47 had God comforting Israel by His vengeance on Babylon for their sorcery and witchcraft.
8. Keep in mind when reading that Isaiah moves all over the timeline e.g. Rome (Is 6:9-13), Assyria (Is 7:2), Messiah (Is 9:1-2,6-7), Assyria (Is 10:1-34), Messiah (Is 11:1-10), Babylon (Is 13-14).
9. Isaiah told Babel's ruin (Is 13-14; 21:1-12; 41:1-9; 43:14-18; 44:24-48; 45:1-6; 46:9-11; 47:1-15).
10. Though the event is about 160 years away, God proves He is God by these incredible prophecies.
11. The reason for Cyrus is God's glory above all (Isaiah 47:4,6,10 compared to Isaiah 48:9-11; etc.).
12. Christians should consider that God's blessings for His glory will still shut out rebellious sinners.

B. To fully appreciate the value and power of this chapter, a person needs to learn about Cyrus the Great.
1. He is the main character in these 40's chapters of Isaiah, for God used him greatly (Is 44:28; 45:1).
2. His commandment to rebuild Jerusalem is what started Daniel's crucial timeline (Daniel 9:24-27).
3. His proclamation for Jews to return to Jerusalem is huge in history (II Chr 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4).
4. Skeptics and students resent Cyrus, for this supernatural prophecy and/or denying Ussher/Ptolemy.
5. The overthrow of the mighty city of Babylon in one night and release of the Jews is clearly epic.
6. God loved this event and spends these 40's chapters of Isaiah to boast about His prophecy of him.
7. Though the name Cyrus is in the pages of scripture nineteen times, most Christians know nothing.
8. When a man denies the supernatural about Cyrus and/or starting Daniel's prophecy, he is ignorant.

C. What do we want to get from this chapter? There are many goals and reasons to learn it; here are some.
1. It should convict us against sin in light of the revelation God has made of Himself for our loyalty.
2. It should help us see that God will do great things for His own glory rather than for our faithfulness.
3. It should help us remember that God rescuing His people in any way should cause our obedience.
4. It should help us grieve over God's best for our lives that is lost when we continue on in our sins.
5. It should help us recognize that wicked conduct forfeits God's great gift of peace on several levels.

God Rebuked Israel's Sins By Fulfilled Prophecy – Verses 1-8

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.

A. The previous chapter was about God destroying Babylon for their cruelty and sorcery.

B. God begins a new lesson from Isaiah calling His people to hear what they had rejected.

C. God added to Israel's name as out of the waters of Judah to identify the primary tribe.
1. The Jews in Babylon were primarily from the tribe of Judah, not from the ten tribes.
2. The ten tribes had been defeated and dispersed by Shalmaneser before Sennacherib.
3. Coming out of the waters of Judah is a procreative fountain (Num 24:7; Pr 5:16-18).

D. Swearing was then and is still now an act of worship that we use in private or in public.
1. Both testaments have many uses of swearing (Deut 6:13; Isaiah 45:23; Heb 6:13,16).

2. Swearing and Oaths in the Bible.

E. Lip service to God, even worshipful oaths, is blasphemy or hypocrisy without godliness.
   1. God often condemned this error (Lev 19:12; Ps 50:16-22; Isaiah 1:10-14; 29:13-14; 58:1-2; Jer 3:10; 4:2; 5:2; 7:9-10; 12:2; 42:20; Eze 33:31-33; Mal 3:5; Matt 15:1-9).
   2. A form of godliness without a changed life is an evil time (II Tim 3:1-5; II Pet 2:19).
   3. God must be worshipped in truth and righteousness (John 4:20; Jas 1:22; I John 2:4).

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

A. Do not lose the connection with the previous verse about their definite disobedience.
B. Jerusalem was the city of worship for Jehovah; the Jews loved it, but did not obey Him.
   1. They trusted God for protection and prosperity, but they disobeyed Him (Mic 3:11).
   2. Jeremiah gave a detailed description of their foolish trust in the temple (Jer 7:1-15).
   3. We do the same when we trust church membership, church doctrine or practice, etc.
C. The great name and memorial name of Jehovah is invoked here for its terror to sinners.
D. Pass Your Sojourning in Fear.
E. The Bible Cannot Profit.

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.

A. Jehovah reminded them of an important axiom in Isaiah 40s – His fulfilled prophecies.
B. There are many cures for idolatry e.g. creation, manmade junk, or fulfilled prophecies.
   1. God promised Abraham a great nation, only one example of many (Gen 15:12-21).
   2. He foretold events in advance, stating prophecies clearly, and then they happened.
   3. They were things that could not have occurred otherwise without divine intervention.
C. Glory of Fulfilled Prophecy.
D. Boasting of God – Isaiah.

4 Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

A. The Jews were always a stiff-necked and rebellious people (Deut 9:6-7,13,24; 31:27).
B. Israel was not pliant or teachable, so God gave fulfilled prophecies to help (Isaiah 48:8).
C. Grasp here that the blessings of fulfilled prophecies were not really His favor to them.

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.

A. Jehovah reminded them of an important axiom in Isaiah 40s – His fulfilled prophecies.
B. There are many cures for idolatry e.g. creation, manmade junk, or fulfilled prophecies.

1. God promised Abraham a great nation, only one example of many (Gen 15:12-21).
2. He foretold events in advance, stating prophecies clearly, and then they happened.
3. They were things He foretold and did when there was no idol among them (Is 43:12).

C. Glory of Fulfilled Prophecy.

D. Boasting of God – Isaiah.

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.

A. God pressured His people to admit His foretelling genius and power by their experience.
   1. He told them many events in the future; they could now see the perfect fulfillment.
   2. *See all this* is not what they heard – it is not a quote – the second phrase is imperative.
   3. They had heard the prophecies and seen them fulfilled, so why not declare His truth?

B. God had now given them new prophecies of Cyrus delivering the Jews from Babylon.
   1. Isaiah's 40s chapters have much information about Cyrus by name (Is 44:28; 45:1).
   2. But even before, God had foretold the ruin of Babylon by the Medes (Is 13:12-22).
   3. They were hidden events in that Cyrus was not yet born and Persian not yet great.
   4. Neither the Jews nor the Babylonians had any clue about the rise of Persia (Is 47:11).

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.

A. God told the ruin of Babylon before it was great Babylon without any significant foes.
   1. The prophecies of Cyrus and Persia before either was much of anything is truly great.
   2. Nineveh ruled the earth when Isaiah wrote, and God foretold Babylon then Persia.
   3. Neither the Jews nor Babylonians had a clue about the rise of Persia (Isaiah 47:11).

B. Glory of Fulfilled Prophecy.

C. Boasting of God – Isaiah.

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.

A. This verse, comparable to verses 3-5, exalt God's prophecies due to Israel's obstinance.

B. God declared huge future events before Israel heard, knew, or imagined such outcomes.
   1. *From that time that thine ear was not opened* is before they knew it (Is 48:7; 50:5).
   2. God foretold specific, impossible things lest Israel ascribed them to idols or sagacity.
   3. Note the care God took to make sure His prophecies could not be ascribed to another.
   4. This same care provides Christian a terrific apologetics proof of God and the Bible.
   5. Why I Believe the Bible.

C. The Jews were always a stiff-necked and rebellious people (Deut 9:6-7,13,24; 31:27).

Lessons

#1 … God asks us to hear Him by scripture, by preaching, by parents, by conscience (v1).

#2 … Making mention of God and giving Him great lip service is not nearly enough (v1).

#3 … Stating trust in God and His institutions or ordinances mocks His great holiness (v2).

#4 … Do you appreciate the fulfilled prophecies of God's word against any unbelief (v3)?

#5 … Why would we, like Israel, ever be obstinate against the greatest, gentlest Being (v4).

#6 … God's mercy can and did use merciful means due to His people's stubbornness (v4).

#7 … God has done things for you that no one else can do or would do, so love Him (v5).

#8 … Christians should increase in desire to declare the truth as they learn more of it (v6).

#9 … God carefully works out things in your life that you had no clue would occur (v7).

#10 … God knows everything about your character and conduct from birth, so repent (v8).

God Would End Their Chastening for Himself – Verses 9-11

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.

A. About 160 years before Cyrus took Babylon, God foretold it (Is 13:1-22; 44:28; 45:1).
   1. He knew 70 years in Babylon were about all they could take or the nation be ruined.
   2. Though they were always rebellious (Is 48:4,8), He would end chastening for mercy.
   3. They were not very repentant or reformed, for only 45,000 chose to return to Judah.

B. He would not save them for their goodness or repentance but for His glory (Is 48:11).
   1. This motive on His part is an axiom of our worldview (Pr 16:4; Is 43:25; Rev 4:11).
   2. This motive on His part provides great leverage in prayer (Ps 25:11; 79:9; 143:11).
   3. Moses used this reasoning with great power for Israel (Ex 32:7-14; Num 14:13-16).

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

A. God saved His people from Babylon for Himself, but He sent them there for their good.
   1. He refined them in a furnace of affliction; their capture and captivity were affliction.
   2. Captivity in Egypt was like an iron furnace before He chose them out of it (De 4:20).

B. He refined them with less fire than silver, for removing all dross might have ended them.
   1. Silver is not refined by or with silver, but it can be refined longer than other metals.
   2. The refiner's fire is to burn away all dross, but this stubborn people still had some.
   3. The Jews, though refined like silver (Ps 66:10), if left in the fire might be consumed.
   4. The context shows lots of dross left (Is 48:1-8) and the danger of total ruin (Is 48:9).

C. God has a very definite limit on chastening in order to preserve the spirit (Isaiah 57:16).

1. Recall how the treatment of grains pictures His chastening wisdom (Is 28:23-29).
2. He will never tempt His people beyond their ability to bear the trial (I Cor 10:13).

D. God chose them in the afflicting furnace of Babylon to end the chastening for Himself.
   1. He had chosen them in Abraham hundreds of years earlier and at other earlier times.
   2. But this choice of them in the furnace of affliction was His choice to rescue them.

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.

A. God did not take them out of Babylon – the refinery – for their purity, but for His glory.
B. As above (Is 48:9), the motive was not their goodness or pain, but His name and praise.
C. If God left the Jews indefinitely in Babylon, blasphemers like Belshazzar might glory.
   1. They might glory in their gods over Israel's god Jehovah, as he did at this last feast.
   2. They might say that God Jehovah was impotent to show lasting blessings to Israel.
   3. They might say that God Jehovah was implacable to show mercy to such a people.

Lessons

#1 … God's gifts of salvation and earthly kindness are for His glory, not your pleasure (v9).

#2 … One of the best tools of wrestling with God in prayer is His glory or name's sake (v9).

#3 … If ordinary chastening would destroy your spirit, God draws you out of the fire (v10).

#4 … If ordinary chastening does not yield fruits of godliness, you must endure more (v10).

#5 … God's name is polluted when His character may be impugned by your situation (v11).

God Proved Love for Israel By Sending Cyrus – Verses 12-15

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

A. God would not share glory with the Babylonian gods, so He would save Israel by Cyrus.
   1. The Jews were His people, and He would not leave them in Babylon for blasphemy.
   2. He was the independent, self-existent, eternal God; therefore He would crush them.
   3. He is the independent, self-existent, eternal God … and origin and end of all things.
   4. He will next remind them He is the Creator and then the Planner of Cyrus' campaign.

B. He had opened this chapter by asking for the Jews' attention, and He repeated it here.
   1. His first lesson was their obstinance in light of His gloriously fulfilled prophecies.
   2. His second lesson was His merciful choice to end their chastening for His own glory.
   3. Now He will remind them of the specific prophecy at hand of Cyrus delivering them.
   4. They were rebellious people from the start and were still corrupt, but He would save.

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.

A. As is often the case in Isaiah 40s chapters, God appealed to His creation of the universe.
    1. He is the independent, self-existent, eternal God … and origin and end of all things.
    2. But He also has some something with that stupendous power … created the universe!
B. You may make toast with your hand (with a toaster), but He laid the earth's foundation.
C. The span of your right hand is 9 inches (if you are a man), but He spanned the heavens.
D. His sovereign power over the universe may be described as giving orders to all objects.
    1. He knows stars by name/number, and He orders them about (Is 40:26; Ps 147:4-5).
    2. When God calls to the stars or other heavenly bodies, they stand up to obey Him.
    3. He also called Media and Persia to the war and their leader Cyrus; they all stood up.
E. Boasting of God – Isaiah.

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.

A. God called those He told to hearken (Is 48:1,12); He called them to gather to hear Him.
    1. His first lesson was their obstinance in light of His gloriously fulfilled prophecies.
    2. His second lesson was His merciful choice to end their chastening for His own glory.
    3. He now confronted them to trust Him against Babylon and idols by His prophecies.
B. God mocked Babylon and idolatry to Israel – do any pagans or idols know the future?
    1. When reading this section of Isaiah – the 40s chapters – remember Cyrus' prophecy.
    2. Bible students should fully know this big event for the O.T. and 70 A.D. for the N.T.
C. The LORD Jehovah loved Cyrus as the instrument to crush Babylon to release Jews.
    1. We see Cyrus here by the third person rather than the Jews' second (Is 48:12,14,16).
    2. This cannot be God's saving love for His elect in Christ, for no evidence and context.
    3. There is no evidence Cyrus ever changed his religion or character by God using him.
    4. There is nothing in the context to suggest more than loving a fine rifle for hunting.
    5. There is nothing in the context to suggest more than common words, I love that guy!
    6. God counted Cyrus His shepherd to do all His pleasure for city and temple (Is 44:28).
    7. God counted Cyrus His anointed, and God held his right hand for success (Is 45:1).
    8. God knew Cyrus by name and called him by his name long before birth (Isaiah 45:2).
    9. God did have some peculiar relationship with Cyrus by name for truth (Isaiah 45:4).
    10. God counted Cyrus's cause and results to be righteous (Isaiah 45:13 cp Isaiah 13:3).
    11. God loves His enemies with kindness, if we rightly understand Jesus (Matt 5:43-48).
    12. This clause, like many in the Bible, requires rightly dividing for truth (II Tim 2:15).
    13. Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus were two tools of God that He appreciated and enjoyed.
    14. Sennacherib was just as much God's tool, but God and he had no such relationship.
D. Cyrus would do God's pleasure on Babylon, just as He had spoken (Is 44:28; 46:9-11).

E. Cyrus would exert his arm on the Chaldeans, similar words to the previous clause.

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

A. Here is the nature of prophecy – God says something, and we marvel at its fulfillment.

B. God had called Cyrus by name and called him to work against Babylon and for Israel.
   1. Consider how God set us up to appreciate the word *called* … like the stars (Is 48:13).
   2. Cyrus likely thought he was building his empire, but he was merely obeying God.

C. Cyrus would be very successful by God bringing him to the work and his own efforts.
   1. While the person of nouns and pronouns are often changed, there is no need for it.
   2. God brought him, which is the basis for his success, but he would campaign wisely.
   3. Compare similar things we have read before about Cyrus (Is 41:2-5; 45:1-3; etc.).

Lessons

#1 … Our faith and trust in God starts with His infinite divine nature and love of us (v12).

#2 … When God asks us to hear Him, we should listen in light of exactly Who He is (v12).

#3 … If stars and heavenly bodies stand up to obey Him, how much more should we (v13)?

#4 … This section of Isaiah shows we cannot overstate creation for our view of God (v13).

#5 … We should see God's hand in politics like the details of His hand on Cyrus (v14).

#6 … God has relationships with men short of eternal life but above other pagans (v14).

#7 … When God's hand is on a man, that man can do mighty things, even if a pagan (v15).

Israel's Disobedience Forfeited God's Blessings – Verses 16-19

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.

A. God called those He told to hearken (Is 48:1,12,14); He called them near to hear more.

B. God reminded Israel of their sins that had caused the captivity and affliction in Babylon.

C. God had not hidden or neglected the declaration of His will for His people to profit.
   1. From the beginning with Moses at Sinai, God had fully revealed His will to Israel.
   2. No man could say that God's revelation was secret – Sinai's thunder and in writing.
   3. From the beginning of Israel – when it began to exist – I the Self-existent was there.
   4. Isaiah taught about 900 years after Moses, but his ministry was no less than Moses'.

D. Different, but the same, now the LORD Jehovah (I Am) and His Spirit had sent Isaiah.
   1. The LORD had given Isaiah a tremendous vision of his glory for ministry (Is 6:1-8).
   2. God spoke first in this verse about His revelation of truth through Moses and others.
   3. But now God was speaking to the Jews through Isaiah whom He had personally sent.
   4. God's Spirit had always been involved with God's preachers (Is 63:10; Acts 7:51).

E. There is no reason to force this passage to be about Messiah and a lesson of the Trinity.
    1. We believe that Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the Lord's Christ from plain N.T. verses.
    2. We believe the trinity of the Godhead by other plainer verses of the N.T. (I Jn 5:7).

F. Why is this section here? What is its purpose and role in the chapter about Cyrus coming?
    1. God by Isaiah kindly explained to Israel why they had to be captives in Babylon.
    2. They were there for disobedience, for God had shown them plainly how to avoid it.

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.

A. Isaiah speaks here with the message of GOD Jehovah, the Protector and Savior of Israel.
B. Compare other places in Isaiah where he does the same (Is 7:7; 28:16; 29:22; 37:6; etc.).
C. The LORD Jehovah had from the origin of the nation/church taught them good truth.
    1. This point was introduced in the previous verse about God's word in the beginning.
    2. God had given very clear instructions how to prosper (Deut 28:1-68; Lev 26:1-46).
    3. Their laws from Moses were the envy of all nations that knew Israel (Deut 4:5-8).
    4. They had life and death put before them plainer than any other nation (Deut 30:19).

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:

A. God offered Israel incredible blessings, but they were conditional upon disobedience.
    1. Note the exclamation point here that stresses the cost of their foolish disobedience.
    2. God's commandments are for our good, and they are not hard or painful (I John 5:3).
B. When a person accuses God for not blessing them sufficiently, it is often for their sins.
C. When a person obeys God, he can enjoy these two blessings and joy (Rom 14:17-19).
D. You must embrace God's words; they are the life of those keeping them (Deut 32:47).

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.

A. God would have greatly multiplied the nation in numbers and duration for obedience.
B. The next chapter will have God's blessing of numbers and duration by mercy in Christ.
C. God did not perfectly and totally cut the Jews off or destroy them, but to a great degree.

Lessons

#1 … If we will hear God without distraction and give Him honor, let us come near (v16).

#2 … Trouble in your life is your fault, for God has given rules for successful living (v18).

#3 … If you want a blessed family tree, then you should give heed to the word of God (v19).

Cyrus Brought Peace But Not to Wicked Jews – Verses 20-22

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.

A. The chapter is filled with instruction, reproofs, promises, warnings, and this redemption.

B. But it ended with praise to God for saving His people from captivity in mighty Babylon.
   1. Those rescued – the remnant Jews – the good figs – were to praise Him with singing.
   2. They were to tell the rest of the world that their God Jehovah had thus saved them.
   3. God revealed His will that He would exalt Himself by Cyrus (Is 44:23; 45:5-7,22).

C. To keep your sense of words honest and not just follow their sound, submit to context.
   1. *Redeemer* and *redeemed* occur 12 times in Isaiah's 40's – (Isaiah 41:14; 43:1,14; 44:6,22-24; 47:4; 48:17,20; 49:7,26).
   2. *Save,* s*aved, salvation,* and *savior* occur 12 times in Isaiah's 40's – (Isaiah 43:3,11-12; 45:8,15,17,20-22; 46:7,13; 47:13,15; 49:6,8,25-26).
   3. *Righteous* and *righteousness* occur 14 times in Isaiah's 40's – (Isaiah 41:2,10,26; 42:6,21; 45:8,13,19,23-24; 46:12-13; 48:1,18).
   4. *Justified* occurs 3 times in Isaiah's 40's – (Isaiah 43:9,26; 45:25).
   5. These words and occurrences related to salvation are often for Cyrus and Babylon.

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.

A. They needed more than rescue/release from Babylon. Who would sustain their return?

B. This further provision for Israel well after their rescue happened twice in their history.
   1. It happened literally when they spent 40 years in the desert before entering Canaan.
   2. It happened literally and metaphorically by decree of Cyrus (Is 41:17-18; 44:3-4).

C. This is part of what the Jews were to celebrate about their God and rescue of their nation.

22 There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

A. Why is this axiom of God's dealings with men here? What is the intent of the words?

B. Though God delivered 45,000 Jews from Babylon by their choice, some were wicked.
   1. God had offered peace to the Jews that was lost by their disobedience (Isaiah 48:18).
   2. God promised peace to His remnant church (Is 48:20), but only some realized peace.
   3. A reading of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi shows great and many acts of rebellion.

C. There are many called in churches of both testaments, but only a few are chosen elect.
   1. The promises of God do not belong to the called but rather to the chosen remnant.
   2. Remember places like Psalm 91 where the many promises are only for the righteous.

Lessons

#1 … God wants us to praise and glorify Him to others, even pagans, for His works (v20).

#2 … Our Father does not allow a sparrow to fall nor those He rescued from Babylon (v21).

#3 … If you compromise personally within a body blessed by God, He can punish (v22).