

Isaiah 48:10-18 + 49:3

The Torah reading of the Statutes of the Law in Exodus 22-23 is paired with this Haftarah, which finds Israel in exile in Babylon for not obeying them: "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments!" (**Isaiah 48:18**)

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

Not with silver or "not as silver" Possibly - silver has not appeared.

"affliction" = affliction, poverty, misery

Rashi - Not with the fire of *Gehinnom*. I have chosen for you the crucible of poverty as opposed to the crucible of fire.

Targum: I have tried, and purified, and refined thee, not by prosperity, but adversity; not with riches, which has its snares, temptations, trials, and exercises, but with poverty.

As in Egypt - **Deuteronomy 4:20** - Egypt is called a furnace.

Isaiah 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."

i.e. "Defamed" if He did not complete his work of redemption of his people from Babylon.

Targum: "for my name, and for my word" so that my glory will not be given to another people.

(But neither given to false gods - see the previous verses - so that your enemies cannot say that their god is powerful)

Isaiah 48:12 - "Listen to me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last."

"I am the first, I also am the last" -

Compare **Isaiah 44:6** - "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.

And **Revelation 1:8** - "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

Isaiah 48:13 - "My hand also has laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand has spanned the heavens: when I call to them, they stand up together."

They stood up and arose out of nothing, when I commanded them to do so; and they are still continually in readiness to execute my commands. - *Matthew Poole's Commentary*

The rabbinical schools of Hillel and Shaminai were divided over which was created first, the heavens or the earth, although the Genesis text says they were created together.

See **Proverbs 3:19** - "The LORD by Wisdom founded the earth, By understanding (Logos) He established the heavens."

The personified Wisdom and Logos (or *Memra* - the Word) are united in **John 1:1-3** - "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."

Isaiah 48:14 - "All you, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them has declared these things? The LORD has loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans."

Cyrus, a Gentile ruler, was chosen to smite the Babylonians and do God's redemptive work.

The fact that the Lord "loved him" alludes to the idea implied in the name of David, ("beloved," or "darling"). Cyrus was to be even as a second David, beloved of the Lord, and therefore a type of Christ and a precursor to Messiah in his redemptive work for Israel.

Isaiah 48:16 - "Come you near to me, hear you 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, has sent me."

"from the time that it was, there am I" - Possibly a reference to Christ who existed before his incarnation, before he appeared as the great Prophet in Israel; he existed as the Word and Son of God from all eternity - *Gills Exposition*

"there I am" - almost the same phrase in **Proverbs 8:27** - "When he prepared the heavens, I was there" as *Wisdom/Word/Logos/Memra*.

But, more probably meaning that God not only gave the prophecies of doom about Babylon but is now causing them to be carried out.

Translation of the phrase "and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, has sent me" is uncertain.

Some rabbis propose that "hear this" refers to the Torah, and that all the later prophets including Isaiah stood together on Sinai at the giving of the Law.

Others see the Shekinah saying "In the beginning I did not speak in secret," with "From the time it was, there was I," being spoken by the prophet Isaiah.

Targum of Jonathan: 'And now Jehovah God hath sent me and his word.'

NET - "So now the sovereign Lord has sent me, accompanied by his spirit."

This is probably Cyrus speaking as the type of Messianic redemption. (But others say it is the Prophet Isaiah)

Isaiah 48:17 - "Thus said the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD your God which teaches you to profit, which leads you by the way that you should go."

Isaiah 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:"

Compare: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (**Matthew 23:27, 28**)

The word "peace" here (שָׁלוֹם *shâlôm*) means properly wholeness, soundness, then health, welfare, prosperity, good of every kind and finally absence of strife.

"As a river" - abundance, plenty and prosperity - like a full, flowing river that fills the banks, and that conveys fertility and blessedness through a land.

The upbeat haftarah ending:

Isaiah 49:3 - And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

This is the Messiah, the servant as in **Isaiah 52:13** - "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations..."

And **Isaiah 53:11** - "...by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

See **Exodus 4:22-23** - "Israel is my firstborn son"

"in whom I will be glorified." - Better, "in whom I will glorify myself."

- **John 13:31** - "When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

