

Stubborn Isra'el Yesha'yahu 48:1-11

In my last post, we examined **The Fall of Bavel** in **Yesha'yahu 47:1-15**. In this post, we explore **Stubborn Isra'el** in **Yesha'yahu 48:1-11**.

Whereas chapter 47 dealt with **Adonai's** judgment against **Bavel**, chapter 48 deals with **Adonai's** grace toward **Isra'el**.

¹ Listen to this, house of Ya'akov, called by the name of Isra'el, who have come from the spring of Y'hudah, who swear by the name of Adonai and invoke the God of Isra'el! - it is not sincerely or justifiably

Yesha'yahu addressed those connected to **Adonai** by their genealogical descent from the patriarchs. **Avraham** was the father of **Isra'el**, the first **Jew**. He had a son named **Yitz'chak** (Isaac), who had a son named **Ya'akov** (Jacob). **Ya'akov** had twelve sons who became the fathers of the twelve tribes of **Isra'el**. **Ya'akov's** name, which means **heel snatcher** or **supplanter**, was appropriate because he was one who lived by his wits - conning and tricking people. But one night, seeing no way out of his circumstances, he wrestled all night with the angel of **Adonai**, saying, ***I won't let you go unless you bless me.*** Genesis ~ 32:26 (CJB)

In the morning, the man said, ***From now on, you will no longer be called Ya'akov, but Isra'el; because you have shown your strength to both God and men and have prevailed.*** ~ Genesis 32:28 (CJB) (Genesis 32).

² that they call themselves people of the holy city or rely on the God of Isra'el - Adonai-Tzva'ot is His name: ³ I announced things that happened at the beginning, long ago; they issued from My mouth, I proclaimed them. Then suddenly, I acted, and they occurred.

The past events refer to the judgment of **Adonai** on His people. He **announced** what would happen to sinful **Y'huda** through **Yesha'yahu**, **Yermiyahu**, **Yechzk'el** (Ezekiel), and other prophets. He proclaimed what He would do and then acted on His words.

⁴ Because I knew that you were stubborn, your neck an iron sinew, your forehead bronze,

Nothing can get through a **bronze forehead**. An **iron neck** is stiff and cannot turn around. This imagery shows the refusal of **Adonai's** people to hear Him or to repent.

⁵ I announced it to you long ago; before it occurred, I proclaimed it to you; so that you could not say, 'My idol did it; my carved image, my statue, gave the order for it.' ⁶ You have heard and seen all this, so why won't you admit it? Now I am announcing new things to you, secret things you have not known,

Up to this point, **Adonai** has been announcing judgment, but soon He will announce new things - a message of grace after the judgment. Why had **Adonai** kept the news of eventual restoration hidden? The new items include **Adonai's** use of **Koresh** to deliver His people that we will examine in the next post.

⁷ created now, not long ago; before today, you did not hear them: so you can't say, 'I already know about them.' ⁸ No, you haven't heard, and you haven't known; these things have not reached your ears before. For I knew how treacherous you were - you were called a rebel from the womb.

Adonai's people had been so seduced by idolatry that **Adonai** said, *"I'm speaking prophetically so that when events unfold, you won't think they happened according to your idols' predictions."*

⁹ Yet for the sake of My own reputation, I am deferring My anger; for the sake of My praise, I am patient with you, so as not to cut you off.

Adonai will not completely destroy His people. A remnant will survive the judgment.

¹⁰ "Look, I have refined you, but not [as severely] as silver; [rather] I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.

Silver in the ancient world was refined by a process in which it was melted to rid it of base components. Silversmiths, as well as goldsmiths, used blowpipes to ventilate their furnaces and cast their products with the aid of soapstone or clay molds. The image of refining is often used in the Bible to refer to removing sin from a person or a community, in this case, through affliction.

¹¹ For my sake, I will do it, for My own sake. I will not let [My reputation] be tarnished; I will not yield My glory to anyone else. ~ Isaiah 48:1-11 (CJB)

Sometimes we wonder why we face one affliction after another. Could it be it's because we're not learning our lesson? Could it be that we're so stubborn that **Adonai** has to take us through the fire of affliction continually? Has He been speaking to you about some issue? Is there something He has told you need to be changed but about which you persistently say, *"Maybe later, Lord?"* We all go through fiery trials, and many are mandated. But, as we watch the people of **Isra'el**, we see that other tests are the result of our stubbornness concerning lessons **Adonai** wants to teach.

In my next post, we examine **Isra'el Freed** in **Yesha'yahu 48:12-22**.