

## **Stubborn Israel—Isaiah 48:1–22**

### **Open It**

1. What are the various possible motivations for us to do the right thing?

### **Isaiah 48:1–22 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup>Hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and who came from the waters of Judah, who swear by the name of the LORD and confess the God of Israel, but not in truth or right.

<sup>2</sup>For they call themselves after the holy city, and stay themselves on the God of Israel; the LORD of hosts is his name.

<sup>3</sup>“The former things I declared of old; they went out from my mouth, and I announced them; then suddenly I did them, and they came to pass.

<sup>4</sup>Because I know that you are obstinate, and your neck is an iron sinew and your forehead brass,

<sup>5</sup>I declared them to you from of old, before they came to pass I announced them to you, lest you should say, ‘My idol did them, my carved image and my metal image commanded them.’

<sup>6</sup>“You have heard; now see all this; and will you not declare it? From this time forth I announce to you new things, hidden things that you have not known.

<sup>7</sup>They are created now, not long ago; before today you have never heard of them, lest you should say, ‘Behold, I knew them.’

<sup>8</sup>You have never heard, you have never known, from of old your ear has not been opened. For I knew that you would surely deal treacherously, and that from before birth you were called a rebel.

<sup>9</sup>“For my name’s sake I defer my anger; for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off.

<sup>10</sup>Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tried you in the furnace of affliction.

<sup>11</sup>For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.

<sup>12</sup>“Listen to me, O Jacob, and Israel, whom I called! I am he; I am the first, and I am the last.

<sup>13</sup>My hand laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand spread out the heavens; when I call to them, they stand forth together.

<sup>14</sup>“Assemble, all of you, and listen! Who among them has declared these things? The LORD loves him; he shall perform his purpose on Babylon, and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans.

<sup>15</sup>I, even I, have spoken and called him; I have brought him, and he will prosper in his way.

<sup>16</sup>Draw near to me, hear this: from the beginning I have not spoken in secret, from the time it came to be I have been there.” And now the Lord GOD has sent me, and his Spirit.

<sup>17</sup>Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go.

<sup>18</sup>Oh that you had paid attention to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea;

<sup>19</sup>your offspring would have been like the sand, and your descendants like its grains; their name would never be cut off or destroyed from before me.”

<sup>20</sup>Go out from Babylon, flee from Chaldea, declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it, send it out to the end of the earth; say, “The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob!”

<sup>21</sup>They did not thirst when he led them through the deserts; he made water flow for them from the rock; he split the rock and the water gushed out.

<sup>22</sup>“There is no peace,” says the LORD, “for the wicked.”

### Explore It

2. What inconsistencies did God see in the people of Judah? (48:1–2)
3. Why did God give plenty of notice but then act suddenly with respect to Judah? (48:3–5)
4. How did God characterize what He planned to do “from now on”? (48:6)
5. What was God preventing by doing something completely new? (48:7)
6. What negative characteristics did God see in Judah? (48:8)
7. What was God’s reason for delaying His wrath against Judah? (48:9)
8. For whose sake did God test Judah with afflictions? (48:10–11)
9. What did God announce about His own nature in this prophecy of Isaiah? (48:12–13)
10. What did Isaiah prophesy that God’s “chosen ally” would accomplish? (48:14–15)
11. What did God announce, and invite people to hear, from a posture of nearness? (48:16)
12. What did God pledge to do for His people? (48:17)
13. If Israel had heeded God’s Word from the beginning, what blessings would have been theirs? (48:18–19)
14. What joyful announcement did Isaiah predict for the people who would be taken captive by Babylon? (48:20–21)
15. What truth did God pronounce concerning the wicked? (48:22)

### Get It

16. When we face problems and hardships, what are the wisest conclusions we can make about God’s purposes?
17. What great blessings accompany those who obey God’s commands?

### Apply It

18. In what area of need will you claim God’s promise to direct you this coming week?