

**ISAIAH: GOD'S DIRECTIVES TO THOSE TROUBLED AT GOVERNMENTAL APOSTASY**  
**Part XXXV: God's Promotions Of His Program Of Grace Versus False Legalism**  
**(Isaiah 48:1-22)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. Legalism is widespread in today's Christian circles: a current Christian book catalogue promotes books with titles like The Power of Crying Out or The Practice of the Presence of God to name just two, and these display man's ideas on cultivating' [as though that is possible for us] true spirituality before God!
- B. Israel was so legalistic in Isaiah's day that she was prepared to conclude he self-help' idolatry had fulfilled her ancient, Mosaic prophecies on the Babylonian Captivity. Thus, God **controlled how** He fulfilled these predictions to **preserve** His glory of relating in **GRACE** to Israel; Isaiah 48:1-22 describes this divine program, supplying us a rich application relative to the legalism we face in our era (as follows):

**II. God's Promotion Of His Program Of Grace Versus False Legalism, Isaiah 48:1-22.**

- A. God addressed Israel as a nation that relied on her heritage and special phrases of alleged loyalty to God as false fetishes for blessing instead of following God and depending upon Him from the heart, Isa. 48:1-2.
- B. Because of this artificial spirituality, or legalism, God gave instruction on **how** He would fulfill ancient Biblical prophecies on the Babylonian Captivity opposite what such legalism could achieve, Isa. 48:3-11:
  - 1. God recalled His ancient prophecies through Moses that Israel would go into captivity if she sinned, Isa. 48:3a (cf. Deut. 29:24-29). This also included God's restoration of Israel to the land, Deut. 30:1-5.
  - 2. Yet, God had decided to fulfill these well-known, ancient predictions **suddenly in ways** that had **NOT** been foretold by Moses, but predicted by Isaiah in his day, cf. Isaiah 48:3b.
  - 3. God's **REASON** for this **sudden clarification** of Moses' prophecies was His desire to **preserve** His program of relating to Israel in **GRACE** to **oppose** Israel's false spirituality, Isaiah 48:4-11:
    - a. God knew Israel had turned idolatrous in heart by giving mere lip service in honoring Him, 48:4, 1.
    - b. He also knew Israel might claim her prayers to false gods had led to her release from captivity in fulfillment of the predictions of Moses back in Deuteronomy 30:1-5, cf. Isaiah 48:5.
    - c. Thus, God had supplied only a general outline of the captivity and release in Deut. 29:24-30:5 and **had held out** on the **specifics** until **ISAIAH'S** day to reveal **with Isaiah's stand for God and against Israel's false idols** that God, not Israel's false idols, had fulfilled Moses' word, 48:6a, 6b-8.
    - d. Indeed, God would even refuse to destroy Israel by Babylon not that she did not deserve it, but since He did not want to relinquish the glory of His grace by failing to keep His promise to restore Israel to the promised land as predicted in Moses' words, Isaiah 48:9-11!
- C. God then called Israel's attention to the glory of His uniqueness as Sovereign, Gracious God, 48:12-21:
  - 1. The Lord urged Israel to recognize that He alone was the Sovereign God of history, Isaiah 48:12.
  - 2. He called Israel to worship Him for the specifics in history announced in Isaiah's prophecy that would reveal His sovereignty [in the way He would fulfill His ancient prophecies to Moses], Isaiah 48:13-16:
    - a. God urged Israel to glory in His creation of the universe, Isaiah 48:13.
    - b. He called Israel to glory in His prophecy through Isaiah regarding Babylon's fall, Isaiah 48:14.
    - c. He then repeated His prophecy about Persia's Cyrus who would yet destroy Babylon, Isa. 48:15-16.
    - d. God then inserted a rebuke to apostate Israel: "If only you had done things **MY** way, you would have had all the blessings you now seek . . ." (to paraphrase the verses at Isaiah 48:17-19).
    - e. The Lord then asked Israel to rejoice in His gracious deliverance of her from Babylon, Isa 48:20-21.
- D. In closing, God summarized the plot of Israel in Isaiah's day: there was not peace for the wicked people of Israel who lived by artificial spirituality in false legalism rather than in dependency upon God, Isa. 48:22.

***Lesson:*** *Legalistic, false spirituality will not fulfill, for the SOLE, SOVEREIGN Creator God who operates with man by GRACE ALONE to give glory to HIMSELF ALONE watches over His Word to FULFILL it in man's life in ways that COUNTER man's artificial spirituality and legalism. As such, the legalistic party finds no peace, for his way is wicked, in conflict with the ways of the God of grace.*

***Application:*** *If we lack God's peace in our lives, we must check not only for general sin in our lives, but the SIN of FALSE, SELF-HELP' spirituality known as legalism, and repent of it! The only way GOD blesses us is when we function in accord with His GRACE in ALL aspects of life and service!*