

The Book of Isaiah

Trusting God More #25

Memory Verse: Isaiah 40:1 KJV, Comfort ye, Comfort ye my people, saith the Lord."

Review: The Prophecy concerning King Cyrus

- King Cyrus would eventually allow Israel to leave exile in Babylon.
- The walls and the temple would be rebuilt as a result of Ezra and Nehemiah's leadership.

The Repetition of Isaiah 45:5, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me."

Opening Discussion:

Based on what we have studied what had God done for Israel up to this point? Now, based on what we have studied what had idols done for Israel up to this point?

Chapter 46 contains one of the finest satires against idols in the entire Bible. FYI (Satire) uses irony to ridicule the object of its contempt, usually in writing. This chapter opens with the defeat of the idols of Babylon. The real distinction between God and idols is simply this: does God carry you? Or do you carry your god?

Read verses 1- 4

Bel and Nebo were gods of Babylon. Bel is short for Baal. Remember, when they accused Jesus of working with Beelzebub in Matthew 12. Beelzebub is short for "Satan" or "the devil." Bel is to be personified as the anti-Christ. Nebo is a picture of a type of a false prophet.

How are the idols viewed in 46:1? What are they doing?

These names may sound far off for us today. In this modern day, we do not think of idolatry in the same way Babylon did in their day. Satan is our enemy. Read Eph 6:10-18.

Discussion: Why would covetousness be considered a form of idolatry? Read Colossians 3:5 and especially note the last three words: "which is idolatry."

In verse 2, what happened to the idols that they were unable to deliver? They were defeated instead.

Describe what God had done for them in verse 4. Describe what God has done for us. Verse 5 is powerful! It's hard to explain God. He is infinite while we are finite. What or whom can we say God is like?

- God cannot be reduced to our terminology. God is God! Amen!

Verse 6 begins the satire with idolatry. Think about the metallic image versus the wooden image.

Read verse 7. What did the idol do for man?

How ridiculous is idolatry and why? Does your God carry you or are you carrying your God?

In verse 8, what is God calling on them to do?

In verse 9, God wanted to stir their hearts by telling them to scan their history concerning the Lord. How would the past be somewhat of a stimulus to their faith?

Verse 11 includes a strange prophecy. How does the future look for them? A ravenous bird is coming up against His people. This is Babylon. In the midst of all this, there will be salvation for Israel.

Chapter 47 opens with the fourth prediction of the doom of Babylon. We saw the previous predictions in Isaiah chapters 13, 14, and 21. The Babylon of the past was under rubble and judgement. Read Revelation 18:2.

What Babylonian tendencies do we see in the world today in the political realm?

Read verse 1. God commands Babylon to “come down.” He speaks almost as if he is referring to a dog that He is commanding to be obedient. Babylon is referred to as a virgin because she has not been captured by the army.

Read verse 2-5 and hear the indescribable humiliation Babylon will face.

Why would God take such awful vengeance on Babylon? Please understand God is not vindictive but does not vindicate. Israel is in captivity, but they must look to God for their deliverance. God has not forsaken them.

“The lady of kingdoms” (v. 5) is the pet name of Babylon. Her fall is inevitable because God has spoken.

Discussion: What do you think about the fall of Babylon?

Do you think there will be a fall today for countries/leaders/idolaters that have Babylonian tendencies?