

EXPOSITORY NOTES ON THE PROPHET ISAIAH

by

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ISAIAH CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

THE EVERLASTING ONE CONTRASTED WITH IDOLS

God is still contrasting Himself with idols and, He says, they can do nothing to save themselves. When Cyrus attacked Babylon and the city fell, the idolatrous priests loaded their helpless gods upon carts to wheel them away and set them up somewhere else. Idols who could not deliver their worshipers had to be delivered by them from absolute destruction.

“Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity. Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you. To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble. Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me” (verses 1-9).

God says, “I am altogether different from these gods who have to be carried by their makers. I undertake to carry you. I have brought you hitherto and I will continue to carry you through, even down to old age will I carry you, when hoar hairs adorn your brow I will be there to carry you, to deliver, to sustain you, and to see you through.”

God had satirized the making of gods out of the trees of the forest. Now He ridicules those who make graven images out of the various metals. The goldsmith takes metal, fashions and works over it and then sets it up and says, “This is a god.” But it is immovable. It cannot walk. It cannot see. It cannot hear. It cannot do anything, and in time of danger it needs someone to protect it. What a god!

Notice the satire here and the irony, and the wonderful precious promises brought before us. God says, “How differently I have acted toward you, Israel. How could you ever turn aside to such senselessness as idolatry when you have known how wonderfully I have sustained and cared for you through the centuries. Look back over the past and see what I have done. And I promise to care for you just as wonderfully in the future.”

~ end of chapter 46 ~

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