

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 264 – Idols Can't Deliver Through None Shall Save Thee (Isaiah 46:1-47:15)

1. Were the idols known as “Bel” and “Nebo” able to deliver themselves from captivity?
No: *“(1) 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. (2) They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity” (Isaiah 46:1-2).*

- Bel is a Babylonian false god (**Jeremiah 50:2** and **Jeremiah 51:44**), thus based upon that and the context Nebo must have been the same.
- Idols did not do the carrying; they needed carried (**Jeremiah 10:1-5**).
- These are the same points we discussed in chapter 44 (**Isaiah 44:8-20**).
- They pray unto gods that cannot save (**Isaiah 45:20**).

2. In contrast, did Israel have to carry the true and living God?

No, He carried them: *“(3) 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: (4) 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” (Isaiah 46:3-4).*

- They'd be wise to hearken to whatever God said (**Deuteronomy 4:1** and **Deuteronomy 28:1-14**).
- Not hearkening to God would be a bad move (**Deuteronomy 28:15-68** and **Leviticus 26:13-33**).
- Again, we see the mention of the remnant (**Isaiah 1:9** and **Isaiah 10:22-23**).
- Borne by God (**Exodus 19:3-4**) even from the womb (**Isaiah 44:1-2**).
- From both through old age, God bore Israel (**Psalms 102:24-28**, **Isaiah 45:17**, **Isaiah 63:16**, and **Luke 19:1-10**).

3. Can an idol measure up against God?

No: *“(5) To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? (6) 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. (7) 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. (8) Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. (9) Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, (10) Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: (11) Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it” (Isaiah 46:5-11).*

- To whom will you liken God (**Psalms 113:5, Isaiah 40:18, and Isaiah 40:25**)? - NONE (**I Samuel 2:2, Deuteronomy 33:26, and Psalms 89:6-8**).
- They have gods made of silver and gold (**Hosea 8:4**) which is not God (**Acts 17:29**).
- Then they worship those idols (**Isaiah 2:8-9**).
- The huge difference between God and their gods was that their gods couldn't do anything and God certainly could/can (**I Samuel 5:1-12**).
- Remember God's might (**I Chronicles 16:12**).
- Remember the past (**Exodus 13:3 and Deuteronomy 32:7**).
- Remember God's ability to know (**Acts 15:18**) and that His counsel does stand (**Proverbs 19:21**). Can such be said of idols? NO!
- What God purposes, man cannot upset (**Acts 5:39**).

4. What did God want the stouthearted to hear?

The God was not going to tarry, but bring salvation in Zion: *"(12) Hearken unto me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness: (13) I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory"* (**Isaiah 46:12-13**).

- Again (**Isaiah 46:3**), they are told to hearken unto the Lord (**Isaiah 28:23**).
- They were stouthearted (**Zechariah 7:11-12**).
- The unrighteous are not acceptable to God (**I Corinthians 6:9**).
- God shows His righteousness and salvation (**Romans 1:16-17**).
- Salvation for Israel (**Psalms 98:3 and Jeremiah 3:23**) in Zion (**Zechariah 9:9**; cf. **Matthew 21:1-11**).

5. Would Babylon stand tall and continue to be seen as the "lady of the kingdoms"?

No: *"(1) Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. (2) Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. (3) Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man. (4) As for our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel. (5) Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms"* (**Isaiah 47:1-5**).

- Come down from you glory is the point (**Jeremiah 48:18**).
- Delicate no more, which is something even Israel suffered (**Lamentations 4:5**).
- Shame, imagery of revealing nakedness (**Lamentations 1:8**).
- God is being vengeful (**Isaiah 59:17-18**) which is scary (**Hebrews 10:30-31**). This will be news that is spread (**Jeremiah 50:28**).
- God is/was the redeemer (**Psalms 19:14, Jeremiah 31:11, and Micah 4:10**).
- Time for them to sit and shut up was coming. Other nations had this happen to them too (**Jeremiah 25:10-11**). Her glory gone (**Isaiah 13:19-20**).

6. Why did God give His people into the hands of the Chaldeans?

He was wroth with them: *“I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke” (Isaiah 47:6).*

- Turning away from the Lord causes Him to be wroth (**Joshua 22:18** and **Psalms 78:21-22**). God being wroth is not a pretty sight (**II Samuel 22:7-8**, **Psalms 78:62**, and **Lamentations 5:22**).

7. Did the Chaldeans remain humble in the sight of God?

No: *“(7) And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. (8) Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: (9) But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. (10) For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me” (Isaiah 47:7-10).*

- Pride = not good (**Psalms 10:2-6**, **Proverbs 6:16-19**, **Proverbs 8:13**, **Proverbs 11:2**, **Proverbs 15:25**, **Proverbs 16:18**, **Proverbs 28:25**, **Proverbs 29:23**, **Isaiah 2:11-17**, **Jeremiah 13:15**, **James 4:6-10**, **I Peter 5:5**, and **I John 2:16**).
- Lifting up oneself so that thinking you cannot be touched leads to being destroyed (**Ezekiel 28:1-19**).
- In a moment judgment was to come on them (**Psalms 73:19**).
- Their trust in themselves was foolish (**Psalms 52:5-7**).

8. To what or whom could the Chaldeans look to for deliverance from God’s judgment?

Nothing or no one could help them: *“(11) Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know. (12) Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. (13) Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. (14) Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it. (15) Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee” (Isaiah 47:11-15).*

- Since they thought they were so great, unforeseeable evil would come upon them (**Isaiah 2:11-17**).
- God challenged them to stand with their enchantments and see what profit that would be just like He had shown in Assyria (**Nahum 3:1-7**).
- Their astrologers, etc. weren't going to deliver them either (**Daniel 5:15-30**).
- Burned up most often will refer to the end of the world when looking at New Testament verses (**II Peter 3:10-14**). However, here such language is just a judgment upon them like others had faced too (**Psalms 106:16-18**, **Nahum 1:10**, and **Malachi 4:1**).
- Merchants weren't going to be their salvation either (**Isaiah 23:8-11**; cf. **Revelation 3:17-19**).