

God Acts

Nov. 1, 2020

Isaiah 46:1-13

Our lesson today is a clear reminder of God's heart and plan to save. He is a God of action and undeterred passion to bring salvation to anyone who will respond.

Isaiah's message to a hard-hearted people was one example of God's faithfulness to them. He is a God who comes to us. God is not deterred by our sin, in fact, He makes sinners His mission. Jesus said, "... *for the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost*" (Luke 19:10).

There are several lessons from today's passage in Isaiah that we don't want to miss. One, we need to remember who God is and what He has done for us. Verse 9 says, "*Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.*"

The second lesson is that we need to take God's message to heart. As a follower of Jesus, we should be aware of the fact that God still acts on behalf of His people. He's still working to save the lost. Jesus said that He had to be about the Father's business. In John 9:4, Jesus said, "*I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.*"

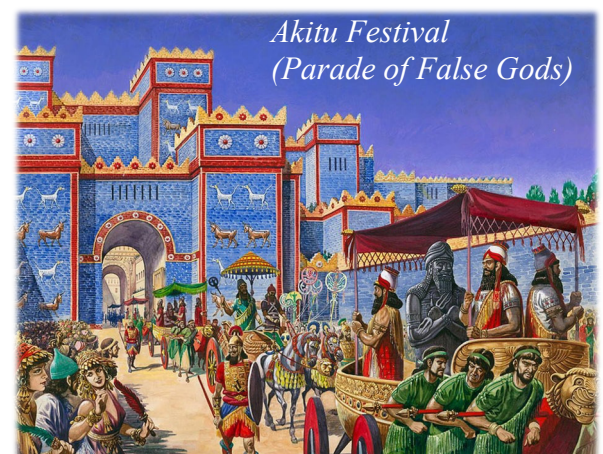
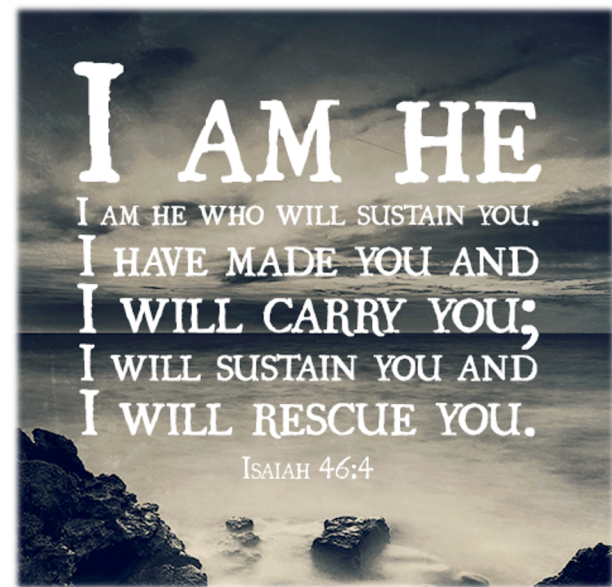
We can be confident that God is on His throne and He is still at work all around us. Be encouraged that He will fulfill every promise of His plan in these days we live in. Let's put our eyes on the Lord and join Him in reaching our world for Christ. Our God is still working! [*excerpts from Glenn Metts*]

The True God (Isaiah 46:1-7)

- Chapter 46 encourages God's people to trust that He would accomplish His plans for salvation.
- Isaiah describes the festival known as *Akitu*, where idols are carried around the city on a cart.
 - The idols are a worthless burden to the people, carried on beasts of burden.
- In contrast, the true God, carries us (bears us up) even before we are born (from the womb).
 - When a child is born, parents must carry her or him until the child learns to walk.
 - Isaiah reminds us that the Lord carries us while we learn to walk in faith.
- God is the Creator and the One who carries His people. Idols are created and carried by people.
 - "*even to your old age I am he; and even to gray hairs*" – God carries us through life.
- "*I will carry you and deliver you*" - The existence of Jacob and Israel was a result of God's creative activity. God saved His people from Egypt, so too would He save them from Babylon.
- The Israelites went into captivity because they worshipped other gods. They did not view God as enough. They had several relationships at once.
- Idols are lifeless objects. God is real and living.
- People were worshipping an inanimate material (gold and silver) formed into a god by a craftsman.
 - Isaiah mocked the idea that people would make something and then worship it.

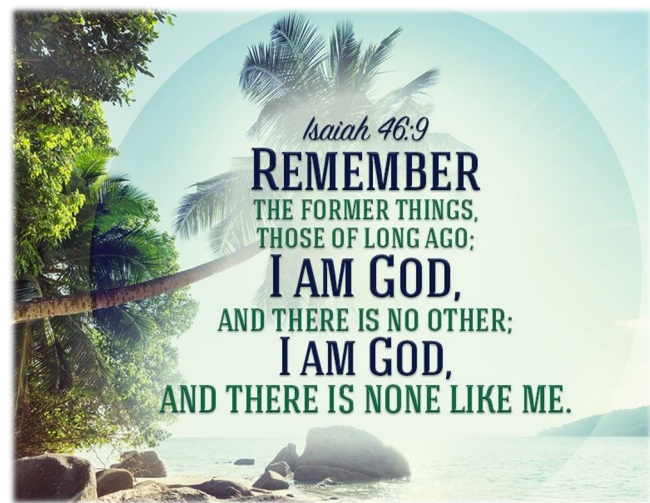
➤ **Why are people tempted to worship an idol?**

➤ **Why do people hesitate to trust God?**



The Trustworthy One (Isaiah 46:8-11)

- The people of Judah were failing to trust God. They rebelled by not thinking He could really deliver them.
 - Instead, they turned to lifeless idols.
 - God, ever patient and loving, reminded them of His faithfulness from the beginning - ***“things of old”***.
 - God stated one indisputable fact:
 - ***“I am God, and there is none like me.”***
 - No other gods played a part in the past or present.
 - Only God would be with them in the future.
 - God has a plan and is committed to it. His plan is to save His people. Nothing will keep Him from accomplishing this plan of salvation, not even the hardheartedness of the people He will save.
 - God is all-powerful. He will ***“Declare the end from the beginning”***.
 - Isaiah prophesied the exile to Babylon was not a sign of God’s defeat, the exile would actually provide evidence of God’s control of events.
 - God warned of exile due to the people’s failure to turn from sin (idol worship).
 - God also provided hope; when the people turned back to Him, He would rescue them.
 - ***“Calling a ravenous bird from the East”*** – This was Cyrus the ruler of Medo-Persia. He conquered Babylon in 539 BC and allowed the Israelites to return to their native lands.
- **What goals do you have for the future? Are you trusting God to accomplish them?**



The Just One (Isaiah 46:12-13)

- ***“Listen to Me...”***
 - Those that are far from righteousness, I will bring near my righteousness.
 - ***“My salvation shall not tarry”***
 - ***“I will place salvation in Zion (Jerusalem) ... for My glory”***.
- The issue of lack of righteousness involves not taking God for His Word.
- Deliverance would happen on God’s timetable. It would not tarry.
 - The people could do nothing to save themselves.
 - Idols certainly could not save them
 - God’s plan is for restoration of His people, at His perfect time.
- God will be glorified for being faithful to His Word. He will restore His people.
 - God’s presence would be in the land of Israel.
 - Israel would reflect God’s splendor
- God’s glory would be known and Israel would benefit by being restored to fellowship.
- **Do you take God for His Word?**
- **What can you do this week for God’s plan to save?**

Biblical Truth:

***The one true God is incomparable;
He will complete His plan to save His people.***

“Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.” 1 Timothy 1:16

