

Isaiah 46:1-13

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[0 : 00] Good evening. Good evening. Turn with me if you would to the Old Testament in the book of Isaiah. Chapter 46.

The Brussels Law Day was whether the teacher preached tonight. I guess we're going to preach. That's what I thought I was supposed to do.

Amen. Isaiah 46 is kind of a, not really an odd place to preach from, but really to get the whole gist of this you got to start in Isaiah 44 and carry on through to Isaiah 48.

So we're basically right in the middle of what's going on here. Really all the context falls within those chapters.

But what we have here is a prophetic prophecy that is being spoken by God to Isaiah.

[1 : 07] It's actually part of one of the most incredible prophecies that you see in the Scripture. And I understand we have prophecies of Christ.

We have prophecies of the coming Messiah. We're trying to discount those prophecies at all in saying that. But something that's truly incredible about this is it's pretty wildly accepted that the book of Isaiah was written between the years of about 740 BC and 700 BC.

And some people will go all the way down to 681 BC. And that's all fine and well. But the events that are being prophesied here are long after that.

Including the fact that Cyrus made a decree, and you can read about that in the 36th chapter of Second Chronicles. He decreed that the Jews be able to go back and they'd be able to go back to their homeland and rebuild their city and worship God as they wanted to.

And this man, Cyrus, was called out by name by Almighty God long before Cyrus was ever even born. He was called out by name.

[2 : 24] So that's what makes this so incredible is that these visions, these words were given to Isaiah long before they ever happened.

And they did come to pass though. Cyrus being the king of Persia, and then Cyrus came in and whooped Babylon. Babylon was the ones in power at that time.

Cyrus, the king of Persia, comes in and he takes that title away from the Babylonians. But God used his pagan king, Cyrus, to release his people that had been in captivity to go back to their homeland and to rebuild the city and to rebuild the temple and to worship God.

And Cyrus actually was actively helping in that matter as well. But God used his pagan king to do this.

And that's what we're in the middle of here when we read these words in Isaiah chapter 46. I've got full attentions of doing the whole chapter.

[3 : 36] It's only 13 verses long. But we'll begin in verse 1 of Isaiah in chapter 46. It says, So, thou with down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beast, 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 going into captivity. Harkin 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 whore-hares 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 let us 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, and he standeth from his place shall he not remove.

[4 : 59] Yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble. Remember this, and shoo 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. 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.

Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executed my counsel from a far country, yea, I have spoken it, and will also bring it to paths.

I have purposed it, and I will also do it. Harking unto me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness. I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry. And I will place salvation and Zion for Israel my glory. So back to verse 1. We'll read a couple of verses here again.

[6 : 09] Bell boweth down, knee both stoopeth, their idols were upon the beast, and upon the cattle, your carriages were heavy-loading. They are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together.

They could not deliver the burden, but themselves are going into captivity. Harking unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the rending 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 whore-hares will I carry you.

I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you. So we have here this picture and these few verses of these people that are going along the way.

He says that bell boweth down, and knee both stoopeth. He says their idols were upon the beast. Their idols, as one was causing, was on these beasts of burden, and they were actually burdening the beast that they were carrying.

But the idols were the whole reason. Idolatry was the biggest reason, I should say, that Israel was ever put into captivity to begin with.

[7 : 29] And I've said before that there's many people that say that this is the sin that will drag America under, and that is the sin that will drag America under, folks, over and over in the Old Testament Scriptures.

It was the sin of idolatry that dragged Israel under, that got Israel sold over into slavery, that got them put and placed into bondage. It was them listening to other people.

It was them listening to the people of the outside nations, them listening to the false prophets and the false teachers, as they would come in, them listening to the outsiders, as they would come in, they would introduce their gods, and they would introduce their idols and their goddesses and their ways and their culture.

And folks, when God chose Israel as the apple of his eye, when God looked down upon Abraham in the book of Genesis, and he chose Abraham to be the father of a nation, to be the father of this nation, Israel, when he chose Abraham to do this, and he carried his people, and he continued on with his people.

God not only created a nation as far as a race of people went, but God created an entire culture for these people, and God himself created a religion for these people.

[8 : 53] Judaism is not just a race, and it's not just a culture. It is also a religion, and God Almighty is the one that instituted all of these things. But when idolatry came into the camp, when idolatry came into the family of the Jewish nation, when idolatry entered in, it got these people in trouble with Almighty God.

And folks, it is no different now here in 2023, as far as the church of the living God goes, idolatry gets the church in more trouble with Almighty God.

It gets believers in trouble with Almighty God just as much as it did the Israelites here in the Old Testament scriptures that we are reading about here.

They had started paying more attention to the idols, and folks, that's exactly what idolatry is. Idolatry is putting something above God.

Idolatry is putting something before God. He goes on to say here in verse 5, To whom will you like of 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 gay, they worship.

[10:12] And folks, this is the things that the people of Israel were doing, and they've been taught them by people of the outside nations. Folks, this is why in the New Testament, I mean, you see it in the Old Testament as well, but in the New Testament, we saw Jesus talk about it.

We saw Paul talk about it. We saw John talk about it. We saw Peter talk about it. We saw Jude talking about it. Talking about false teachers coming in, talking about them introducing things into the congregation of the living God, introducing things that were contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, introducing things in to the people of God that God would not have them to do. God would not have them to think about. God would not have them to consider. And then before you knew it, these people had turned things into idols. They had turned the false teachers into idols. They had turned the ideas of the false teachers into idols. Folks, they had turned themselves into idols. They had turned everything into idols, and they were paying more attention to anything and everything other than the scriptures and other than Almighty God. God here says, he says, they lavish gold out of the bag and waste silver in the balance of the goldsmith and make of it a God.

[11:43] They fall down. They worship. They bury him upon the shoulder. They carry him and set him in his place. And he standeth from his place. And he standeth from his place.

Shall he not remove? One shall cry unto him. Yet can he not answer nor save him? Out of his trouble here in verse 6, we see that they're using their gold.

They're using their silver. They're using their riches to make these idols. And not only have they used their riches, something they can use to barter with or to trade with, but they're also hiring goldsmiths to make these idols.

But God here says in verse 7, he says, one shall cry unto him. Yet can he not answer nor save him? Out of his trouble said, telling them, hey, these idols, well, do you know good?

They are useless. They are dead. It didn't matter if it was an emblem. It didn't matter if it was a placard or a statue or a statue head. Whatever the case was, it was useless to these people.

[12:45] The only thing that we can worship that matters the only person that we can worship that really matters is Almighty God. That saved our soul. These people here have made idols out of anything and everything.

And we here in this century, in this millennium, this long after this scripture was written are no different than these people were. You've got people.

Folks, I'm talking about believers. I'm talking about the church and make idols. Folks, you can make idols out of spiritual things. You make idols out of the red back hymn, a lot of Christians right now, good Bible believers, Christians, that won't sing a song unless it's found in the red back hymn. You've got people especially in this area that made an idol out of the version of the Bible that they use instead of paying attention to what's being preached. They're more worried about where it's being preached from.

Folks, Jesus Christ is the only one that is worth worshiping. Jesus Christ is the only one that is worth our tribute. Jesus Christ is the one that is worthy of the praise of the people of God.

[13:57] We've got to be careful. We've got to be careful what we're paying attention to. We must be careful with this. Remember, we're talking about people of God here.

Talking about people of God. God that had brought the Israelites out of Egypt. God that had parted the Red Sea. God that had brought them through on dry ground.

After He sent the strong, He's playing. God that had fed them in the wilderness with manna and with quail. He had fed their ancestors this way and these people would have been well aware of these accounts that are given in the scriptures.

But yet over and over time and time again we find them turning back to our Dollar Tree. We find them turning to the gods of the pagan nations that are around them.

Folks, if we are not careful as the children of God, as the people that have been bought with the blood of Jesus Christ, if we are not careful, we will find ourselves in the same boat as these people were.

[14:57] Worshiping idols that are of no use to us. And self. Self can be just as much an idol as anything else can. That's why the church houses ain't filled.

And I'm talking about just here on a Wednesday night. I'm talking about it's like it everywhere. Why? Because the people of God have made an idol out of self. They've said I deserve to sit at home in my easy chair.

I deserve to have a break. I deserve this. And I deserve that. And folks, that is putting yourself before Almighty God. That is not crucifying the flesh. That is not mortifying the deeds of the flesh. That is not denying yourself daily and taking up your cross and following Jesus Christ when we have an attitude like that. We can make ourselves an idol if we ain't careful. We can make ourselves, we can make our spouses, we can make our children, our grandchildren. You all heard me say before, be careful what you make an idol, what you put before God, because God can take anything out of your life that is getting between you and Him.

[16:01] God can do that. And God is powerful to do that. And it is not above God to do that. His ways are above our ways. His thoughts are above our thoughts.

And His ways are perfect. And His ways are always just and they're always right. He says, once you'll cry unto Him, yet He cannot answer. Folks, it's not, He may not answer.

It's not that He will not answer. It's not that He might not answer. He cannot answer. These idols could not answer. They were useless to these people. Anything that we put above God, folks, it is useless spiritually to us.

It is useless to us. The God that saved our soul. The God that redeemed us. The God that said, He has only begotten Son. The God that sent the crown jewel of heaven to hang on the cross in my place into suffering, to bleeding, to dying.

The cross that took my shame and took my guilt upon Himself. Deserves my praise. And nothing else deserves my praise more than He does.

[17:07] Hallelujah. And nothing else can answer me if I call to it. Sure, my wife can answer me for a while. Let's sing it out. When you turn and pray, and the entire world has forgotten about you.

I, Almighty God, the one that has redeemed you from your sin, the one that saved you out of hell, I will still be with you. Hallelujah.

That's the God that I serve, and that's the God that saved my soul. Why wouldn't I praise Him? Why would I even consider putting something above Him? Praise God.

He says they took care of Him from the womb, and He'll continue on with them through their whole hair, through their old age. Folks, even before He was saved, and even before I was saved, God was taking care of me.

God was blessing me, and I didn't even know Him. I didn't even know Him, but I had food, I had clothes, I had shelter, I had parents that loved me.

[18:38] I had children, I had all kinds of things. All kinds of things before I ever knew God. He was taking care of me then, and I didn't even know it, didn't even recognize Him for it.

And everyone else could say the same thing. Everyone else could say the same thing. We all benefited from some blessings of God before we were saved, but the greatest blessing we got was in salvation, was in redemption, was in Him redeeming our souls.

Back to Him, we who were cast off, we who were wicked, we who were rebellious against Him. God redeemed us. Why would we put another before Him?

Why would we put another above Him? Verse 8, He says, Remember this, and show yourselves, man, bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember this, remember what we were just talking about, what He just brought up about the idols, how useless the idols were, how the people, they had taken their riches, their gold, their silver, and whatever else, they might have had laying around, and they had made these idols, and these idols were useless to them.

He says, remember this, and show yourselves, man, bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Now, just show yourself as men, He's not talking about show yourselves as brute, or show just how strong you are.

[20:00] He says, show yourselves as men, show yourselves as matured, in other words, show yourselves as in understanding what I'm saying. He says, remember this, remember what I just said about the idols, and show yourselves to be mature, men of God to be mature, adults of God to be mature, women of God, and understand what I'm telling you here, that those idols will do you no good.

People, people making out a lot of these, and we've already talked about that, they'll make an idol out of anything, and folks that gets to church in trouble, it gets us believers in trouble doing that. God says, remember what I just told you, and show yourselves as men, show yourselves as learned, show yourselves as having wisdom, show yourselves as matured, as matured in me, folks, and understand when we come to God, when we come to faith in Christ, when we come to faith in

Jesus Christ, we come to Him as a child, and understand that folks, we are not to remain in that state, we are not to remain as a child, we are to grow in Christ, we are to grow, hey, Jesus Christ in the book of Luke, in the third chapter says that He grew in stature, and He grew in wisdom, Jesus Christ Himself grew in wisdom, while He was here on this earth, and understand that He was God, and understand that God is omniscient, and God is all-knowing, the folks I can promise you, if Luke chapter three tells us that He grew in wisdom and in stature, we can stand to grow in some wisdom ourselves.

God is saying here that we need to act as mature people and God, we don't need to stay on the milk as is taught in the New Testament Scriptures. Sooner or later, we need to be graduating to the meat.

There's people out there that say that make a thing out of Paul, glorying in his infirmities in the New Testament.

[22 : 06] They make a thing out of him, glorying in his infirmities, and say, well, that must mean that the more ignorant I am, the weaker that I am, the more that God can use me. Folks, that's not what He's getting at at all in that scripture.

That's not what He's getting at at all, and that goes against what we're reading right here when God says, shoot yourselves as men, and He's encouraging them to shoot yourselves as mature to understand what I am telling you folks.

It is our duty as Christians to grow in the knowledge of God, to grow in our relationship with God, to grow in our knowledge of the gospel, and to grow in our appreciation of the gospel.

When I first got saved, I had very little knowledge of God. I had all kinds of hidden knowledge of the Bible. I had all kinds of knowledge of the history of the Bible, but I had very little knowledge of what I was going to say when I first got saved.

Of God. But I've grown in that, and that's what God expects of His people. He expects us to grow. He expects us to grow in the knowledge of the scriptures, and the knowledge of Him, and grow closer in our relationship, and I walk with Him.

[23 : 17] To not do so is not as a man would do, it's as a child would do. A child would just continue on their way, and that's what I'm going to say.

Folks, that's not what mature adults do. And it's like everyday life, it's like getting our physical lives. When I was little, I was provided for, I've already said I had food, clothing, shelter, I had a loving family, I had toys, I had all kinds of things.

When I was growing up, we weren't rich by any means, but I was provided for. But folks, how much more has God provided for me? How much more has He given me? What provision just outshines anything that was done for me as a child?

Or anything that is done for me as an adult, folks? God has provided those things. He provided those things to me when I was a child. Maybe through my parents, or through relatives, or through whoever, but it was still provided by Almighty God.

There's people out here that say I'm self-sufficient, I can take care of myself, I can go out into the woods and shoot a deer, I can go out in a field and kill a cow, hey, go out there in the woods and shoot a deer that's you created.

[24 : 26] Go out there in the field and kill a cow that's you created. Folks, God provides it all. It is all provided by God. It is God's blessings. Remember this, and shoot yourselves men.

Bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors, remember the former things of old, for I'm God, and there is none else. I'm God, and there is none like me declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times of things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

Folks, there is none like God, and God states that himself, and he doesn't do it in haughtiness, he doesn't do it in pride, he does it as a simple statement of fact. There is none like him.

He says there is none like me, there is none else like me. He says I am the Lord, and beside me there is no other. He says I declare the end from the beginning. I declare the things, the things that are going to happen in the future all the way from the ancient days that have already passed.

He is Almighty God. He is omniscient. He is omnipresent. He is the God that saved our soul. He is the one that has redeemed us. He is the one that looked down upon you and me, wretched sinners, and said praise the Lord, I can do something with that.

[25 : 52] Amen. Thank you Lord. I don't have anything but a sinful mess on me. He said I can redeem that. I can redeem that. My counsel shall stand. And I will do all my pleasure.

And folks, I can promise you when God says my counsel shall stand, he's saying the words that I'm speaking, and I will do all my pleasure. And folks, I can promise you the words that I'm speaking, every statute, every judgment, every counsel, every word, it shall stand.

He says I will do my pleasure. He says I will do all my pleasure. And I can promise you children of God, I can promise you if it is God's pleasure, it is 100% just and it is 100% right.

And it is 100% holy. It is 100% pure. We know from the book of James that every good and perfect gift coming down from the Father of life. And as God says, he will do all of his pleasure.

What is the pleasure of God? Folks, we know from the scriptures that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. We know that from the scriptures themselves. But that scripture continues, he says, but the eternal way from his wicked ways, and he turned from his wicked ways and live.

That's the place where God gets pleasure.

[27 : 12] God gets pleasure from redemption. God gets pleasure in his plan being worked out through his good and to his glory and the story and the working and the glory of redemption. God gets his pleasure in that.

He got pleasure when he reached out and saved me. He got pleasure when he reached out and saved you. This is what pleases God. This is what pleases God. He's redeeming, following mankind back to himself, calling a ravenous burn from the east, a man that executed my counsel from a far country.

We ain't going to spend too much time here, but I think here he's actually referring to Cyrus, the pagan king that I was talking about in the introduction to all this, calling a ravenous burn from the east, a man that executed my counsel from a far country.

Yeah, I've spoken it and will also bring it to pass. I've purposed it. I will also do it. Folks, I can promise you if God has purposed it, it will come to pass.

It will come to pass. The Bible says that the grass withered and the flower faded, but the word of our God will stand forever if God has purposed it. And if he purposed it, it was from eons ago. It was from centuries and millennia and millions of years ago that God purposed it. But if God has for your life, for my life, for one of the cases, he has also purposed it to bring him glory and to bring him power and he will bring it to pass.

[28 : 46] Thanks, God. Sometimes it's hard for us Christians to accept though. What about when hard times hit? What about when sickness hits? What about when financial problems hit?

What about when this friend leaves you? That friend leaves you? What are the cases? That friend leaves you? What are the cases? God uses those things for his glory.

God uses those things for his glory. But just like these Israelites and their idols, they would turn to idols, God would put them in bondage, He would give them over to bondage, sell them into bondage. They would stay in bondage for a while and they would cry out to God.

And God would redeem them. God would bring them back up out of the bondage. That He had placed them in. Sometimes God allows things to come in our lives and it's hard for us to accept.

Sometimes God allows things to come into our lives to humble us.

Sometimes it's to teach us. And sometimes it ain't even about us. It's for somebody else that's around us. But God uses all these things for his glory. And if He has purposed it, it will come to pass. Harken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness. I bring near my righteousness. I shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry. I will place salvation in Zion for Israel, my glory. But this small passage here in verse 12 begins with harken unto me, ye stout-hearted.

[30 : 16] Who is the stout-hearted? Folks, a lot of times it's me and you here. He was talking about the people that were proud, the people that were hard-hearted. The people that had given up on God.

Remember, the prophecy is being spoken off here. What's these people that were going into captivity, that were going into bondage that were coming out at this point in the Scripture.

And I have a feeling that some of those Jews, when they came out, they felt like God had taken too long to bring them back out. They had felt like God had not heard their prayers. They had felt like God had forsaken them. And I promise you, God, if you have been bought with the blood of Jesus Christ, the word of God says, He will never leave us, nor will he forsake us. He will go with us all the way, even to the end of the world.

Sometimes when I feel forsaken, I know I have. Sometimes when I feel like God is not there, I know I have. Sometimes when I feel like God is not hearing our prayers, I know that I have. But a year

later, four years later, eight years later, whatever the case is, that prayer that you prayed come to fruition right before your very eyes.

You get a phone call, you get a postcard, you get news, you get whatever it is, however it is that it gets to you. You say, I prayed that prayer and God has answered that prayer. Hey, it's not always in our time that God comes through, but I promise you if you pray earnestly unto God, God will hear your prayer and he will answer in his own good time. Hallelujah. Thank you, Lord. And if he's purposed to do it, I promise you it'll come to pass. I bring nearer my righteousness. It shall not be far off and my salvation shall not tarry. I get tickled when I hear preacher say if the Lord doesn't tarry it is coming. I get tickled every time I hear that it comes about a plan that stays here that shall come will come and will not tarry. So the Lord's not going to tarry it is coming.

[32 : 20] But here, God say I bring my salvation. It shall not be far off. It won't be far off. It's just like Paul, when Paul quotes over in the Book of Romans, I believe it's chapter 10, he quotes from the book of Deuteronomy to the Old Testament. He says the word is nigh the even, not mouth even, the heart.

Folks, the word is nigh the. God says he's drawing his salvation nearer under these people. I got news. Jesus Christ himself is salvation and Jesus Christ is the incarnate Word of God. The Bible says in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. And if the word is nigh unto us and if the Word is nigh and it is in our mouth and it is in our heart, folks, if it's within us, that is Jesus Christ himself here. He says I bring near my righteousness. It shall not be far off in my salvation. Shall not tarry. He says I'm not going to hold back my salvation one second or one minute.

When I hold on from where I want it to be placed at, from where it's going to come in your life, where it will come in my life. God will grant it when he sees fit and it's not far off. That's what a lot of problem with the world is.

And what a lot of problem with Christians is, they think that God's a million miles off or a blue billion miles off. And I understand that he's above heaven. He's above the first heaven and the second heaven.

And he's in the third heaven. I understand he's above the clouds. He's above the stars. He's above the sun and the moon and everything else. We know I understand the praise God. God is within me. I'm a born again child of God. He is within me.

[34 : 08] And if you're a born again child of God, he is within you. He is not far off. He is not, he is not a great distance away. He is inside of me. And by way of the Holy Spirit, I have access into the very throne room of God, where I can approach the throne of grace boldly and I can obtain mercy in a time that I needed.

How do you? God is that close. God is that close. He says, 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. And I understand, Isaiah was writing to a bunch of Jewish people when he wrote this. Folks, he says, here now I will place salvation in Zion for Israel, my glory.

I understand the context that's surrounding this. I understand who Isaiah was writing to. The people of God are the glory of God. And it doesn't just apply to the Israelites here.

What did we say just a few minutes ago? Redemption is what brings God pleasure. Redeeming his creation back to him, his creation that rebuilt against him, his creation that has gone against his law, that has broken his law, that has gone against every moral law that he ever laid down in the Scriptures, and gone against everything that he ever spoke. It brings God pleasure to redeem those men back to him.

[35 : 42] And when those men and those women are redeemed back to God, we become the people of God. The church is the people of God. We are the pride of Christ. Christ being the head and we being the body. But praise God.

We are the people of God and we are the glory of Almighty God. For there is nothing more that he can do for man, nothing greater that he can do for man than to redeem his unworthy, undeserving soul.

That's right. And when he does that for us, we should bring him glory. We should do everything in our power to bring him glory. Not for salvation, but because of salvation. Because salvation has happened in us.

Because there's been a transformation, because there's been an inner working, because God has taken out that stony heart. He has put in a heart of flesh in us. He has redeemed us back to himself.

He has saved our souls and you deserve hell and I deserve hell and our children deserve hell and our parents deserve hell. Every one of us deserve nothing more than the flames of hell and eternal torment for all of our lives. But God has redeemed us from all of that.

And because God has redeemed us from all of that, it is our duty to bring him glory with our lives, with our actions, with our speech, with every fiber of our brain.

[37 : 05] Being glory to God. With everything in us. Thank you Lord. That is the room I'm going to go. Folks, that's the message tonight.

God bless you, Brett. God bless y'all. I hope it was a help to you. I appreciate your attention.