

Set Free by Turning Away from Idolatry:

A Study of Idolatry

Isaiah 46:1-13

1. *The fate of idolaters and their idols*

- a. They will be bowed down:
Conquered by enemies
- b. They will be led into captivity:
Unsaved by the false gods
they worshipped

2. *The contrasting fate of genuine believers*

- a. The LORD created them
and will carry them
from the womb to the grave
- b. The LORD will always sustain
and carry them through all
the trials and temptations of life

3. *The powerlessness of false gods to save their worshippers*

- a. They are not like the LORD
nor equal to the LORD
- b. They are only the creation
of man's mind, thoughts, ideas
- c. They are only physical objects:
They are made by mere man
- d. They are unable to help
or sustain people in life:
They have to be carried
- e. They cannot move (to guide,
protect or provide for people)
- f. They cannot answer
or save when called upon

- 1 Bel bows down,
Nebo stoops low,
their idols are borne by beasts of burden.
The images that are carried about
are burdensome,
a burden for the weary.
- 2 They stoop and bow down together;
unable to rescue the burden,
they themselves go off into captivity.
- 3 "Listen to me, you descendants of Jacob,
all the remnant of the people of Israel,
you whom I have upheld since your birth,
and have carried since you were born.
- 4 Even to your old age and gray hairs
I am he, I am he who will sustain you.
I have made you and I will carry you;
I will sustain you and I will rescue you.
- 5 With whom will you compare me
or count me equal?
To whom will you liken me
that we may be compared?
- 6 Some pour out gold from their bags
and weigh out silver on the scales;
they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god,
and they bow down and worship it.
- 7 They lift it to their shoulders and carry it;
they set it up in its place,
and there it stands.
From that spot it cannot move.
Even though someone cries out to it,
it cannot answer;
it cannot save them from their troubles.

4. *The strong appeal of God to idolaters (false worshippers)*

- a. Remember the powerlessness of your idols
- b. Remember God's works down through history: He has proven He is God
 - 1) He has revealed the truth, foretold important future events His purpose and plan will come to pass
 - 2) He will raise up a bird of prey — a world leader (Cyrus) — to fulfil His purpose: He will execute judgment upon idolaters and free His people (a picture of Christ's work)
- c. Listen to the LORD
 - 1) Because you are stubborn and unrighteous
 - 2) Because God is bringing His righteousness near
 - 3) Because God is ready to save Zion and to give His glory to Israel (all genuine believers)

8 Remember this,
keep it in mind,
take it to heart, you rebels.

9 Remember the former things,
those of long ago;
I am God, and there is none other;
I am God, and there is none like me.

10 I make known the end from the beginning,
from ancient times, what is still to come.
I say 'My purpose will stand,
and I will do all that I please.'

11 From the east I summon a bird of prey,
from a far-off land,
a man to fulfil my purpose.
What I have said, that I will bring about;
what I have planned, that I will do.

12 Listen to me,
you stubborn-hearted,
you who are far now from my righteousness.

13 I am bringing my righteousness near,
it is not far away;
and my salvation will not be delayed.
I will grant salvation to Zion,
my splendour to Israel.