

Review

The Lord has made several mentions of false gods in this section of the book of Isaiah. In the passage before us this evening, He's going to reiterate some of the statements He's made, and ultimately give us an illustration that clearly demonstrates the folly of idolatry.

44:6 The First And The Last

In chapter 43, God had said,

Is. 43:10-11 "...Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me. I, even I, am the LORD, and there is no savior besides Me."

God says again that there are no other gods apart from Him. He is the first God, and the last God. I find this interesting, because Jesus said,

Rev. 22:13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Once again, we are confronted in the book of Isaiah with the deity of Jesus Christ. The Jehovah's Witnesses say that Jesus isn't God, but that He is "a god." Well, Jehovah says, "There is no god besides Me."

44:7 God's Forecasts

If there are any who disagree with the statement that there are no other gods, the Lord invites anyone to disprove Him. Let someone - anyone - stand and say that He is equivalent to God.

It's as if God is saying, "Well, anyone who is like Me would certainly be able to tell me the entire story of how I established things in ancient times, as well as being able to say what things are going to happen in the future."

This is the same proof God required back in chapter 41, when He said,

Is. 41:22-23 Let them bring forth and declare to us what is going to take place; As for the former events, declare what they were, that we may consider them and know their outcome. Or announce to us what is coming; Declare the things

that are going to come afterward, that we may know that you are gods...

Again, we are reminded about what an amazing proof of God's deity that prophecy is. It demonstrates that He is outside of time, controlling the events of earth.

44:8 The Rock

Not only is God the only god, He is also the only "Rock." He is the Rock of our salvation (Deut. 32:15), the Rock in Whom we take refuge (2Sam 22:2-3), and the Rock of Israel (2Sam 23:3).

Again, we're faced with a Bible discrepancy if Jesus is not God. For, Paul said,

1Cor. 10:4 ...the rock was Christ.

So, as the psalmist asked,

Psa. 18:31 ...who is God, but the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?

I love how God asks, "Is there any other Rock? I know of none." It's such an ironic statement, because God is omniscient. He knows all things (1John 3:20)

Heb. 4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

So, if God doesn't know about any other gods, it's because there aren't any!

44:9 Fashioning A God

A graven image is an idol, a representation of someone's god. The concept in and of itself is inherently foolish. After all, if God could be represented by a statue, then He wouldn't be much of a god, would He?

In chapter 40, Isaiah asked,

Is. 40:12-18 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and marked off the heavens by the span, and calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, and weighed the mountains in a balance and the hills in a pair of scales?

Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or as His counselor has informed Him? With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge and informed Him of the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust. Even Lebanon is not enough to burn, nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering. All the nations are as nothing before Him, they are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless. To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with Him?

The people who create likenesses of their gods are futile. The word "futile" in Hebrew is TO-hoo." It means to be without form. So, it's really an ironic statement: "Those who form gods are themselves actually formless."

And their emptiness spreads, because they use valuable metals and materials to create their gods. So, they take something preciously valuable, and turn it into something that is of absolutely no value.

44:10-11 The Profit In Idolatry

It's interesting to me that idols have no practical value, which makes the fact that they're formed out of valuable materials pretty silly. But there is a profit, at least for the guy who makes and sells them.

But he and all of the subcontractors who make those gods will be put to shame. Why? Because they are MEN making GODS. Think about it: the craftsmen are mere men... how can they possibly make a god?

This reminds me of when Paul was preaching in Ephesus. So many people were getting saved and renouncing their idolatry, that the idol-makers were losing business.

Acts 19:23-28 About that time there occurred no small disturbance concerning the Way. For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the craftsmen; these he

gathered together with the workmen of similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that our prosperity depends upon this business. You see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are no gods at all. Not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the world worship will even be dethroned from her magnificence." When they heard this and were filled with rage, they began crying out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

This turned into a mob that dragged some Christians into a dangerous and unlawful assembly.

These human men made a profit by creating gods. And one day, men like this will have to give an account before the real God. And they will be put to shame.

44:12-20 The Folly Of The Idol Maker

This is my favorite passage in the Bible for pointing out the idiocy of idolatry. What a great illustration, as the man chops down a tree, and cuts it into halves. He cooks his dinner over one half, and bows down in front of the other half, saying, "Deliver me!" For goodness' sake! The tree couldn't save itself from his axe!