

ISAIAH

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Isaiah chapter 43 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Back in Isaiah chapter 40 we began a section that is dealing with the comfort of God for Israel and I believe those lessons we can apply to our own lives. You see, He is in control and once we understand that we can rest in Him. Think about when you were a child and how you rested in the comfort, the protection, the provision and-so-on of your parents. That is what our heavenly Father wants us to do, rest in Him! Isaiah chapter 43 continues that thought of comfort, the comfort of God towards Israel. With that as our background, let's begin reading in Isaiah chapter 43, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word this evening.

ISAIAH 43**VERSE 1**

1. As we closed last time we saw in Isaiah 42:23-25 a picture of God judging His people, bringing them into captivity and their refusal to repent and get right with God. Millions of Jews were taken into captivity by the Babylonians and the city of Jerusalem was destroyed along with the Temple.

Now the question may be like Paul said in Romans 11:1, "**I say then, has God cast away His people? . . .**" That is an important question and Paul goes on to answer it for us in that same verse of Romans chapter 11 as he says, "**. . . Certainly not! . . .**"

I do realize that some feel that Israel can and has forfeited the covenant that God made with them. Yes God did judge them but also understand that Isaiah 43:1 opens up with the word “**But**” and that is an important word because that “**But**” is linked to God!

God created them as a people, as a nation, He formed them, He called them and they are His! And notice that He calls them by name, which implies to me that the Jews are His children! You don’t name someone else’s children.

2. Now why can’t this covenant that God made with them be forfeited? We need to go back to Genesis chapter 15 to understand this reason. When the covenant was given to Abraham it was a unilateral covenant based upon God’s faithfulness and not Abraham’s. Why do I say that? The reason is very simple; Abraham was sleeping when God sealed the covenant by passing through the sacrificial animals.

Then in Genesis chapter 17 God tells Abraham that they will always be His people and He will always be their God! And don’t think God has given up on Israel or forsaken them today, as some teach. Paul said in Romans 11:25-27, “**For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.’**”

3. And what we see here in Isaiah 43 is the love of God for His people as He tells them not to fear because He is the one who will redeem them, they are His! That should be words of comfort to us as well, that we do not need to fear because the LORD, the one who has created us, formed us, called us by name has redeemed us by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. And once again I don't believe you can lose or forfeit this salvation because it is a unilateral covenant also, based upon the faithfulness of God, the finished work of Christ and not upon our faithfulness or good works!

And thus, if He saved us from death by making us alive again in Christ, why do we fear these other things that come our way? God is for us, He is looking out for us, He is working in us and through us and the work that He began He will finish – ***DON'T FEAR!***

4. As we move on listen carefully to how the Lord continues to comfort them as they go through difficulties in their life, that He is with them and that should bring us great comfort also. Let's read on and see what the Lord has to say.

VERSES 2-7

1. What I want you to notice here is that it does not say, "***If***" these things happen but the Lord says "**When**" these things happen, they are going to happen! God never promised us a life here without difficulty, without persecution and yet that is how some Christians present the Gospel. They say, "Just accept Jesus and everything will be okay!" Really, have any of you found that when you came to Christ you had no more problems? I surely didn't, in fact I had many more problems because of my faith and that is what the Scriptures do tell us. The big difference now is that I can cast all those cares, that anxiety, that worry at His feet and let Him carry me instead of me trying to do it on my own!

Jesus said in John 16:33, **“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”** In other words, stay focused, keep your eyes upon Jesus, trust in Him because everything around you will be shaken, there will be tribulation, not might be! Now this is not a promise of peace like you might think, but you can receive it if you want, it is up to you.

You see, the world’s peace is empty; it is a peace that is looking for an absence of difficulty and they will never find that. But Jesus can give to us a peace that surpasses all human understanding. He can give us a peace as we go through the storms of life! It is as Jesus said in John 14:27, **“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”** The question is, “Do you believe?”

Remember what Isaiah 26:3 says, **“You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.”** Isaiah speaks of this, **“perfect peace”** and in the Hebrew it is translated, ***“shalom, shalom.”*** And the reason peace is repeated twice is that he is trying to tell us that this peace is a perfect peace; there is nothing else like it. But what is peace? For many peace is the absence of any problems, any difficulties. They see it as an easy, smooth life with no bumps in the road. The problem is many times or maybe even most of the time our roads of life are like the roads in Illinois, bumpy with many pot holes in them and it costs you lots of money just to travel them!

And to think that peace is an absence of problems is not the peace that the Scriptures speak of. You see, the Bible doesn’t tell us we are not going to have problems, difficulties, tribulation as I have said, but that we can have peace as we are going through these times.

One of the best illustrations of this is seen in an art contest where artists were to paint a picture depicting perfect peace, what it meant to them. The second place winner painted a carefree lad sitting in a boat on a little placid lake and there was not even one little ripple to disturb the surface of the water. The sky was blue, not a cloud in the sky, and everything was peaceful. But he didn't win.

The winner of the contest painted a raging waterfall with the winds whipping the spray all around. There was a violent thunderstorm raging through the area. And there, sitting on a limb, behind this waterfall, was a bird that had built a nest and was peacefully brooding over her eggs. Even though all around her was thunder, lighting, crashing of the water, she sat in peace in the midst of the storm! That is a great illustration of what the Christian life is all about. That is what God has for us and thus, "**Fear not!**"

2. Notice some of the difficult times that we can face just as the children of Israel did. God will be with us as the waters of life come crashing down upon us, He will not let them drown us, overflow us! When things heat up, when the fire of life gets intense, He is right there with us and He will not allow us to get burned in this fire.

This picture of God preserving us through the fire is also seen with the three Hebrew young men who were taken captive with Daniel by the Babylonians. And when they refused to bow their knee before the golden image the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar was furious and had them cast into the fiery furnace. The heat was so intense that the soldiers that threw them in were burned to death and as King Nebuchadnezzar looked into this fiery furnace he said,

“ . . . ‘Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?’ They answered and said to the king, ‘True, O king.’ ‘Look!’ he answered, ‘I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.’ Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, ‘Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here.’ Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire. And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king’s counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.” Daniel 3:24-27.

You see, God was with them even in the fiery furnace as He had said and He is with us no matter how intense the heat of life may get, we just need to look to Him and **“Fear not!”**

I like the perspective one commentator gave of Israel and the church. He wrote, “Israel is just as indestructible as God’s Word and Covenant are. Whoever can annihilate Israel can do more than Satan and all the powers of hell have been able to do in ages past. What is true of Israel, however, is equally true of the Church. Against it, too, the flames have raged and the waters have boiled but, according to His promise, the Lord Jesus has always been with her.” (Bultema) May we not forget that!

3. Now verse 3 seems strange that the LORD gave these nations; Egypt and Ethiopia and Seba for a ransom for them, what is that about. I think this is looking to the release of the Jews by the Persians. Cyrus King of Persia let them go and return to Jerusalem and in return God gave them the Egyptians, Ethiopians and Seba in their place.

It is as Vine writes, “The Lord rewarded Cyrus the Persian Monarch for liberating them, by permitting him and his son Cambyses to possess Egypt and the neighboring kingdoms. Seba was the largest district between the White and the Blue Nile, contiguous to Ethiopia. The possession of these lands was not merely a gift, it was a ransom price (a kopher, or covering), the people on whose behalf payment was made, being covered by it.”

Proverbs 21:18 puts it like this, “**The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, And the unfaithful for the upright.**” And in Proverbs 11:8 we read, “**The righteous is delivered from trouble, And it comes to the wicked instead.**”

4. As we look at verse 4 it speaks of Israel being precious in His sight and again, I think this can apply to our own lives. Now here is the question, “Why are we precious in His sight?” Some have come to the wrong conclusion that it is because we are worthy, for you would never pay with your life for something that is worthless. You see, no longer are we wretched sinners, according to some. But that is not what the Scriptures have to say. Why then are we precious in His sight? Because God chose us to be precious, it is because of Him and not us! As Paul said in Romans 7:18, “**For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells. . .**”

5. In verses 5 and 6 we see the near fulfillment of this prophecy being the return of the Jews from their captivity. But the long term fulfillment is partially seen with the re-gathering of the Jews from around the world into the land of Israel, which occurred on May 14, 1948 as the nation of Israel was reborn. And the complete fulfillment is when God gathers His people together, the Jewish people, to enter into the Kingdom with Him after the seven year Tribulation Period as Matthew 24:31 tells us, **“And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”**

6. And verse 7 sums it up, it is not about us, it is about the Lord! You see, we have been created to bring glory to God. Now, obviously you don't have to do that. You can fight against that because God has given you a free will. But also understand this; there is no greater joy, no greater satisfaction than to be used as God intended us to be used, to bring Him glory. Yes, it is not always easy but it is what is best for it is the reason we were created. In Revelation 4:11, we are told that very thing, **“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”** (KJV)
 May we not forget that because God will not share His glory, He alone is God!

VERSES 8-9

1. Remember what the Lord said back in Isaiah 42:19-20, **“Who is blind but My servant, Or deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is blind as he who is perfect, And blind as the Lord's servant? Seeing many things, but you do not observe; Opening the ears, but he does not hear.”**

The Lord was speaking of His blind and deaf servants and they were not born blind and deaf but they willingly closed their eyes and ears to the things of God, the truths of God, even making idols to worship instead of the true and living God. And now the Lord calls them to come forward along with the other nations, gather together because the Lord is going to speak.

God is once again challenging them. The Lord's servants have chosen to worship and honor other gods. These other nations have chosen to worship and honor other gods. If these gods are so great then show Me and let's see the witnesses you have that can testify of their greatness! God is challenging them to prove Him wrong, which is foolish but man still does that today. You see, there is no other nation, no other idol, no other religion that can speak of future events with 100% accuracy, but the LORD can and does! He shows us He is real and yet man turns away from Him, rejects Him and that is just foolish!

2. They had nothing to say so the Lord is going to speak and explain to them that they are without excuse in regards to believing in Him, the evidence is overwhelming. Look at what the Lord says.

VERSES 10-13

1. How are the people of God His witnesses? Because they had witnessed the greatness of God, that was not the problem. The problem was that they did not remember the great things God had done among them. If they did then they would be a witness of the truth that He is the only true God!

2. Now let me say this. The Mormon's believe that if you are a good Mormon man one day you will get your own planet to populate with you many wives and you will be god over the whole thing. Is that true? Absolutely not, and it is not because I said so but the Lord said, "**... Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me.**" Isaiah 43:10. I think that is pretty clear, don't you? There are no other God's, ***PERIOD!***

3. So in verse 10 we dealt with the Mormons, and not to offend the Jehovah Witnesses by negating them, we will deal with them here in verse 11. I guess you can say that I am an equal opportunity offender of the cults!

The Jehovah Witnesses believe that Jesus is not Jehovah God, but a god. Not Almighty God, but a Mighty god. Verse 10 dealt with that also, but notice that verse 11 as it speaks of only one Savior and that is the "**LORD**" and it is all capitalized speaking of Yahweh.

Now they may try to argue the point, but in the New Testament we are told in Luke 2:11, "**For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.**"

John 4:42 says, "**... 'Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.'**"

And Acts 5:30-31 says, "**The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.**"

Acts 13:23 says, "**From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior; Jesus.**"

And then in Hosea 13:4 we once again read, **“Yet I am the LORD your God Ever since the land of Egypt, And you shall know no God but Me; For there is no Savior besides Me.”**

The point is this, Yahweh is the Savior and Yahweh is Jesus, the Savior of the world! (You can also see this in spoken of in; Titus 2:13, II Timothy 1:10, I Timothy 4:10).

Now let’s look at this and it is really very simple. Since Jesus is clearly our Savior (Philippians 3:20, 2 Timothy 1:10), and there is no other Savior beside the LORD, then Jesus must be the LORD. The LORD, Yahweh, is One God in Three Persons! I love how the Lord deals with this in the Old Testament and we will see this again in our study tonight in the next chapter.

4. I like the way this section closes, **“Indeed before the day was, I am He; And there is no one who can deliver out of My hand: I work, and who will reverse it?”** Isaiah 43:13. In other words, God is in control, He is Sovereign and thus, **“Fear not!”** Do you see this recurring theme tonight – trust in the Lord, don’t fear!

VERSES 14-17

1. Think about these words here in Isaiah. Long before the Babylonians ever conquered Judah and sent the nation into a 70-year exile Isaiah is speaking about that taking place! And he also speaks about the fall of Babylon, their judgment by God for what they were going to do to Judah!

And we see that God is going to send Cyrus and the Persian army into Babylon and the Babylonians will be defeated. In that defeat there will be much wailing because they thought that no one could bring them down, but they forgot about God!

2. In verses 16 and 17 we see God remind the children of Israel, specifically the Southern Kingdom of Judah how He brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, leading them through the Red Sea on dry ground and drowning the Egyptian army that came after them. God wanted them to remember this so they could be encouraged during their time in captivity, seeing how God had brought them out of Egypt and how He will also bring them out of Babylon.

And just as the Red Sea was no obstacle for God, neither will the Euphrates River be an obstacle for Him. It is through this great River that the Persian army will enter into Babylon and defeat them!

3. And this is a lesson we are reminded of often. To look upon what God has done in the past, the great things He has done in our lives, the great things He has done in the lives of men and women throughout history and thus, we can trust God right now in the situations that we are facing. In other words, “**Fear not!**”

VERSES 18-21

1. Now this seems strange, almost a contradiction. In Isaiah 43:16-17 we are told to look at the past, remember the great things that God has done for them. But now, here in Isaiah 43:18 we are told, “**Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old.**” How can that be?

First of all we are to remember the great things that God has done for that encourages us. But we should also forget, put aside our failures, the defeats we encountered and move on to what God has for us. I think Paul put it perfectly when he said in Philippians 3:12-14, **“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”**

You can't change the past but you can live in it and be discouraged, be down, be frustrated never moving forward or you can ***PRESS ON***, move forward to the calling that God has for you. Learn from the past but don't let the past stop you from serving the Lord!

2. Now this great deliverance that Isaiah is speaking of I believe goes far beyond the Egyptian deliverance, it goes far beyond the Babylonian deliverance, I believe it is looking forward to the Messiah who will set them free from their sins and ultimately will sit upon the throne of David and Jesus will rule and reign for 1,000 years!

VERSES 22-24

1. Notice God's charge against them, they are not calling upon God, there is no fellowship. In fact, the people are weary of serving God! They are burnt out, they feel burdened, and thus, all the sacrifices they are offering are not accepted by God because they feel forced to do these things and they are not doing it out of love unto the Lord!

How did this happen? Because they were trying to approach God by their works and that will never work and they have become burdened, burnt out because of it. Now before we are too harsh on them, what about us? Do you feel burdened in the work? Do you feel burnt out serving the Lord? If you do then God has not done this, you have done this to yourself.

Now please understand that I am not saying you should drop out. I remember several weeks' back Pastor Steve Miller was talking about meeting with the pastors from Illinois and one of the pastors was sharing about one of the elders in his church. He wanted to take a sabbatical! Why? Pastor Steve did not say but he was probably burnt out!

If you feel like you are burnt out I guess you should drop out but there is a solution and we will see that as we read on. But the key is coming back to the Lord, let Him refresh you. Some have been on a sabbatical for years and there are no signs of them ever coming back. You may see them from time to time when there are pot lucks, but that is about it. The tragedy is that they are missing out and I don't know about you, but I don't see the Lord giving us a sabbatical from service!

Let me ask you a question. How many of you are in service for the Lord! Hopefully you are all raising your hands because if you are not, then we need to talk. I don't care who you are, what you do, you are in ministry for the Lord. Every single Christian is and yet so many come up short in serving Him or they are serving Him so much that they have forgotten about Him and are just serving. Both are wrong!

2. This is also kind of funny to me. God is saying, "Hey, you think you feel burdened! You think you are weary! Try being Me! You have burdened Me with your sins, You have wearied Me with your iniquities." Now what can be done about this? Let's read on and see.

VERSES 25-28

1. Here is the solution to our problem. Instead of working to pay the debt for our sins, which you can't do and it will only weary you, give it to the Lord, receive the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ and that burden will be gone. You see, you serve the Lord not because you have to, but because you want to; you are allowed to serve the King of kings and Lord and lords!

God is calling for sinful man to state your case before Him, not that He needs to be reminded, but many times we do, to awaken us out of our spiritual complacency. Remember what Isaiah 1:18 said, **“Come now, and let us reason together,’ Says the LORD, ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.’”**

2. Now as we move into verses 27 and 28 who is this father that sinned? Some say this speaks of Adam, others Jacob, but most likely it speaks of father Abraham, who also blew it many times. We also see the priests and the prophets who were evil many times, speaking falsely, representing God the way they wanted to.

And the point here, I believe, is that none are righteous, no not one, not even father Abraham, not the priests or even the prophets of God! This section started out well with God blotting out our transgressions but now it is ending on a sour note. Keep in mind that there was no break in the original writings, no chapter divisions or verses. So let's read on into chapter 44 and see the remedy for all these transgressions, what God is going to do and it flows out of the idea of God blotting out all our transgressions.

ISAIAH 44**VERSES 1-4**

1. Yes we saw that Isaiah 43 ended with a warning of judgment but God will not go back on His promise to His people, the promise of hope and restoration that is only found in Him! The key for them is to turn back to Him!

Notice how God looks upon rebellious, sinful Israel. He tells them that He has chosen them, made them, formed them and as He looks upon them He calls them Jeshurun or “righteous ones” or “the upright ones.” That is not how they were but that is how God saw them. That is the love God has for His people and His chastening is not to punish them but to awaken them so that they would return to Him!

2. And notice that He is going to pour His Spirit upon them. How important that is in our lives. As we see the effects of the Spirit filled life in a person we see that where the Spirit of God is poured out life springs forth. Where a person is dry, there is no life, there is the works of the flesh and that is never a good thing. Be thirsty for God as Robert Murray M’Cheyne said as he preached on this verse back on July 1, 1838 to his congregation in Dundee. He said,

When two travelers are going through the wilderness, you may know which of them is thirsty by his always looking out for wells. . . . So it is with thirsty believers; they love the Word, read and preached – they thirst for it more and more.

Is it so with you, dear believing brethren? In Scotland, long ago, it used to be so. Often, after the blessing was pronounced, the people would not go away till they heard more. Ah! Children of God, it is a fearful sign to see little thirst in you. I do not wonder much when the world stays away from our meetings for the Word and prayer; but ah! When you do, I am dumb – my soul will weep in secret places for your pride.

- Robert Murray M'Cheyne, Sermons of Robert Murray M'Cheyne, p. 16

Some of you are wondering why you are not thirsty. Let me ask you this, “When does an athlete get thirsty?” When he works out of course! Maybe the reason you are not thirsty is because you are not using what God has given to you already. I guarantee you the more you serve Him the thirstier you will be and He will pour out His Spirit upon you and you will see life spring forth!

Spurgeon put it like this, “Without the Spirit of God we can do nothing; we are as ships without wind, or chariots without steeds, like branches without sap, we are withered; like coals without fire, we are useless; as an offering without the sacrificial flame, we are unaccepted. I desire both to feel and to confess this fact whenever I attempt to preach. I do not wish to get away from it, or to conceal it, nor can I, for I am often made to feel it to the deep humbling of my spirit.” How true, may we be thirsty for God, serving Him, loving Him and others and using the gifts He has given to us to bring glory to Him!

VERSE 5

1. What is Isaiah speaking of here? I think Paul speaks of this very thing in Ephesians 1:13-14 where he tells us, **“In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”**

Make no mistake about it, when the Holy Spirit is poured out on us we know we belong to the Lord and we are not afraid to say it. We want everyone to know we belong to the Lord and He belongs to us! Spurgeon picks up on this idea of “another will write with his hand, ‘The LORD’S’” and he tells us, “The text may have another rendering, for, if you notice, the word ‘with’ in the text is in italics, to show that it was inserted by the translators. It might run thus: ‘Another shall subscribe his hand unto the Lord.’ This alludes to the custom which still exists, but which was more common in those days, of a servant being marked or tattooed in the hand with his master’s name . . . Paul alludes to this when he says, ‘Henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus;’ as much as to say, ‘I am Christ’s: I have had his name branded upon me.’”

May we walk in the power of the Spirit, may those refreshing waters of the Holy Spirit not only fill our lives but overflow our lives and touch those around us for Jesus!

VERSES 6-8

1. For those who like to deny the deity of Jesus Christ, here is a hard verse to come to grips with but I am sure they have some way of distorting the Scripture to make their case. First of all verse 6 is spoken in the first person singular and yet as you read it we see that Yahweh the King of Israel is spoken of, God the Father, **AND** Yahweh his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts, Jesus spoken of. You see, one God manifested in 2 of the 3 persons of the Godhead spoken of in the Scriptures is spoken of here.

Now the Jehovah Witnesses like to tell you the redeemer is not Jesus, but Jehovah, the Almighty God, for Jesus is only a mighty God. Again, as you read verse 6 it is speaking of two different people here, that is why the word “**and**” is used.

Now there is this little problem that we see repeated several times in Isaiah chapters 44 and 45 and that is the fact that there are no other God's! What is interesting is that the word “God” is ELOHIM, (el-o-heem') and it speaks of more than two. Now I am not saying that we are polytheistic or believe in many God's, not at all!

This is very important for us to understand because the cults like to use this to mess us up. In the Shema that is found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 we are told, **“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”**

As I have said, these verses are also known as the SHEMA, which means to “hear.” And the Jews would say these verses, this prayer in the morning and in the evening, they would teach it to their children; it was an important part of their lives!

Now in saying that, I want to show you something here that you may not expect. I want to show you that the idea of the Trinity is not a New Testament idea, but it is spoken of in the Old Testament. Here in Deuteronomy 6:4 listen once again to what we have read, **“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!”**

During worship at the temple the worshipers would cry out over and over again, ***“SHEMA YSRAEL YAHWEH ELOHIM ECHAD YAHWEH.”*** Over and over they were affirming the oneness of God, which was the foundation of the Hebrew religion; they were of course monotheistic in their beliefs! And so are we as we will see. We do not worship three different God’s, but one God manifested in three distinct persons!

Let’s look at what this text is saying because it is showing to us the Trinity or the Tri-unity of God. We start out with **“LORD”** and that is **YAHWEH**, the covenant name of God used by the Jews and when you see it in all capitals that is what it is referring to.

Then we go to the word “**God**” and that is the Hebrew word, **ELOHIM**. Now this is where it gets interesting to me. El is the singular form, Elo is speaking of two and Elohim is speaking of more than two or three or more.

Now this is a problem, are we saying that there is more than one God, a polytheistic belief? As I said, absolutely not, we believe in One God and you will see how this is played out for us in this Scripture

Next we are told that the **LORD** or **YAHWEH** is “**one**” or ECHAD. Once again this is confusing. First we say that there are three God’s, then here it is saying one God, what in the world is going on? This word “**one**” speaks of a compound unity, not a singular unity. Let me give you an example. When God created Adam and Eve He said, “**And they shall become one [echad] flesh**” (Genesis 2:24) or a compound unity.

Now that may not sound too important, but it is. You see, if you were to speak of a singular unity, the Hebrew word would be YACHIYD, but that is not what the Holy Spirit used here. If he did, we would have no basis for the Trinity. But when you have the plural form, Elohim paired with echad, then you are speaking of one God manifested in three distinct persons! Deuteronomy 6:4 says, “Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is **one** LORD”

In this verse we are told that God is **one**. However, when we examine the Hebrew word “echad” translated here as “one” we discover an interesting meaning. The Hebrew word “echad” comes from a Hebrew root “achad” which means, “to unify” or “collect together”. The word literally means a “united one” or “compound unity”. The LORD our God is **one** (united one - Trinity) LORD!

So we are not speaking of two or three God’s but one God manifested in three distinct persons; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit!

2. We are also told here in Isaiah that the God is the first and the last which should remind us of what we are told in Revelation 1:8 , **“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’”**

Now if you are still not sure this is speaking of Jesus, look at Revelation 1:17-18. It reads, **“And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.’”**

Let me ask you this, when did Yahweh die? The Jehovah Witnesses can’t answer that question because they don’t believe Jesus is equal with the Father. But it is very clear in this verse that Jesus was put to death on the cross of Calvary and rose on the third day. He is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. He is Yahweh our Redeemer, the second person of the Holy Trinity!

3. And once again, compared to these idols, compared to creation itself, there is no God like our God. Thus, once again we see a challenge to those idols, those people and those nations who worship them, to step forward and speak of things that were to come to pass with 100% accuracy. And, of course, they could not do these things, only God can!

4. And I love verse 8. The Jehovah Witnesses believe Jesus is “a god.” The Mormon’s believe you can become a god, and that false doctrine has even come into the Christian church today! But God has something to say about that. God says that He knows of no other god, not even one. And if God doesn’t know of any why do we think otherwise?

In fact, for those that think this way, listen to what Jeremiah 10:11 says of them. We read, **“Thus you shall say to them: ‘The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens.’”** Don’t be foolish thinking you are a god or will become a god, for if you do, you will perish, you will die like men! There are false gods, symbolic gods, and the true God - and the only true God is Yahweh, the Lord. Thus, **“Fear not!”**

5. Now if you really want to know how God feels about idols, just listen to what He says next. He shows us the foolishness of our actions and yet man still worships idols today!

VERSES 9-20

1. Here God is speaking of the foolishness of placing ones trust in idols, for they are useless, they will not profit, they can’t see or know anything. And for those who put their trust in them, they will be ashamed. Why worship something that will not profit you or help you?

And when you stand before God you will not have your idol with you because it is worthless, it can’t go with you! It is as Hebrews 12:29 says, **“For our God is a consuming fire.”** And because of that, **“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”** Hebrews 10:31. You see, outside of Christ you will stand in your own righteousness and you will be consumed by the fire of His judgment, no idol will be able to help you, they can do nothing!

2. Now keep in mind that the idol you make is always inferior to its maker, and thus, as the idol maker gets hungry and thirsts and has to stop his work to satisfy those needs, the idol he makes can do nothing to satisfy those basic needs!

You see, this is just plain foolishness on their part. This idol that he makes for himself comes from his own imagination and to make it he cuts down a tree that is living and makes it into a dead idol. Not only that. He cuts down the tree and takes part of it and places it in the fire to warm himself with. With another piece of the wood he places it in the oven to cook with. And with the last piece of wood he carves it into an idol to worship. Do you see how foolish their actions are! But why do they do that? Why do they make these idols to worship?

I think verses 18-20 tell us. Because they have rejected the love of the truth God has sent them a strong delusion to believe a lie, to believe that a dead piece of wood is a god that can interact with man and thus, deserves our worship. The more you reject the truth the more God will make firm your convictions. And as you continue down that road you can pass the point of spiritual no return. A place where your heart is so hard that there is no salvation for you, because you have made the path you want to travel on and God has just firmed that conviction of yours. They don't even see the foolishness of their actions.

3. Let me give you two examples of what I mean, the foolishness of all this. Several years ago a church started called Church of Diana in which its followers believe the late humanitarian, Princess Diana speaks to them. To them she imparts wisdom and guidance not unlike that of the Holy Spirit. The church's founder, Richard Fame, said that Princess Diana dictated to him a book of truths - Diana Speaks! He said, "We believe that if anyone reads this book with an open mind, that they will hear the princess speaking to them. . . . If anyone calls upon her, she will come to them through the book." The church had over 7,000 members and I am not sure how many they have today but how foolish and as far as I can tell, it is still around!

The second example is the story of a former roadblock that became a Hindu god. I love this one; it kind of reminds me of the “Pet Rock” that sold millions. This story goes like this, “Devotees from as far away as India worship at the San Francisco shrine to the Hindu god Shiva. Although it originally was just a traffic barrier, believers now pray and offer flowers, food and coins there.” Man, go to Illinois, you will find gods everywhere on the Tollway! If you reject the truth of God you will believe all kinds of foolish lies, and we can go on-and-on with the foolish things people worship and do, supposedly intelligent people. And ultimately they are being set up to believe the lie of the Antichrist and they will worship him because they rejected the love of the truth from God, they will ultimately believe they are god!

VERSES 21-23

1. How does this fit in with God rebuking those who were worshipping these idols, these gods? I think God is calling for Israel to remember the foolishness of making and worshipping idols and as they do it should inspire greater trust and confidence in the true and living God. When we think about the alternatives to following the Lord, it should make us follow Him all the more closely. Remember what Peter said to the Lord, “**. . . ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’**” John 6:68-69.

And the result of coming to the Lord, being set free, having our transgressions blotted out is that we sing unto the Lord, we praise Him, we worship Him, we shout to the heavens and let others know what our God has done in our life! That is what we should do!

VERSES 24-27

1. Notice how God humbles the proud showing them the foolishness of their ideas outside of a Creator God. Look at the theory of evolution. Nature itself testifies that there is a designer, a creator, a God. Everything shows design, even the simplest cell to a snowflake. And yet the evolutionists teach that life came from non-life, from no information the system kept gaining more information until we have the complex life forms of today. And yet, the evidence does not support their theory.

Then why do they do it? Paul said in Romans 1:20-22, **“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools.”**

We as Christians need not be ashamed of what God has said in His Word for science will eventually catch up with what God has said. Make no mistake about it, God’s Word is complete and when God speaks of scientific things they are 100% accurate! For those who boast of what they know God will bring them down and frustrate their ideas.

2. You see, God speaks to His prophets and they speak forth the Words of God to the people and God brings those words to pass. Prophecy is fulfilled! The LORD demonstrates He is the true God by prophesying a future deliverer for Israel.

Keep in mind that when Isaiah wrote this, around 712 B. C., the Southern Kingdom of Judah was still in the land, they had not gone into captivity yet. You see, at this point the Assyrians were the world power, not the Babylonians. But in around 106 years, 606 B. C., the Babylonians would come and take captive the Southern Kingdom of Judah with their final assault and deportation to Babylon occurring in 586 B. C.

It is at this point the walls of the city, the city of Jerusalem and the Temple were completely destroyed; the land was just a mess. But God is saying that His people will return to Jerusalem, return from their captivity, the city and the walls and the Temple will be rebuilt. Who is going to deliver them? We don't have to guess because in the last verse we are told and this will set us up for our study next time. Listen to what we are told.

VERSE 28

1. God calls Cyrus, this Persian King, by name some 125 years before he was even born. Now in chapter 45 we are going to continue this same thought regarding this man named Cyrus, who was going to defeat the Babylonians and let God's people return home. Remember the chapter and verse divisions were placed much later in the Bible, and so the text was continual, and the end of chapter 44 flows right into chapter 45 and we will get into that next time.

2. Let me close with this. What was the lesson we learned tonight? **“Fear not!”** Why should we fear? Because God is in control at all times. How do we know He is in control? Because of prophecy and how God is 100% accurate in telling us what the future holds. We don’t need to fear, He is in control and prophecy gives us that assurance or as Peter said in II Peter 1:19-21, **“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”** Thus, **“Fear not!”**