

Gods of Bavel Yesha'yahu 46:1-13

In my last post, we explored **Yerushalayim to Be Inhabited ~ Part 3** in **Yesha'yahu 45:14-25**. In this post, we learn of the **Gods of Bavel** in **Yesha'yahu 46:1-13**.

A contrast is drawn in this chapter between the idols that had to be carried and **Adonai** who carried the burdens of His people.

¹ Bel bows down, N'vo stoops low; their idols are borne by animals, beasts of burden. The loads you yourselves were carrying are now burdening tired animals.

Bel was not a proper name in **Bavel** but was the Akkadian equivalent of **Ba'al** (lord). **N'vo** was the god of **Borsippa**, a city near **Bavel**. He was the god of wisdom and the patron deity of scribes and the son of Marduk. These gods, or more precisely, the idols that represented them, had to be carried on carts to move from one place to another. They were a heavy burden for the animals that carried them.

² They stoop and bow down together; they cannot save the burden, but themselves go into captivity.

When one ancient Near Eastern power defeated another, they would carry off the idols of the conquered nation.

³ "Listen to me, house of Ya'akov, all who remain of the house of Isra'el: I have borne you from birth, carried you since the womb. ⁴ Till your old age, I will be the same - I will carry you until your hair is white. I have made you, and I will bear you; yes, I will carry and save you.

The remnant were those **Israeli** who would survive the coming judgment. **Adonai** had carried or sustained His people from their birth. Rather than using *beasts of burden* to carry His people, **Adonai** carries them Himself all the days of their lives.

⁵ To whom will you liken Me and equate me? With whom will you compare me, as if we were similar?"

Throughout history, people have tried to *liken Adonai* to various beings. The Greeks said, "If I were **Adonai**, I'd live on Mount Olympus, be all-powerful, and seduce pretty maidens." So that's what their gods did all day long: throw thunderbolts and chase women. In other cultures, people said, "If I were **Adonai**, I'd soar through the sky," so they made their idols like eagles. People make gods out of what they think it would be fun to be. But the problem is, those gods become burdens. If your god is a pleasure, you will be burdened with lust. If your god is money, you'll be in bondage to greed. If your god is your intellect, you'll be weighed down by pride.

⁶ They squander the gold from their bags and weigh silver on a scale; they hire a goldsmith to make a god, before which they fall down and worship! ⁷ It is borne on shoulders and carried, then set in its place; and there it stands. From its place it does not move. If one cries to it, it cannot answer or save anyone from his troubles.

The images of deities in **Mesopotamia** were fed, dressed, and even washed daily. Food sacrifices were brought to the god daily (and no doubt eaten by the temple technicians). Other attendants were required to dress and undress the statue, and still, others were employed to wash the statue and transport it in times of celebration. ¹ Idols are worthless in the day of trial and tragedy. Not so the true and living **Adonai**.

¹ The IVP Bible Background Commentary – Old Testament.

⁸ Remember this, and stand firm. Keep it in mind, you rebels. ⁹ "Remember things that happened at the beginning, long ago — that I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.

To **remember** means to draw strength by contemplating **Adonai's** past acts of power. Throughout Scripture, **Adonai** calls Believers to **remember** the work He has already done on their behalf (see Deuteronomy 5:15, 1 Chronicles 16:11-2, and 2 Timothy 2:8). Seeing **Adonai's** hand in the past encourages us to seek His face in the present.

¹⁰ At the beginning I announce the end, proclaim in advance things not yet done, and I say that My plan will hold, I will do everything I please to do.

The gods of the ancient Near East were not capable of controlling the destiny of the world without help. In **Mesopotamia**, there existed the "*tablets of destiny*," texts which contained the futures of all things (including the gods) in the universe. Whoever controlled these tablets controlled fate. Occasionally these tablets came into the "*wrong hands*," and chaos ensued. Some gods, including Enki, wore sorcerer's hats, showing that they could control and predict the future, but only by way of spells and incantations. Conversely, **Adonai** managed all things without resort to superficial means of tablets or spells. ²

¹¹ I call a bird of prey from the east, the man I intended, from a distant country. I have spoken and will bring it about; I have made a plan, and I will fulfill it.

Koresh, the **King of Persia**, was the bird of prey. The **Persian** ensign was an eagle.

¹² Listen to Me, you stubborn people, so far from righteousness: ¹³ I am bringing my justice nearer, it is not far away; My salvation will not be delayed, I will place My salvation in Tziyon for Isra'el My glory. ~ Isaiah 46:1-13 (CJB)

My salvation will not be delayed. He said the same thing concerning the vision He gave to Habakkuk, another of His prophets. ***For the vision is meant for its appointed time; it speaks of the end, and it does not lie. It may take a while, but wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.*** Habakkuk 2:3 (CJB)

Who or what do you put your trust in? **Adonai** or your own created idol?

The Lord's timing is perfect. As seen in the next chapter, His delivery of His people was nearer than they could have imagined.

In my next post, we examine **The Fall of Babel** in **Yesha'yahu 47:1-15**.

² Ibid.