

July 15

Isaiah 45 – 48

Welcome back! My name is Terry Ebers & thanks for joining me for the July 15th Project 4:4 Accelerator. Today you read Isaiah 45, 46, 47, & 48. So, let's dive right in...

Today we continued to read the monologue in which God compares His reality, power and strength to the unreality, inability and weakness of idols. In Isaiah Chapter 46 God says..."Remember this, fix it in mind, take it to heart...I am God and there is no other; I am God and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning...what I have said that will I bring about; what I have planned that will I do..." The powerful theme of the sovereignty of God is carried throughout the entirety of this portion of scripture. Repetition after repetition, like a carpenter pounding home nails, God hammers home the message through Isaiah. 'You will go into captivity because you would not learn my lessons any other way but never forget, even in Babylon I am in charge, and when you have finally learned what I must teach you, I will bring you back, restore you and judge the Babylonians for their arrogance and sin.'

Now, if I had to pull out just one main theme or lesson from what we read today, I would put it something like this: If you bear the name of God, be careful how you walk, because He is jealous to protect His glory. In Isaiah chapter 48 God says..."See, I have refined you, though not as silver. I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake I do this. How can I let myself be defamed? I will not yield my glory to another."

I remember reading a devotional book by Oswald Chambers throughout my college years. One of the quotes that stuck with me was..."In everything I do, Christ's Honor is at stake." During a time in my life when I was really growing as a disciple of Jesus, this quote challenged me to continually think how my actions affect & reflect the glory of Christ.

God will not yield His glory to another. That statement is so important because it helps us understand the motives and purposes of God. God protects His own glory. His glory is important. That is the whole point of the end of chapter 48. "This is what the Lord says, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: 'I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea. Your descendants would have been like the sand, your children like its numberless grains; their name would never be cut off nor destroyed from before me.'"

"If only" -- what tragic words they are! Here is the point. God has chosen you and me, just like He chose Israel. We bear His name. We are the reflections of His truth, righteousness and glory. He has instructed us clearly in the way in which we are to live. His commands are before us. If we walk in His ways, the blessing of God will be

upon us. But if we dishonor His name, then God will move to protect His glory, to guard His reputation, and that often leads to our own affliction. The Babylonian captivity was that affliction for the nation of Israel. Isaiah prophesied about this! It's what it was all about!!

Is this a truth that we take seriously? Sometimes it seems that we are nearly as asleep as the ancient Israelites. We can be just as stubborn. I wonder...what it is that we do to rob God of glory, and who or what do we, by our actions and attitudes, expect Him to share His glory with? I humbly admit there are times in my life when I want the glory...I want the credit. And I have to be reminded that God will not yield His glory to another!!

Another thing I want to make note of from our reading today is that God gives us some reasons for why prophecy is so important. One of these reasons was so that when things occurred in human history -- things that God ordained and planned from before the beginning of time -- Israel, stubborn as she was, would have to admit that it was God who did these things...Because God had already told them exactly what would happen. In chapter 48 it says... "Therefore I told you these things long ago; before they happened I announced them to you so that you could not say, 'my idols did them; my wooden image and metal god ordained them.' Prophecy, then, is another way in which God protects His glory, making certain that He is perceived as the true and sovereign God, and other "gods" and idols are understood to be worthless and useless bits of wood and stone.

Well thanks for joining in today and as you go about your day, may you be reminded that in everything you do, Christ's honor is at stake. He Deserves the honor & glory in all things. Have a great day!