

God Blesses Those Who Wait Upon Him

Introduction:

1. In our last Bible lesson of 2016 we showed from Psalm 23 how God blesses those who make Him their Shepherd.
2. In our first Bible lesson of 2017 we are studying the message found in Isaiah 40:18-31.
 - a. Situations that require waiting can cause us to become weak, weary, and faint.
 - b. However, Isaiah's message shows how "God blesses those who wait upon Him."

Discussion:

- I. THE JEWS WOULD BE PUT IN A WAITING SITUATION
 - A. Isaiah informed King Hezekiah in 39:5-7 that his people would be taken to Babylon.
 - B. According to Jeremiah 29:10, the captivity in Babylon would last 70 years.
 - C. While the Jews waited in captivity, they would have to overcome:
 1. the pagan influence of the Babylonians
 2. the idea that God did not care for them.
- II. (vs.18-24) WHILE THE JEWS WAITED IN CAPTIVITY, THEY WOULD HAVE TO OVERCOME THE PAGAN INFLUENCE OF THE BABYLONIANS
 - A. The Babylonians worshipped idols, as illustrated in Daniel 3.
 - B. Isaiah showed in vs.18-20 how idols are made of various materials.
 1. (vs.19-20) Materials include gold, silver, and wood.
 2. (vs.18) Can God be compared to any image made by man?
 - C. (vs.21-24) Isaiah pointed out the folly of comparing God to graven images.
 1. The Jews had been informed and they understood certain things about God.
 - a. He sits upon "*the circle of the earth*" -- He reigns in heaven.
 - b. The inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before God.
 - c. God stretches out the heavens as a curtain and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in.
 - d. God rules over the princes and judges of the earth.
 2. Remember: The Jews would be in Babylon while they waited -- the Babylonians worshipped idols, and the Jews would have to overcome this influence.
- III. (vs.25-31) WHILE THE JEWS WAITED IN CAPTIVITY, THEY WOULD HAVE TO OVERCOME THE IDEA THAT GOD DID NOT CARE FOR THEM
 - A. (vs.25-26) The Jews could be reminded of God's power by observing the objects in the heavens He created.
 1. They would have to avoid thinking that God was so distant that He did not care for them.
 2. See vs.27.
 - B. (vs.28-31) Isaiah pointed out the folly of thinking that God did not care for His people.
 1. God does not faint or become weary (Psalm 121:4).
 2. There is no searching of God's understanding.
 - a. (Psalm 147:5) God's "*understanding is infinite.*"
 - b. He knows the needs of His people, and He cares.
 3. (vs.29) God gives power to the faint, and He increases strength to the weak.
 - a. (vs.30) Eventually, even the young will faint, grow weary, and fall; however, . . .
 - b. See vs.31.
 - C. God cannot be compared to any image because He reigns in heaven over everything.
 - D. Even though God reigns in heaven, He cares for and wants to bless His people.
- IV. SOMETIMES WE ARE IN SITUATIONS THAT REQUIRE WAITING
 - A. When this occurs we must not lose sight of God's true identity (Acts 17:24-29).
 - B. Also, when this occurs we must not think that God does not care for us (1 Peter 5:7).
 - C. When we are in situations that require us to wait, let us "wait upon God" by:
 1. allowing God to lead us in His truth and teach us (Psalm 25:5)
 2. being of good courage (Psalm 27:14)
 3. waiting patiently (Psalm 37:7a)
 4. hoping in God's Word (Psalm 130:5).