

Title: Harken Unto God!
Text: Isaiah 46: 1-4
Date: April 8, 2012
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Isaiah 46: 1: Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth,

Bel and Nebo were the two chief idol gods in Babylon. When God sent Cyrus to deliver Israel out of bondage, Cyrus hauled their idols away on wagons.

Illustration: Statue of Sadaam Husein

Anything that we make our confidence, other than Christ, is an idol. It does not have to be made into an image—it may be only in the imagination of a man's heart.

Ezekiel 14: 3: Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?

An idol can be religious experiences, religious service or things of this world: honors, position, titles, possessions. Anything that a sinner trusts in rather than Christ alone is idolatry.

Isiah 46: 1: ...their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages *were* heavy laden; they are a burden to the weary *beast*. 2: They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity.

Can you picture those weary horses and oxen burdened under that heavy load as they pulled the wagons loaded down with those broken down statutes?---Christ bears the burden of his people. But anything other than Christ will not only fail to bear our burden, it will itself become a heavier burden to us. Instead of it carrying you, you will have to carry it.

Isaiah 2: 20: In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made *each one* for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; 21: To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. 22: Cease ye from man, whose breath *is* in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?

Something is happening in this present day that we have been warned about by the Lord Jesus and all the apostles of Christ. The Lord warned of falsehood so subtle that ***“if it were possible it should deceive the very elect.”***

The church of Rome—with all the many statutes and pictures—is obvious idolatry. Within the past 50 years, among those who would renounce Catholicism as idolatry, it was obvious idolatry when preachers said, “god has no hands but your hands or let god or god has done all he can do”? Such a god is as much an idol as a statue covered in gold (Is 46: 7). But it seems more and more in our day the old harlot is not dressed up like an obvious harlot. She's trying to pass herself off as truth.

It is dead-letter understanding when folks are content to hear Christ's blood trampled underfoot from the pulpit and the activities of a church exalted to attract men so long as the church claims to hold to this creed or that confession from the past, or if they can check off the doctrines of grace in a statement of faith like Catholics counting rosary beads. It is idol worship.

The Master told us that this day of subtlety would come, "...if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Mt 24:24)

2 Corinthians 11: 14: And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15: Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Here is the word of the eternal, unchanging Lord of salvation

Isaiah 46: 3: Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb: 4: And *even* to your old age I *am* he; and *even* to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.

This is the Lord's word to his spiritual Israel today as certain as it was to his true Israel in the midst of Israel in Isaiah's day. He says to all his blood bought, regenerated children of grace, to his remnant according to the election of grace...HEARKEN UNTO ME!

The only way any sinner here will heed this command is by God speaking this word in power into our hearts. May the Spirit of God come now and speaks this in his irresistible power right here, right now—**Hearken unto God.**

There are many voices we heed that cannot profit us. You and I who have been called by his grace are so prone to hearken to that which we ought to give no regard.

Our adversary would love for us to hearken to him so he can beguile us like he did Eve—*whom resist steadfast in the faith—hearken unto me!* The old man of our flesh has his voice of temptation--*hearken to the voice of our God.* The heavy trials and the weights that come with these shipwreck bodies have great voices of discouragement—but God says to you born of his grace, "***Hearken unto me, [my dear child—you] are borne by me from the belly, I made you—you didn't make me...carried from the womb:*** they have to carry their idols, but God says you haven't carried me, I have carried you from the womb. ***And even to your old age I AM HE; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you...***

I. OUR GOD IS THE ETERNAL, UNCHANAGEABLE JEHOVAH--"I AM HE."—"I carried you from the womb; And even to your old age I AM HE; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you..."

I went home to see some of the old things I remember most, but I couldn't find them—everything had changed—the log cabin.

Our God changes not. As he was the first moment he opened our eyes and hearts to behold his glory in the face of Christ Jesus so he is now.

Malachi 3: 6: For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

At times our hearts are ablaze with zeal for him but even when we are smoking flax but our heavenly Father is the same in his love and grace--the same in his affections and care. When your children waver and try our patience our love for them does not change?

Matthew 7: 11: If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven...

Though our weary steps may falter—he is same in his power and protection; in his promises and truth, in his faithfulness to his people. He promised us...

Hebrews 6:18; That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us

Hebrews 13: 8: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

II. I HAVE MADE YOU—you are borne *by me* from the belly,...carried from the womb...

Those of you who have not trusted in God our Savior, your confidence was born of you, you made it. And it will go to the dust when you go to the dust then you will face God without an Advocate. Yet, even naturally speaking, you were born of God from your mother's womb. He has carried you thus far. **He says, Harken unto me!**

Those here who are born of him spiritually, you were born in his purpose of grace, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

The elect child of God is like Israel who was born in the purpose of God when as yet none of them were formed so are his spiritual Israel.

When Christ descended into the lowest parts of the earth—in the womb of the virgin—even then all his children were in him.

Psalm 139: 16: Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all *my members* were written, *which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them.

Through all our days of rebellion, he carried us, when as yet we did not even know he was doing so. Just *as he suffered Israel's manners in the wilderness*, he was longsuffering to us—not willing that any of his elect child should perish till he brought us to repentance.

Isaiah 63: 9: In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

Deuteronomy 1: 31: And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place.

He brought us to hear his gospel and made us a new creation, created in righteousness and true holiness—HE SAYS “I HAVE MADE YOU”--made you a new creation---“made partakers of...spiritual things,”

Hebrews 3: 14: For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

Isaiah 43: 21: This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

Brethren, we can't unmake what God has made!

III. AND I WILL BEAR, EVEN I WILL CARRY YOU

When the Spirit of God regenerated us, he made us to see just how real Christ bore us and carried us.

Isaiah 53: 4: Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5: But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed....1 Peter 2: 24: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Even to your old age I AM HE; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you...When these bodies are old and wrinkled or racked with sickness still WITH HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED. **We have been** made the righteousness of God in Christ: justified, sanctified, washed, complete.

Deuteronomy 33: 27: The eternal God *is thy* refuge, and underneath *are* the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy *them*.

Every poor sinner here who is yet without Christ is under the weight of guilt. You must carry your idols—they don't carry you. You are under the burden of the law, but Christ says,

Matthew 11: 28: Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29: Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

The great Shepherd of the sheep...

Isaiah 40: 11: He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.

He keeps and nourishes his babes with the sincere milk of the word, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem."

Do you see how much better the true and living God is than any idol?

Isaiah 45: 21:...there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. 22: Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

Isaiah 46: 3: Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb: 4: And *even to your old age I am* he; and *even to hoar hairs will I carry you*: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry,...and will deliver *you*.

IV. He saves the best for last...AND WILL DELIVER YOU (Col 1: 13)

For every believer here...already...our gracious Father

Col 1:13: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

As he carries us from the womb to old age...so often we have the sentence of death in ourselves, as Paul said, "that we might not trust in ourselves but in God who raiseth the dead:"

2 Corinthians 1: 10: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver *us*;

- Out of all affliction, out of all temptations
- Out of the hand of every enemy
- From this body of sin and death
- From death eternal, and wrath to come
- At last from the grave and all corruption.
- And at last he will deliver us into something

Revelation 21: 1: And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. 6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Our unchanging God and Savior says, Hearken unto me! The next time all these distracting voices are trying to turn me aside, I believe I will just hearken unto his voice! How about you?

Psalm 73: 26: My flesh and my heart faileth: *but* God *is* the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Psalm 48: 14: For this God *is* our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide *even* unto death.

Amen!