

**The Weekly Word**  
October 29 – Nov 4, 2018

Isaiah continues to speak to us this week. Happy reading...  
Grace and Peace, Bill

To hear the Bible read click this link... <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>.

**Monday, October 29: Isaiah 42- The Lord suffers no rivals ...**

Verse 8 arrested my attention. *"I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols.*

I know elsewhere in the Bible God says that He is a jealous God which is similar to what verse 8 says. Still verse 8 stopped me in my tracks.

*I will not yield my glory to another...* That is a strong statement. I keep rolling around in my thoughts the words *I will not yield...* An absolute definitive statement.

The Lord suffers no rivals. God will not allow anyone to pretend to His throne!

Subsequently, this means that I best not allow anyone or anything to rival the Lord in my own life. I need to keep focused on the Lord and not let my heart to run after other gods.

*God, thank You for this word. Thank You for this reminder. Lord, give me Your strength to keep my eyes glued on You and You alone as Lord and God and Savior. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen*

**Tuesday, October 30: Isaiah 43- God is with me forever and always...**

In a word to Israel I found my devotional spot. In a word to Israel I found a meditation treasure. *But now, this is what the LORD says— he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead (1-3).*

As a human being God formed me and as a disciple of Jesus, God redeemed me, so my heart receives this as a word speaking to me.

As I was writing the last line, I felt God prompt me to send these verses to a friend who is going through a difficult time. So I did that right away. (I know myself and if I don't do it soon, I forget things as life moves on...). I don't know if/how this might speak to my friend; I leave that in God's hands.

Oh, what comfort these words bring to me. God is with me forever and always. And this is exactly what Jesus promised in the end of Matthew's Gospel when He said, "And I will be with you always to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

*Lord God, I am so blessed to not walk this life alone, to have You always by my side, leading, guiding, directing, protecting, caring and loving. Thank You, Lord God. I take a moment to pray for people who don't know You. How lonely life can feel... please open their eyes to You. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**Wednesday, October 31: Isaiah 44- God alone...**

The heart of this chapter is a declaration by God that He alone is God. As part of God's call to Israel, God challenges the efficacy of idols by illustrating their origins. Here is a snippet of God's challenge. *They [idols] know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand. No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, "Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?" Such a person feeds on ashes; a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, "Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?"* (18-20).

What an illustration. How can you make an idol out of a piece of wood and then use the leftover wood to cook your meal or warm your camp? Do you really think that fashioned piece of wood has spiritual power? God mocks Israel for believing so and calls them back home to Him, the one true God.

Today the idols I am tempted to trust in are not statues of wood or stone (although in parts of the world such temptations still exist). What I am tempted to trust in is my education, my bank & retirement accounts, modern medicine, and other trappings of upper-middle class American life. Mind you, none of the middle class American life blessings I mentioned are bad in and of themselves. However, when they become my trust, and my go-to for protection, they become my god because they command the majority of my attention, then I am flirting with danger.

Jesus reminds us, *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*** (Matthew 6:19-21).

God invites us to treasure Him, to think on Him, to love and trust in Him...

*Lord God, be the center of my life. Be my first thought of the day and my last thought at night. Guide me and lead me until you take me home to be with You forever. Through Jesus Christ, my Lord, I pray. Amen.*

#### **Thursday, November 1: Isaiah 45- God is in charge now and forever...**

I love the fact that this chapter opens with reference to Cyrus, who in round numbers lived 150 years after Isaiah. God is so good announcing to Israel that Cyrus will be used by God for the sake of His people Israel.

It was a few verses after the opening that I found my words for today. Still referencing Cyrus named in verse 1, verses 4-7 read: *For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen, I summon you by name and bestow on you a title of honor, though you do not acknowledge me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me, so that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting people may know there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things.*

God is working on behalf of Israel so that the world will know that the Lord is God. God is determined to show the world that He exists and that He is in charge and that He is the one God above all gods.

I take such comfort in this. In a world filled with idols and demons and god-substitutes and false gods, the Lord God, Jehovah, fully revealed in the New Testament as Trinity, one God in three persons, The Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit stands alone above the fray of imposters. And this God can even use unbelieving kings for His glory. How good is that!

I sit today reveling and revering the Lord God –Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit. Thanking Him for His word in Isaiah and blessing Him for sending Jesus to be the atoning sacrifice for all who believe.

*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation. Oh, my soul praise Him for He is my help and salvation... Bless You Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit. Bless You. Through Jesus Christ, my Lord, I pray. Amen.*

### **Friday, November 2: Isaiah 46- The bellowing call of God...**

The Lord is relentless in His pursuit of His people. God will not give up. He calls and calls to Israel His beloved.

In His call God reminds them who He is...

*“Remember this, keep it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels. Remember the former things, those of long ago; 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, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, ‘My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.’ From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that I will bring about; what I have planned, that I will do (8-11).*

Even though they are presently rebellious God calls to them and offers them salvation...

*Listen to me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are now far from my righteousness. I am bringing my righteousness near, it is not far away; and my salvation will not be delayed. I will grant salvation to Zion, my splendor to Israel (12-13).*

I hear in God’s call to Israel, His constant call to me and to all who follow Him. Even when you stray, I will save you. Turn to Me, come back to Me when you wander, I am there for you. I love You and will always love You.

A word of hope for people who wander and stray from the Lord.

As I sit this morning, I feel God beckoning. “Come to Me, stay with Me.” Although I don’t feel far from the Lord at this moment, God is calling me to an ever and ever closer relationship and connection.

*Lord, I am grateful that You are always there and always calling me closer. I love You, Lord, and I am ever thankful that You continually reach out to me. I pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.*

### **Saturday, November 3: Isaiah 47- A warning God knows, God sees...**

God drops a scathing rebuke and word of judgment on Babylon who will be God’s rod of correction for Judah.

As I sat and read I marveled that Isaiah, inspired by the Lord, wrote these words 150 or so years before they happened. God knows, God sees. I marveled at the Lord God Almighty above and beyond time, seeing all.

Then I checked, ancient Babylon is modern day Iraq. That once great and proud civilization has never risen again to world prominence. Disaster did come upon them as God said (11) and they never recovered.

As I was writing the above I began to understand this chapter as a warning. What God says will happen, happens, so when God says judgment will come, it will come. And when God’s judgment comes, which it will, people not under the umbrella of protection afforded by the atoning work of Jesus, will face the wrath of God.

*Thank you, Lord God, for opening my eyes to Jesus and moving me to confess Jesus as Lord. I pray that You would help me be an agent in this world, sharing Your love and Gospel with others so that they have an opportunity to confess You as Lord, as well. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

## **Sunday, November 4, 2018, Sunday Worship**

*If any of my thoughts or the Bible readings spark questions send an email reply and I will do my best to answer all questions from people on the list... I will answer personal questions privately; general questions will be answered in a subsequent email installment.*

*If you are reading along with me from the PCOG website you can send questions or request being placed on the weekly email list by emailing Lisa at [office@pcogonline.org](mailto:office@pcogonline.org).*

Click here for a link to my sermons on the web. Sermons are generally posted within 2 days.