

# Isaiah Chapters 46 & 47 – Dead Idols and the Living God; The Humiliation of Babylon!

## OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 112 (1st floor, backside of the High School, facing Mac Arthur, near the east corner, adjacent to the High School office), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – [Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com); email – [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com) For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: [www.ptwente.com](http://www.ptwente.com) Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

## INTERPRETATION

## APPLICATION

### **THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU – Michael W. Smith (Isaiah 40:18, 25; 46:5)**

*There is none like You. No one else can touch my heart like You do. I could search for all eternity long and find, there is none like You. (3)*

*I could search For all eternity long And find There is none like You*

### **GENERAL OUTLINE OF ISAIAH: Referred to as the “Fifth Gospel” since the third century!**

*Possible date of kings reign” - Uzziah, - 792-740; Jotham, - 750-736; Ahaz, - 735-720 Northern Kingdom of Israel falls to Assyria in 722BC; Hezekiah, - 715-699/686; Manasseh – 687-642*

*Isaiah’s time of prophecy - About a minimum of 40 years and possibly more than 60 years!*

*In the tenth year of Nabopolassar (616 BC) the Babylonians defeated the Assyrian army.*

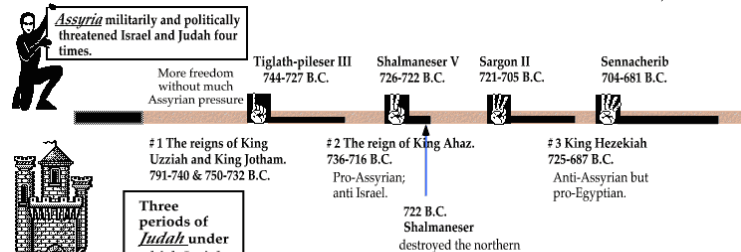
*Cyrus takes Babylon. In October (539 BC), the Persian king Cyrus took Babylon.*

### **ISAIAH 40:1-66:24**

*The prophecies of chapters 1-39 addressed Judah in her situation during Isaiah's ministry (739 B.C. until c. 686 B.C.). The prophecies of chapters 40-66 address Judah as though the prophesied Babylonian captivity (Isa 39:5-7) were already a present reality, though that captivity did not begin until 605-586 B.C. The words "There is no peace," says the Lord, 'for the wicked'" (Isa 48:22; Isa 57:21) signal the divisions of this section into three parts: chapters 40-48 (Comfort of Jehovah), chapters 49-57 (Salvation of Jehovah) and chapters 58-66 (Glory of Jehovah).*

*Four Messianic Prophecies-Songs of the Suffering Servant: #1 Chapter 42:1-9 -Servant of Jehovah-Jesus; #2 Chapter 49:1-13-Servant of God; Savior of the World; #3 Chapter 50:4-9-Jehovah Adonai-Humility of Rejected Prophet; #4 Chapter 52:13-53:12-Suffering Servant-Jehovah’s Servant-Sin Bearer.*

- I. THE ASSYRIAN PERIOD - CONFLICT AND VICTORY (Isa 1-39)
  - A. PROPHECIES CONCERNING JUDAH AND JERUSALEM (Isa 1-12)
  - B. PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE NATIONS (Isa 13-27)
  - C. DELIVERANCE FOUND NOT IN EGYPT, BUT IN THE LORD (Isa 28-35)
  - D. HISTORICAL INTERLUDE (Isa 36-39)
- II. THE BABYLONIAN PERIOD - HOPE FOR TROUBLED TIMES (Isa 40-66)
  - A. THE ONE TRUE GOD VERSUS IDOLS (Isa 40-48)
  - B. LORD'S SERVANT WILL BRING SALVATION THROUGH SUFFERING (Isa 49-57)
  - C. THE FUTURE GLORY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE, THE NEW ZION (Isa 58-66)



### **Isaiah – Bible Timeline**

739 BC	Isaiah Complains of Zion's Corruption	<a href="#">Isaiah 1 - 5</a>
739 BC	Isaiah's Vision and Commission	<a href="#">Isaiah 6</a>
735 BC	Isaiah's Prophecy of Immanuel	<a href="#">Isaiah 7</a>
734 BC	Uriah/Zechariah Verification	<a href="#">Isaiah 8</a>
730 BC	Isaiah Prophesies a Child Is Born	<a href="#">Isaiah 9</a>
730 BC	Isaiah Prophesies Judgments Upon Israel	<a href="#">Isaiah 9:8</a>
730 BC	Isaiah Prophesies Judgment on Assyria	<a href="#">Isaiah 10</a>
730 BC	Isaiah Prophesies The Root of Jesse	<a href="#">Isaiah 11</a>
730 BC	Isaiah's Joyful Thanksgiving	<a href="#">Isaiah 12</a>
725 BC	Isaiah Prophesies against the Nations	<a href="#">Isaiah 13 - 22</a>
725 BC	Isaiah's Valley of Vision	<a href="#">Isaiah 22</a>
725 BC	Isaiah's Burden of Tyre	<a href="#">Isaiah 23</a>
725 BC	Devastation on the Earth	<a href="#">Isaiah 24</a>
725 BC	Isaiah's Songs of Praise	<a href="#">Isaiah 25 - 27</a>
725 BC	Isaiah's Further Warnings	<a href="#">Isaiah 28 - 32</a>
725 BC	Isaiah Prophesies a King Shall Reign	<a href="#">Isaiah 32</a>
725 BC	Isaiah Declares God's Judgments	<a href="#">Isaiah 33, 34</a>
725 BC	Isaiah Declares the Joyful Will Flourish in Zion	<a href="#">Isaiah 35</a>
712 BC	Hezekiah's Illness and Healing	<a href="#">2 Kings 20, Isaiah 38</a>
711 BC	Hezekiah Shows Treasures	<a href="#">2 Kings 20:12, Isaiah 39</a>
711 BC	<b>Isaiah Prophesies Captivity and Restoration</b>	<a href="#">Isaiah 40 - 66</a>
701 BC	Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem	<a href="#">2 Kings 18, Isaiah 36, 2 Chron. 32</a>
701 BC	Hezekiah's Prayer	<a href="#">2 Kings 19, Isaiah 37</a>

## Isaiah Chapters 46 & 47 – Dead Idols and the Living God; The Humiliation of Babylon!

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### INTERPRETATION

### APPLICATION

#### The Idols of Babylon and the One True God

##### **CARRIED GODS**

**Isa 46:1** Bel (power, lord, master) bows down, Nebo (wisdom, the lofty one) stoops; Their idols were on the beasts and on the cattle. Your carriages were heavily loaded, A burden to the weary beast.  
**Isa 46:2** They stoop, they bow down together; They could not deliver the burden, But have themselves gone into captivity.

##### **THE GOD WHO CARRIES**

**Isa 46:3** "Listen to Me, O house of Jacob, And all the remnant of the house of Israel, Who have been upheld by Me from birth, Who have been carried from the womb:  
**Isa 46:4** Even to your old age, I am He, And even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; Even I will carry, and will deliver you.

**Isa 46:5** "To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal And compare Me, that we should be alike?

**Isa 46:6** They lavish gold out of the bag, And weigh silver on the scales; They hire a goldsmith, and he makes it a god; They prostrate themselves, yes, they worship.

**Isa 46:7** They bear it on the shoulder, they carry it And set it in its place, and it stands; From its place it shall not move. Though one cries out to it, yet it cannot answer Nor save him out of his trouble.

#### Chapter 46 - The LORD continues the theme of this section – THE FOLLY OF IDOLATRY

**vs. 1-2** The idols of the nations are carried into captivity. Bel bows down, Nebo stoops: picturing the gods of the great Babylon stooping low in humiliation. Bel and Nebo were names of two false gods the idol-worshipping nations served. It is as if now God gets personal, “naming names” when it comes to idols; and now these false gods are brought low. The names of the pagan gods Bel Lord or master) and Nebo (the lofty one) are familiar to us in the names Belshazzar (master protect the king - It’s a recognition that a man’s god is his master, or his Lord.) and Nebuchadnezzar (may the lofty one protect our borders). Your idols were on the beasts and on the cattle. Your carriages were heavily loaded: Isaiah pictures God’s people going into captivity, in a forced relocation. Loaded on to their beasts and carriages are their idols - even their idols are carried away into captivity, and loaded on the moving trucks! The bottom line is they could not deliver the burden, but have themselves gone into captivity. (Babylon was conquered in 539B.C. by Cyrus of the Medo-Persian Empire)

**vs. 3-4** The LORD, the true God, will carry His people. Who have been upheld by Me from birth, who have been carried from the womb: The false gods represented by dumb dead idols must be carried; but God carries His people. He carried them from before their birth, and He promises to continue to carry them (even to gray hairs I will carry you!). I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry: This is the same Fatherly care Jesus spoke of in Luk 12:6-7 : Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. When we understand that has made us, and we are valuable to Him, then we can trust Him to carry us.

**vs. 5-7** Who is like Me? The LORD can save His people when the idols are helpless. They lavish gold out of the bag: Much money and attention is given to the production and care of our idols. Yet, though one cries out to it, yet it cannot answer nor save him out of his trouble. Isaiah again exposes the ironic folly of idolatry. They bear it on the shoulder, they carry it. God has just said He has and will carry them, but here we see you have to carry him! A god you have to carry is worthless! It cannot answer you! It cannot save you out of your trouble!

**vs. 1-3** Do you have to carry your gods, or does your God carry you? Do you think God needs us to carry Him or to think for Him – to give Him wisdom?

**vs. 3-4** There are two times in life when we really need to be carried, at the time of our birth and when we near death. But really God has maintained us and carried us all the way along – even to your gray hair, all through this life, right into heaven!! He is the only One who can do that!!

**vs. 5-7** To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal And compare Me, that we should be alike? It is so foolish to make or worship something, which is always so much less than our God! No other god can save him out of his trouble. He gives us His Holy Spirit to do all things – all beyond what any other gods or idols could ever do!

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### INTERPRETATION

### APPLICATION

Isa 46:8 "Remember this, and show yourselves men; Recall to mind, O you transgressors. Isa 46:9 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Isa 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure.'

Isa 46:11 Calling a bird of prey from the east (Cyrus), The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it. Isa 46:12 "Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, Who are far from righteousness: Isa 46:13 I bring My righteousness near, it shall not be far off; My salvation shall not linger. And I will place salvation in Zion, For Israel My glory.

vs. 8-10 Remember that the LORD knows the beginning and the end. *Remember this, and show yourselves men:* We can gain the courage of *men* when we *remember* the things God tells us to remember. How much defeat we suffer in the Christian life through simply *forgetting!* *Remember the former things of old . . . there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning:* God knows the *end* of every matter, of every course of circumstances, just as clearly as anyone else can see the *beginning* of it. *Saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure."* God knows the end from the beginning because He is much more than a passive observer of events. His *counsel shall stand*. His works and plans never fail, because He *will do all His pleasure*. God isn't just *watching* the entire parade of history, He is *directing* the parade. The essential point is that God's people must *remember* this about the LORD - that He knows the end from the beginning, and is in control over all things. When we *remember this*, we will *show yourselves men*. We can have tremendous courage in our God when we understand and remember who He is and what He does.

vs. 11-13 Remember that the LORD will bring a deliverer to Zion. *Calling a bird of prey from the east, the man who executes My counsel:* This is another reference to Cyrus. God's people need to remember that God always has a deliverer for His people, even if He has to find one among pagan kings! *My salvation shall not linger:* God's people need to remember that God's timing is always precise and wise. When we are *stubborn-hearted* we need to *listen* to the LORD and remember He never delays and is never late. God's always has His deliverer, and always knows exactly when to bring His deliverance. *Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, Who are far from righteousness: Hear with intent to do it, you hard hearted, who are far from Biblical righteousness! Rom. 11:1*

vs. 8-10 Our God is reminding us over and over again in this section of Isaiah that He is unique in everything! He the One and Only True God! He demonstrates His uniqueness to His people by prophesying in advance of things to come, so that when they do later occur with 100% accuracy, we will know and believe the Bible more than any other book! He is a marvelous God! He is not just a spectator watching the future unfold, He is directing the whole thing!

vs. 11-13 God brings up the current prophecy of Judah, being brought into captivity for seventy years by Babylon, more than 100 years future. God had said that He would raise up Cyrus and deliver Judah from their Babylonian captivity. We can read of the accuracy of this prophecy in our history books. *God says listen to Me. I will bring my righteousness near; My salvation will not linger and I will do all My pleasure,' yes, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it* How aware are we of God's use of prophecy in demonstrating His uniqueness and the proof that the Bible is so completely accurate? God's counsel shall stand!

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### INTERPRETATION

### APPLICATION

*The Humiliation of Babylon (Isaiah 13-14; Jeremiah 50-51; Revelation 17-18)*

*Isa 47:1 "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; Sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called Tender and delicate."*

*Isa 47:2 Take the millstones and grind meal. Remove your veil, Take off the skirt, Uncover the thigh, Pass through the rivers.*

*Isa 47:3 Your nakedness shall be uncovered, Yes, your shame will be seen; I will take vengeance, And I will not arbitrate with a man."*

*Isa 47:4 As for our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is His name, The Holy One of Israel.*

*Isa 47:5 "Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; For you shall no longer be called The Lady of Kingdoms.*

*Isa 47:6 I was angry with My people; I have profaned My inheritance, And given them into your hand. You showed them no mercy; On the elderly you laid your yoke very heavily.*

*Isa 47:7 And you said, 'I shall be a lady forever,' So that you did not take these things to heart, Nor remember the latter end of them.*

Chapter 47 - God speaks about the judgment that He is going to bring on Babylon in humbling them. They are going to be brought down! Remember Babylon is not yet a world power at this time. It will be about 150-175 years before that happens! It is believed this prophecy is around 711B.C.; Babylon was conquered around 539 B.C. vs. 1-3 The humiliation of Babylon - Babylon, represented as a woman, is humbled. *Come down and sit in the dust:* Isaiah pictures proud Babylon as a humiliated woman, who shall no more be called tender and delicate. She is stripped of her fine clothing, and is forced to march in a forced relocation (pass through the rivers). The picture here of Babylon is as a rich, frivolous and sensual young woman who is doomed to the despicable state of a slave and in every respect is treated like a Near-Eastern slave woman." *I will take vengeance, and I will not arbitrate with a man:* The humiliation God will impose on Babylon is exactly the humiliation she put upon Judah and Jerusalem. When God humbles Babylon, He is taking vengeance and cannot be talked out of His judgment.

v. 4 The LORD of hosts is glorified. *As for our Redeemer (gaal):* Seemingly, Isaiah cannot help himself - when he sees how God will take vengeance on this enemy of God's people, he praises God and boasts in His redeemer. In the original, this is *gaal*. **A *gaal* had to be a close relative.** Christ is pictured here, for in His humanity He came forth from the Jews. **A *gaal* had to be able to deliver.** The **Holy One of Israel does not lack this ability.** Sometimes a *gaal* had to exercise bloody vengeance. Christ will work bloody vengeance upon Babylon for its oppression of His people. Frequently a *gaal* had to pay a ransom to free a prisoner. The Lord Jesus paid with his blood on Golgotha to ransom His people. On the basis of these considerations, to which could be added many more, it is evident that the name *Gaal* is very fitting for the Savior.

vs. 5-7 Why God will humble Babylon. *I was angry with My people:* Babylon thought that she conquered Judah and Jerusalem through her own power. But Babylon didn't see that she really conquered them because God was angry with His people, and therefore used Babylon as an instrument of His work. God says, "You didn't know that I had given them into your hand." *You showed them no mercy:* As an instrument in God's hand, Babylon was too enthusiastic in their attack on God's people. Even though God allowed it and used it, they still should have showed mercy to God's people. We are always safe when we take the path of mercy! *And you said, "I shall be a lady forever."* Babylon was blind, Babylon was cruel, and now Babylon is shown to be proud and presumptuous. For all these reasons, God promises to humble Babylon. This picture of proud, blind Babylon can also be applied the corrupt Church, who claims royal riches, power and honor for herself forever. A queen feels she must reign, and that was also the Church's goal even from its early years. Soon it placed a cross on its steeple instead of on its shoulders. With all its veneration of the cross, it hated the cross in a spiritual sense and reached for the crown of the world.

vs. 1-3 Babylon is represented as a female in deep distress. She was to be degraded and endure sufferings; and is represented as grinding at the hand mill, the lowest and most laborious service. God was righteous in His vengeance, and none should interpose. God used Babylon to humble Judah. They overstepped the task given them, so now God judges them. When we are used by God, we must be careful only to do what He gives us to do!

v. 4 The prophet exults in the Lord of hosts, as the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel. How thankful and grateful we should be for our *gaal* – Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ!

vs. 5-7 God often permits wicked men to prevail against his people; but those who cruelly oppress them will be punished. What a lesson here for us on how to love and treat one another!

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### INTERPRETATION

### APPLICATION

*Isa 47:8 "Therefore hear this now, you who are given to pleasures, Who dwell securely, Who say in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, Nor shall I know the loss of children'; Isa 47:9 But these two things shall come to you In a moment, in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness Because of the multitude of your sorceries, For the great abundance of your enchantments.*

*Isa 47:10 "For you have trusted in your wickedness; You have said, 'No one sees me'; Your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you; And you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me.' Isa 47:11 Therefore evil shall come upon you; You shall not know from where it arises. And trouble shall fall upon you; You will not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly, Which you shall not know.*

vs. 8-9 The rebuke of Babylon - Why sudden humiliation comes to Babylon. *Hear this now, you who are given to pleasures, who dwell securely*: In the midst of her pride and arrogance (*I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow*). God brings another charge against Babylon. Judgment also comes because of the multitude of your sorceries, for the great abundance of your enchantments. Babylon was famous as a founding place and breeding ground for occultic arts and practices.

vs. 10-11 The pride and arrogance of Babylon is rebuked. *You have trusted in your wickedness*: This is a searching insight into the heart of the proud sinner. They trust in their continuing wickedness to cover the tracks of their previous sin. They are clever, but their wisdom in wickedness has warped them (Your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you). *Therefore evil shall come upon you*: And it did for Babylon, which was suddenly conquered in one night, when they believed all was safe and secure (as recorded in Daniel 5).

vs. 8-9 God rebukes Babylon for their being given over to pleasure, pride, arrogancy, their sorceries, and enchantments. The form of rebuke/judgment is to be the loss of children and husbands (widowhood). We also need to avoid what Babylon did!

vs. 10-11 The rebuke of Babylon's pride is a simple fulfillment of a principle repeated three times in the Scripture: *God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. (Pro\_3:34, Jas\_4:6, 1Pe\_5:5).*

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### INTERPRETATION

### APPLICATION

*Isa 47:12 "Stand now with your enchantments And the multitude of your sorceries, In which you have labored from your youth—Perhaps you will be able to profit, Perhaps you will prevail.*

*Isa 47:13 You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, And the monthly prognosticators Stand up and save you From what shall come upon you.*

*Isa 47:14 Behold, they shall be as stubble, The fire shall burn them; They shall not deliver themselves From the power of the flame; It shall not be a coal to be warmed by, Nor a fire to sit before!*

*Isa 47:15 Thus shall they be to you With whom you have labored, Your merchants from your youth; They shall wander each one to his quarter. No one shall save you.*

*vs. 12-15 Stand now with your enchantments and the multitude of your sorceries:* God challenges the sorcerers of Babylon to save them from His judgment. After all, if they have real spiritual power, they should be able to. But their weakness in the face of the LORD’s judgment will be exposed. The Babylonian sorcery also included complacency. The people relied on their magicians to predict the coming of the enemy and to defeat him. In Babylonia the intellectual and the magical were intertwined, the wise man being instructed in all the arts of the supernatural. ***Behold, they shall be as stubble, the fire shall burn them:*** Not only can the sorcerers of Babylon not deliver others from God’s judgment, they can’t even deliver themselves. The fire of judgment that comes upon them will be severe; it will not be a coal to be warmed by, nor a fire to sit before! False religion seems to offer the warmth of helpfulness, but it is not a fire to sit by, rather a fire of destruction. How many greatly underestimate the blazing strength of God’s judgment! We see the same tragic thinking among those who say, “I won’t mind going to hell. I’ll party there with all my friends!” Some have even said that they will ski on the lake of fire! They think the fires of judgment will somehow be useful or comforting, but they are making a deadly mistake. Can there be a more dangerous sin? ***No one shall save you:*** What a final sentence! And if we will not find our salvation in the LORD; if we will not look to Him and be saved, then certainly no one shall save you. *Eze. 28:16,18*

*vs. 12-15* God challenges Babylon on their practice and belief in sorcery as well as their complacency. They through their magicians could be used to defeat their enemies. God says these things *shall be as stubble, the fire shall burn them.* The sorcerers could not only deliver Babylon, they could not even delivery themselves! ***The fire shall burn them! How many so underestimate the blazing power and strength of God’s judgment. No one shall save you! Jer 8:20 "The harvest is past, The summer is ended, And we are not saved!" How tragic! May we share truth in love to all unbelievers the LORD put in our path!***