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EXCERPTS OF ISAIAH'S EXPOSITION OF GOD'S GREATNESS

Intro: I have just been reading through Isaiah and noticed how the Lord gives an expose of His greatness and the total foolishness of idolatry. So many people today want to bring God down to their level. Doing so is the essence of idolatry.

This morning I want to briefly go over the Lord's declaration of Himself through Isaiah. The problem we have today is just as it was in previous days and generations. People have no idea just who the Lord is.

We may think we are more advanced spiritually to get involved in actual idolatry that is making wooden or metal icons and falling down and worshipping them? This is not the case, in many respects we are more idolatrous than they are. Our idols are fabricated in our minds and on computers. We write our own Bibles with our vain philosophies and ideas. We laud these ideas as facts when they are nothing more than fabricated files with the word science added to them.

CONSIDER GOD'S GREATNESS VERSES OUR IDOLS

I. Isaiah Exposes The Foolishness Of Idolatry Verses True Worship

Isaiah 44:9 They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.

Isaiah 44:10 Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing?

Isaiah 44:11 Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together.

Isaiah 44:12 The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.

Isaiah 44:13 The carpenter stretcheth out his rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house.

Isaiah 44:14 He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it.

Isaiah 44:15 Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto.

Isaiah 44:16 He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire:

Isaiah 44:17 And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god.

Isaiah 44:18 They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand.

Isaiah 44:19 And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?

Isaiah 44:20 He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

Isaiah 44:21 Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

Isaiah 44:22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

Isaiah 44:23 Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

Isaiah 44:24 Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

Isaiah 44:25 That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish;

1. THE FOOLISHNESS OF IDOLATRY IS EXPOSED BY THE WORTHLESSNESS OF MAN'S VAIN RELIGIONS.

The Lord says think about what you are trusting in.

You take a tree that you planted,
You chop down the tree with your ax.
You burn part of it in the fire and then take some of the wood and make a god?
What Kind of God is that?

Are we any better?

We fabricate lies about where we came from.
We imagine a world that has evolved over millions of years.
We conjure up ideas and a whole complicated system made up of man.

Then we spend up our resources serving this imaginary system.
Our nation goes into debt trying to support these vain ideas.
We regulate our industry and economy according to these vain ideas.

With no proof.
With no tangible evidence.

Which is worse, the man who takes a tree and burns part of it and then takes a part and engraves a God,

Or modern men who with their minds engrave an intricate system of evolution that is made up by our so called intellectual gurus?

This is non other than the religion of humanism, where man's ideas and learning reigns supreme.

How can a piece of wood save us, or do us any good to worship?
How can the feeble ideas of men save us or guide us?

Go ahead, the Lord says, worship that piece of wood. Do you think it will do you any good? Pray to that wood, will it change anything? Who made that wood? A man made it. Will you worship it?

Who made up this intricate and vain philosophy of evolution and humanism? Men invented it. Will you be guided by men?

2. BE NOT DECEIVED MAN'S PHILOSOPHIES AND VAIN IDEAS ARE WORTHLESS!

Think about the foolishness of Idolatry. Can a god that you fabricate do anything to help or save you or deliver you or help you? NO NO NO NO

How much less can vain ideas help you or do you any good?

What you believe effects your life. If you believe that you are a by product of chance, evolution, then everything is left up in air. Morality is evolving, family structure is evolving, ethics are changing, right and wrong are a drift.

Just like the man who took the ax and carved his own God.
Modern man has engraved a God with his pen in books of learning.
Will you trust in the wisdom of men to guide you? Will you trust in a God carved of men to guide you? Both are foolish. Both are vain. Both will lead you to destruction.

II. Isaiah Shows The Practical Power And Wisdom Of the True God.

But now let us look at the true God and His power.

Isaiah 44:26 That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof:

Isaiah 44:27 That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:

Isaiah 44:28 That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Isaiah 45:1 Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

Isaiah 45:2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

Isaiah 45:3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.

Isaiah 45:4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

Isaiah 45:5 I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

Isaiah 45:6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.

Isaiah 45:8 Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it.

Look at what God has done and is doing.

1. HE SETS UP LEADERS AS HE CHOOSES:

Cyrus is a perfect example. Isaiah wrote this about Cyrus over a hundred years before he was born.

What many people do not realize in reading Isaiah 44:28ff is that this heathen ruler was named by the prophet long before the monarch was even born. Isaiah prophesied in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (1:1). His ministry thus occurred in the latter portion of the eighth century B.C. (ca. 740 - 701 B.C.). This was some one hundred fifty years before Cyrus came to the throne!

Notice the Lord says,

Isaiah 45:4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

Isaiah 45:5 I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

I called you by name before you ever knew me!

Today people would tell the Lord, there should be a separation of church and state and God should not inter meddle with politics.

Ever notice God got involved in the affairs of men and has so from the beginning of time?

God intervened when the powers of the world got too corrupt in the days of Noah.

When the political leaders of the world got together at the tower of babel God out voted them and destroyed their greatest building project.

God disrupted Egypt and got involved to get Israel out of the land.

We are reading the history of Israel in Sunday School and learning how God worked throughout the history of Israel.

What makes you think now God is not interested in intervening in America! Just because our politicians don't want it!

I hear people criticizing me for giving opinions concerning politics.

When politicians start legislating things contrary to the Bible it is time to speak up and say something. We have come a long way the wrong way in our nation today and the church and Christians have let it happen.

You hear people say, I do not discuss religion or politics. How stupid is that? Religion determines your eternal habitation, and politics determines the physical habitation. What two subjects are more important in life?

The Spiritual should influence the physical and not the other way around.

I Timothy 4:8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

III. Isaiah Exposes The Discontentment Of Idolaters.

Isaiah 45:9 Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

Isaiah 45:10 Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?

What happens to a people who reject God as their creator?

These people become discontent in the way God made them. They strive with their maker.

This is what we see going on today. Men thinking they are a woman trapped in a man's body. Women wanting to be men.

We are reaping confusion. Now women are complaining about men who are competing in sports as women. Again confusion.

Our society is in a state of confusion because man's religion of humanism brings chaos and confusion into our world and society.

We are living in a world where people are constantly striving with their maker

Isaiah 45:9 Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

Isaiah 45:10 Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?

IV. Isaiah Shows How God Wants Sinful Man To Come To Him.

Isaiah 45:11 Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.

Isaiah 45:12 I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

Isaiah 45:13 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 45:14 Thus saith the LORD, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God.

Isaiah 45:15 Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

Isaiah 45:16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols.

Isaiah 45:17 But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

Isaiah 45:18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.

Isaiah 45:19 I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

Isaiah 45:20 Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save.

Isaiah 45:21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.

Isaiah 45:22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

Isaiah 45:23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

Isaiah shows how God wants men to be saved and come to him:

Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

God wants people to be saved, He is striving to bring men to Himself. God even wants to be able to bless us, The problem is our sinful ways.

DEU 5:29 O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!