

**CALVARY PANDAN
BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 44

ISAIAH

CHAPTER 44

Theme: "Take Heart and Trust in the LORD!"

THEME VERSE

Isaiah 44:22-23 (KJV) "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. 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."

INTRODUCTION

Trust in the LORD will remove all fears. It is not just a matter of a general trust in the LORD but a very specific way to trust in the LORD that counts. It is to trust in His manifold promises regarding God's people, Israel. This requires faith on the part of God's people. It is no wonder that the LORD has to declare to us that without faith it is impossible to please Him (cf. Hebrews 11:6). Also the LORD added that anything that is not done in faith is sin (cf. Romans 14:23). It is an insult to God if His children chooses not believe

in Him even after having been told of what the LORD had done in the past and what He intends to do in the future. It is as good as calling Him a liar!

Faith is required in believing the past as well as the future. As all men are only people of the present, it is needful that faith and trust be in God alone. To have faith and trust in God is to obey His Word i.e. in what He has said in Holy Scriptures. In the darkest hour of Israel's existence, the light of the LORD needs to shine the brightest. The LORD did send this bright light into Israel's heart.

The challenge was one of believing in idols or in the LORD. The LORD has been with Israel from the very beginning of her existence. In fact, the LORD gave birth to Israel. How can Israel turn to idols at this juncture of her existence? Israel is in dire straits at this time but she must turn back unto the LORD and not to idols.

All of mankind have two choices to make on this earth when it comes to faith. It is to have faith in the one living and true God through Jesus Christ or the idols made by the hands of sinful man! There is no third option. Turn back to the LORD and the LORD would bless Israel in great abundance. Do not turn to idols for they are made by the hands of sinful man. How can Israel, the people of God, regard them as her gods! The world might not be able to see as they do not have God and the truth. However, Israel, from her very beginning, had the truth and

has known the LORD. How could she be so foolish to turn to idols in worship!

The LORD will raise a Persian king to send Israel back to the Promised Land at the end of the exile! This is how powerful the LORD is for even the heart of the most powerful heathen king in that region of the world is turned according to the LORD's will. The exile is not the end for Israel but a new beginning. The Promised Land has to be cleansed before the LORD could bless the people of Israel once more! The exile was the best way to do that!

OUTLINE

1. The LORD will succor Israel (vv.1-8);
2. The Vanity of idol worship (vv. 9-20);
3. The Mercy of the LORD endureth forever! (vv. 21-28).

COMMENTARY

The LORD will Succor Israel — 44:1-8

Verse 1 – The LORD continues His encouragement to Israel despite the fact that judgement had already been passed regarding her future exile into captivity. How does one encourage another other than to reverse the punishment which the LORD cannot do! Israel (or Judah, as Israel, the northern kingdom, had already been destroyed by the Assyrians at this time of the single kingdom period) must learn that there

are consequences for sins committed repeatedly even after warnings from the LORD had been given to them through His prophets! The LORD appealed to Israel by addressing her as "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant." Israel's old name reminds her of her origin and past when she was not a people of God but now she is still a people of God. Even when she goes into exile, Israel will still be God's people. The only difference is that she will not exist as a nation in the Land of Promise but a people in captivity.

Despite her many years of rebellion and disobedience the LORD still called her "my servant." The relationship was based upon the covenant rather than reward earned by obedience. Israel was God's people before she became a nation. She was God's people in the days of Abraham when the LORD said that through Isaac and Jacob the world would be blessed. Changing from Jacob to Israel the LORD added by saying that Israel is one whom the LORD has chosen. The choice was the LORD's sovereign decision. There was no basis for the LORD making this choice, but He chose Jacob nonetheless as it was His right to do so and He did! **Romans 9:10-13** (KJV) "And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac; **11** (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) **12** It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. **13** As it is written,

Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

Verse 2 – The LORD made Israel. This word is different from the word to create which the LORD used in 43:1 to emphasize the origin of Israel. In this instance the emphasis is on the making or doing part. The LORD made Israel. He formed (i.e. sculptured) Israel from the womb. He helped Israel when Israel was totally helpless like a fetus inside the mother's womb! He shaped and made her to become what she is right now, despite her many sinful and rebellious ways all these hundreds of years. Yet the LORD still sees in Israel a nation that He could use and still call her His servant!

The LORD comforts Israel by telling her not to be afraid. The reverting back to Jacob is significant here. Her old name is used, reminding her that though she might still be in a state of rebellion, the LORD has not given up hope on her. She must not give up hope on herself! The LORD called Jacob His servant again. Such tender and loving kindness bestowed upon her is comforting to us today. The LORD called her "Jes'u-run" which means the upright one. It comes from the root word which means "to make straight." This word occurs only four times in the entire OT and it refers only to Israel (cf. Deu. 32:15; 33:5, 26; and here in Isaiah). This was a term of endearment. The LORD is very tender toward Israel now as He knows how fragile Israel was in terms of morale and spirituality. It was a heavy burden

to bear a godly witness as a nation from one generation to the next!

The LORD again reminded Israel that she was chosen by the LORD. The LORD cannot make mistakes. He did not make a mistake in choosing Israel to be His witness all these many years even though Israel might have failed Him many times. This is the same for believers today! We must repent when we fall into sin.

Verse 3 – The LORD will take care of His own. He will pour water upon him that is thirsty. They who are thirsty will be thoroughly drenched with water. The copious amount would more than satisfy the most thirsty. It will not be given in drips but in large amounts. It will be like floods upon dry ground. The dry ground will have no time to suck up the large amount of flood water that will cover it. The blessings of the LORD upon His people would be in great abundance. In the case of the nation of Israel where the nation is married to the Land, the blessings of the LORD are always spiritual and material. In the case of the church the blessings of the LORD are always spiritual and not material.

The LORD will also pour (same word as before) His Spirit upon the seed of Israel. Many of the Jews would become believers. The LORD pours His blessings upon the children of the Israelites. This is a reference to the time of the Pentecost where the Jews became believers in the thousands through the preaching of the apostles.

Verse 4 – The Jewish believers would spring up as among the grass

i.e. in great numbers just like willows by the water. Willows by the water grow thick foliage. The water would continuously supply water to the plants and the plant thrives and grows very well by the river bank. In the case of the Jews springing up like grass, the imagery teaches numerical increase. The second imagery of the willow points to an increase in spirituality and lifelong growth.

Verse 5 – These believers will say to one another, "I am the LORD's." This means that they belong to the LORD and the LORD is their God. They are not ashamed to tell the world that they are God's people. They live holy lives. They are proud of their new found faith in Christ! Another believer would call himself by the name of Jacob. What it means is that Gentiles would also become believers. They would identify themselves as also being from the root of Jacob who wrestled with the LORD and finally submitted to Him. It does not make sense if these believers referred to Jews as they already have Jacob as their father.

The understanding that these are Gentiles is further supported by the second part of this verse. Another shall subscribe (to write) with his hand unto the LORD i.e. make an oath that they belonged to the LORD. They surnamed themselves by the name of Israel i.e. they openly identified themselves with Israel. Is this not what we Gentiles believers have identified ourselves with? There is a close affinity that Gentiles believers have with the people of Israel. The LORD

knows our hearts well. He transformed us and knows how we feel toward His Old Testament people even though the church has replaced Israel as His witnesses today in New Testament times.

Verse 6 – The LORD reveals to Israel His personal attributes. Firstly it is the LORD who has spoken and continues to speak with Israel. Israel must listen. The LORD says that He is the King of Israel. As King He will protect His people Israel for they are His. To be part of the kingdom means that protection and provision of all needs will be taken care of by the King. If He does not do so then the King would be blamed for failing to do His duties as King. He also introduced Himself as the Redeemer of Israel. He has saved Israel many times and He will continue to save Israel in the future. Israel must not lose heart. He will always be there for Israel as her Redeemer.

He is also called the LORD of hosts i.e. He is the captain of His army! The hosts here refer to the LORD's angelic armies! There is no one more powerful than God, not even Satan and his fallen angels. The LORD's absolute control over all things and creatures on this earth is emphasized in the next phrase. The LORD is the first and the last. He is the first in all things including the first and last word in all matters, the first and the last in all deeds done, the first and the last in time. The LORD was there in the very beginning and He will remain at the end of time. No creature can make this claim not even Satan

and definitely not the kings of this earth! Therefore, beside the LORD there is no other God. He alone is God and He is the God of Israel! How comforting this doctrine must be to the people of Israel.

Verse 7 – Who can call and declare all that the LORD had done and revealed? No one! Who can set all that the LORD had done and revealed in order except the LORD Himself? No one! The time frame of the LORD's revelation began with Israel, God's ancient people. Who was there to call, declare, and to set in order other than the LORD Most High! Just as the LORD was in total control of Israel's origin and her past, He is also in absolute control of her present and her future. The things that are coming are bleak for Israel as the Babylonians would come and destroy all things including the city of Jerusalem and the Temple.

The things that are in the future are also in the hand of the almighty God of Israel. The LORD will show them all to His people Israel that they might not be afraid.

Verse 8 – Do not be fearful and afraid. The word for "fear" means to be startled suddenly. The word "afraid" means to remain fearful after being startled. The LORD had already told Israel in prophetic advancement so that she need not be afraid. The revelation of the future events by the LORD means that the LORD is in absolutely control. Prophecies are not to be seen as mere future events that the LORD can foretell but cannot control, like a fortune teller. Prophecies

are future deeds of the LORD revealed to His children like a loving father telling his children what father will surely do in the future. Nothing can prevent Him from accomplishing His will in the life of the people of God. God's Will, will ultimately prevail!

Israel is God's witness despite her many failures. If the LORD can work only through perfect witnesses then there would be none on earth who could witness for Him. The emphasis is on Israel as God's witness. The LORD has not cast Israel aside as His witness. Using a rhetorical question the LORD asked if there is any God beside Him. Of course there is none! There is no one even close to the LORD. If there is, the LORD does not know any of them. Since the LORD knows all things, there is therefore none on this earth ever who is like unto the Most High!

The Vanity of Idol Worship — 44:9-20

Verse 9 – The one who makes the graven image will be the LORD's next focus. The LORD was very direct in His estimation of these image makers. He declared that they are "all of them vanity." The word for "vanity" is the same word that God used to describe the world before He began to fill it with living things. It is translated in the KJV as "without form" (cf. Genesis 1:2). These makers of graven images are empty and what they made are also empty. They are called delectable things here because they look beautiful and are very desirable to the people who worship them. They have the outward beauty like most things

made by man. However, they shall not profit. The word for profit does not mean that these makers of images will not be able to make money from them but that those who purchase these images will not profit from these idols. These images will not do the buyer any good.

How do we know that this is true? The images are their own witnesses. Take a good look at these images and see if they can do any good to the ones who bought them. They cannot see. They do not know anything! They are dumb and useless. They might have the look of beauty covered in precious metal and precious jewels. But they cannot help the buyer at all. They cannot see at all. If they are blind how could they help! They would not be able to see what is happening in the idolaters' life. The images cannot know which means that they are not able to help as they are totally oblivious of what is happening. These makers of images ought to be ashamed of themselves as they made these senseless and lifeless things and called them gods!

Verse 10-11 – Verse 10 is meant to be sarcastic. Who hath formed a god? The word for "formed" has the meaning of one who sculptured. He shapes it carefully like the way God made man. This same word is used in Genesis 2. Can God be formed? Man takes some gold and melts them. Then he pours the melted gold into a mould. He cools it and then an idol is formed after polishing and shaping it into perfection! How can man make God! Yet he thinks that he

has! Who hath formed a molten image that is profitable for nothing? What it means is that who is so foolish to take all the trouble to make an idol and then at the end of it, these idols and images made by the hands of man are of no profit to anyone. They cannot hear prayers. They do not have powers to protect. They do not have eyes to see and help. They cannot appreciate and receive the offerings of the worshippers!

Behold, all his fellow workers shall be ashamed including the workmen who helped them. These workmen are all men like Adam. They are weak and frail and of the earth. The idols and images are also of the earth! How can they be gods! Let these workers of idols all come together and let them stand up leaning on these idols to save them and provide for them in time of need. They shall all be afraid when they realize these idols cannot help them in time of need and danger. Then they shall all be ashamed together. To imagine grown men with families and knowledge of the world could be so foolish as to make these idols and trust in them and called them gods when they have all be made by man!

Verse 12 – The smith with the tongs work in the coals. The smith takes the metal in his tongs and beat it into the shape he wants with his hammer. He puts it into the coals over and over again to soften it so that he could fashion it. The word for "fashion" is the same word for "sculptured" as used in verse 10. He labours long and hard with the strength of his arms. He

does this until the idol is done. He becomes exhausted. He is hungry. He does not have time to drink water and he becomes faint.

Where was the idol when these things happened to the smith? Why did the idol not come and strengthen the smith? Why did the idol not fill the stomach of the smith when he was hungry? Why did the idol not provide water when the smith was thirsty?

Verse 13 – The carpenter stretches out his rule to make a line and measure. What it means is that he goes to the forest and finds a tree that is suitable for the wooden idol. He marks out the line for the idol. He measures to ensure that the piece of wood from the tree is large enough to make the idol of his choice. He fits it with planes. It means that he cuts the trees and smoothen it to the texture that he wants. He then marks it out with a compass. This means that he uses a chalk to mark on the piece of wood where to carve the head, the body and the limbs of the idol. He then makes it into the figure of a man according to the beauty of a man. The idol might have all the muscles and six packed torso looking like Hercules! Then this idol is placed in the house to guard the house.

From a tree to the idol made in the image of man and placed in the house, it has not been able to do anything to help on the inside or outside of the house and yet man would worship it as a god! The idol is useless to help! This is ludicrous! The idol is made in man's image. God made man in His image. If man made

this idol how can the idol be greater than man!

Verse 14-15 – The foolishness of idol worship is revealed with much contempt by the LORD in these two verses. The carpenter heweth down cedars and he also takes the cypress and the oak which he considers as the trees with better wood among all the trees. He plants the ash tree and the rain nourishes it and makes it grow. Verse 14 describes the manner of life of the carpenter who is a maker of wooden images or idols. This was how he regards the trees that he uses for making his idols. If there is no tree of his choice available then he grows it like the ash tree mentioned here.

Then the next verse gives us the punch line! The same kind of wood that the carpenter uses to make his idols are also the wood that he uses to burn to keep himself and his family warm! He uses the same wood for his idols to put into the furnace and bake his bread with it. At the same time he makes a god out of it and worships it! He makes a graven image out of it and bows down to it! The foolishness of idolatry is frightening and sad. It makes men so foolish and blind! He chooses the wood and he plants the wood that the idols are made from and yet these idols that the carpenter had absolute control over can become his god!

Verse 16-17 – The LORD continues with His logical reasoning on how foolish it is for man to worship idols. Using man's day to day life the LORD drives home His point. The carpenter burns part of the wood after

he used it to make his idol. The wood chips and remaining portion of the wood is thrown into the fire for burning to cook lunch and dinner for the family to eat. The same fire is used to roast their roast until it is fully cooked. The same fire is used to warm himself at night especially in winter. Then in front of the warmth of the fire that he lit with the wood he used to make his idol he exclaimed, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire."

The fire that the carpenter enjoyed which was burned from the wood that he used to make the idol provides him warmth, and also cooked his food is far better than the idol itself. When the wood of the idol is burned it gives life to the carpenter but not the idol and yet the idol is worshipped. How can the carpenter then call the wooden image his god and worship it!

The remaining piece of wood that was not used for burning is made into a god even the graven image! Then he falls down to it and worships it. He also prays to it and asks it to deliver him in time of trouble and calls it his god! How foolish and hardened is the heart of sinful man. The God who made him he ignores and rejects and despises. But the idol that cannot help or hear or see or speak and made with the hands of man, he worships and serves! The vivid and accurate description of what the idolatrous Jews had done should shock them into repentance. Idol worship is senseless and foolish!

Verse 18 – These idolaters have not known nor understood at all who God really is. They sincerely

believed that these beautiful idols made of molten metal and craved wood are their gods. This is what spiritual blindness entails. The idolater loses all senses including his common sense! The Bible revealed in this verse that it is the LORD who shut up their eyes that they could not see! The word "shut up" means "to smear." God smeared something over their eyes so that they become blind. Some understood "he" to refer to Satan. But the context does not argue for this interpretation. The meaning of "he" has to refer to the LORD for He is ultimately sovereign. The LORD never punishes anyone without a just cause. In short these idolaters deserve the judicial blindness that the LORD had inflicted them. When sinful men continue to go headlong toward their sin, they would soon pass the point of no return. All the LORD has to do is to give them over to their reprobate mind and they will entrench themselves deeper and deeper in sin so much so that they would not be able to get themselves out of it (cf. Romans 1:28).

Their sins would be worse and the saddest part is that they delight more and more in their sins and lead others into sin as well. They convince others that their path is right and good. They do not see sin as sin anymore. They rejoice in their sin and anyone who tries to rebuke them would be scorned and rejected! That is why they cannot see and their hearts cannot understand. No matter how foolish and ridiculous the worship of idol is they would not acknowledge it and change from their idolatrous ways. Their hearts are hardened judicially by the LORD.

Verse 19-20 – Once judicial hardening sets in no one will consider in their hearts. They will have no knowledge and understanding. They will have no ability to say even the most obvious, "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?" Even a blind man can see how foolish idolatry is and yet these idolaters are as blind as a bat flying nowhere in the brightness of the noon day sun.

The Bible says that the worship of idols is like one who feeds on ashes. The wood is burned into ashes and the same piece of wood is used to make idols! The idolater has a deceived heart whereby he continues to live a life of delusion after having turned from the truth which the Jews had! Once the truth is taken from him, he is powerless to deliver himself from this bondage to idolatry. Holding onto the idol in his right hand, he would not see it as a piece of wood but truly as his god! He does not see that idolatry is a lie.

To believers who are born again idolatry is easily discernible as false. The arguments put forth by the LORD in this chapter are so logical and obvious to them. Yet this is all possible because of the transforming work of Christ that God has wrought in their hearts. If not for this work of grace the description of these idolaters is a description of all of us, without exception. Therefore humility ought to

prevail in our hearts. Thanksgiving and a deep sense of gratitude ought to mark our mind and attitude as we live and serve Him in these last days. What a great deliverance believers have received from God through Christ Jesus our Lord and our Saviour.

The Mercy of the LORD endureth forever! — 44:21-28

Verse 21-22 – Using the imperative, the LORD turns His attention to His people. He commanded them to remember and never forget all that the LORD had said about the foolishness of idolatrous worship. He called His people first by the old name, Jacob and then followed immediately by the new Name "Israel." This was to remind Israel of her past and where she is right now. The use of the vocative is to show His tenderness toward His people. How far she has come in her walk with the LORD as well as how far the LORD had brought Israel. She will always be the LORD's servant. Ownership is meant here in these words of the LORD. Literally it means "thou art a servant to me."

The LORD deliberately used the same verb here as he used in verses 10 (formed) and 12 (fashion) to emphasize the fact that in the case of Israel, the LORD had sculptured and shaped Israel into who she is right now. This is the work of God. He protected and watched over Israel. He answered the many prayers of Israel. Conversely, Israel fashioned and shaped her wooden and metal images. How can these idols be her gods! Because the LORD was the One who

formed Israel therefore Israel belonged to Him as His servant.

Using the vocative again to emphasize the emotion and feeling that the LORD has for Israel, He said that He will not forget Israel. Israel, as His servants doing His will, will never be forgotten by God. The LORD used the same strength as the Ten Commandments to make His point.

The LORD has blotted i.e. obliterated the transgressions of Israel even though their transgression might as a thick cloud. When the sun shines through the cloud disappears. The LORD will not give up on Israel. Israel must not give up on herself but return to the LORD. All her sins are also wiped out by the LORD which appears like a cloud. Commanding Israel to return unto Him was the LORD's cry. The LORD has redeemed Israel. This was the basis for the LORD not giving up on Israel. The redemption was through the blood of Christ. Israel belongs to the LORD. She cannot run away. She must come back to the LORD for she has already been purchased.

Verse 23 – Commanding the creation of the LORD to sing and to shout is what the LORD did. These are eternal witnesses that have existed since the beginning of time. The heaven was commanded to sing out loud because of what the LORD has done in and through Israel. The lower parts of the earth were commanded to shout. The mountains were commanded to break forth into singing including all the trees in the forest. These inanimate objects were

witnesses to all that the LORD has done from the very beginning. The works of the hand of the LORD were visible to them all. They had heard and they had seen. They are now commanded to praise the LORD because of what the LORD has done for and through Israel!

The LORD has redeemed Israel. The LORD has glorified Himself in Israel. Despite the sins and rebellion of Israel the LORD has turned things around and His sovereign will is still being accomplished in Israel. Not even the failures and sins of Israel can stop or prevent the will of God from coming to pass. What the LORD wants to do – to save mankind from his sins – He will do it. That is how the LORD redeems Israel from her many sins and failures. Israel still belongs to the LORD despite her idolatry. The LORD's Will will be done and therefore the LORD had glorified Himself in and through Israel. This means that the first coming of the Messiah is still on track. The LORD is in control still.

Verse 24 – The LORD continues His argument before Israel. He is Israel's Redeemer. He did so with the blood of Christ. He owned Israel. He also formed (same word as before i.e. sculptured) Israel from the womb. The beginning of Israel's existence was due entirely to the LORD. Israel was not founded by man or came into existence by chance. The LORD carefully shaped her to what she is today, every step of the way despite her many failures. The LORD is the One who made all things

including Israel and her enemies whom the LORD controls at will.

He alone stretches the heavens i.e. He determines how far the boundaries of the heavens are. Of course the word "alone" here does not exclude the other two persons of the Trinity. The LORD alone also spreads abroad i.e. overlay the earth. The surface of the earth was designed by God alone. There were no idols and no graven or wooden image. He made them all alone!

Verse 25 – The LORD frustrates the tokens i.e. the signs of the liars. These liars were the astrologers and magicians who would use the heavens for their predictions. The LORD's creation reduces them to liars. He makes void their use of the heavens and they become liars. He makes diviners mad i.e. angry. He turns the so-called wise men backwards i.e. to make them look foolish and most unwise. Their knowledge is turned into foolishness. The heavens and the earth are sufficient to reduce these so-called wise and great men with their high IQ and wisdom into vanity!

Verse 26-28 – The LORD will confirm i.e. establish or bring to pass what His servant has said. The LORD will perform i.e. complete the counsel of His messengers. These would include Isaiah as well as Jeremiah and all the prophets of old who served the LORD during this period of crisis before and after the Babylonian captivity. They said concerning the city of Jerusalem, "Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah,

Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: **27** That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: **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."

The exile of Judah will surely take place. But so will the restoration of Judah at the end of her exile. Jerusalem will be inhabited again after her destruction. Judah's many cities would also be rebuilt. The destroyed places that occurred in the time of the Babylonian destruction would be raised up by the LORD. If the impediment surrounding these decayed areas in Judah was water, the LORD would dry them out. If it were the deep or rivers that prevent the people of Judah from returning, He will dry them out so that God's people will return to rebuild Jerusalem and Judah! Neither the seasons nor the times can prevent or slow down the will of the LORD if the LORD says that it will be done!

Cyrus the soon to be most powerful king in that region, after the reign of the Babylonian Empire ends, is called the LORD's shepherd. This means that He will protect the Jews when he rises to power. At this juncture he was not even born yet. The Persians were not a superpower. Yet the LORD prophesied that the time of the Jews return would be when Cyrus would reign. He will do the LORD's will by protecting the Jews when they return. We read this in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah! He will do the

pleasure of the LORD. He will even say about Jerusalem that she will be built. He will also say that the foundation of the Temple would also be rebuilt. Heathen kings who are not believers are also in the absolute control of the LORD. This would surely assure the Jews who had just been told of her impending captivity because of her many sins. **Proverbs 21:1** (KJV) "The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." Amen.

- 2. Do you find it easy to bear a godly witness for Christ? Do you think that it is easier for the church to bear a godly witness for Christ than the believer? How do you answer these questions in light of Matthew 11:28-30? Please elaborate.

DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

MONDAY: Isaiah 44:1-8

TUESDAY: Isaiah 44:9-28

WEDNESDAY: Isaiah 44:1-28

THURSDAY: Isaiah 44:1-28

FRIDAY: Isaiah 44:1-28

- 3. Can the failures of the believer be considered as a good witness for the LORD? Please explain.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Do you give up hope easily? Have you ever given up on others before in the ministry i.e. write a person off as "no good" when the person disappoints you or fails you? Do you think that God should give up on us after we have failed Him so many times? Please elaborate.

- 4. Why is it that men and women with high IQ and hold high positions and can handle multibillion companies would bow down to idols and serve them? Are they not wiser than these idols? Explain.

idols in your heart? Is it possible for a true believer to worship idols?

5. Why can't the idol worshippers see that the idols are blind and dumb and deaf? They have eyes to see clearly do they not? They have a mind to understand do they not? Please explain.

8. What lessons have you learnt from this chapter about God's Word and about yourself?

6. Why is idolatry so arresting and captivating? Please explain.

7. Do you view the sin of idolatry as a small sin because you are surrounded by idols and so have gotten used to them? Are there