

Study 77: Isaiah, Part 33 Isaiah 42:17-25

Isaiah 42 (cont.)

17 But those who trust in idols,
who say to images, ‘You are our gods,’
will be turned back in utter shame.

[This is similar to Acts 17:22-31:

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

24 “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. 26 From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. 27 God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. 28 ‘For in him we live and move and have our being’ [quoting from the Cretan philosopher Epimenides]. As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring’ [from the Cilician Stoic philosopher Aratus].

29 “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. 30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31 For he has set a day when he will [μελλω = *is about to*] judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

[God was going to rise up and destroy the idols and idolatry of His people using Cyrus, the king of Persia, whom God calls His “shepherd” (Isa 44:28), His “anointed” (Isa 45:1 = מָשִׁיחַ “messiah”), and His “righteousness” (Isa 45:13).

18 “Hear, you deaf;
look, you blind, and see!
19 Who is blind but my servant,
and deaf like the messenger I send?
Who is blind like the one in covenant with me,
blind like the servant of the Lord? [i.e. *Israel*]
20 You have seen many things, but you pay no attention;
your ears are open, but you do not listen.”
21 It pleased the Lord
for the sake of his righteousness
to make his law great and glorious.
22 But this is a people plundered and looted,
all of them trapped in pits
or hidden away in prisons.
They have become plunder,
with no one to rescue them;
they have been made loot,
with no one to say, “Send them back.” [“*Restore*”]
23 Which of you will listen to this
or pay close attention in time to come?
24 Who handed Jacob over to become loot,
and Israel to the plunderers?
Was it not the Lord,
against whom we have sinned?
For they would not follow his ways;

they did not obey his law.
25 So he poured out on them his burning anger,
the violence of war.
It enveloped them in flames, yet they did not understand;
it consumed them, but they did not take it to heart.

Note: Isaiah prophesied c. 742-680 B.C.

King Uzziah died in 742 B.C.

In 710 B.C., the cities of Judah were attacked by the Assyrians, but they were unable to take the people captive because of the Lord's intervention (2 Chronicles 32:22). In 722 B.C., the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and deported the inhabitants.

2 Kings 17:6-20

In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

7 For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods, 8 and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the Lord had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. 9 Also the children of Israel secretly did against the Lord their God things that were not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from watchtower to fortified city. 10 They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. 11 There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the Lord had carried away before them; and they did wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger, 12 for they served idols, of which the Lord had said to them, "You shall not do this thing."

13 Yet the Lord testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets." 14 Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the Lord their God. 15 And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them. 16 So they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, made for themselves a molded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. 17 And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. 18 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone.

19 Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. 20 And the Lord rejected all the descendants of Israel, afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them from His sight.