

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Is your “god” carried in a bag?

(Jerry Fite)

Isaiah, in chapter 46:1-2, sees the principal deity of Babylon, “Bel” and the Chaldean patron god of “writing”, “Nebo” bowing down in defeat as they are carried away by Cyrus and the Persian army. The images of these gods are struck down, and loaded up on beasts. The gods themselves go into captivity along with their images. “*They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity*” (Isaiah 46:2).

Isaiah then addresses the people of Israel by rebuking idolaters for equating Jehovah with other gods. “*To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like*” (Isaiah 46:5)? To show Israel how such an inclusion is ludicrous, Isaiah focuses upon the distinction between the gods being carried, and the one true God.

Whom do they worship? Not only do they worship gods made from gold formed by the hands of the goldsmith, but these same gods are borne on the shoulder, and set in place. You can then cry to them, but they will not answer; nor will they save you in time of trouble (Isaiah 46:6-7).

In contrast, Jehovah has been carrying His people along from their birth as a nation, and will continue to carry them along into old age (Isaiah 46:3-4). He is God and there is none else (Isaiah 46:9). His counsel shall stand (Isaiah 46:10). He has spoken, and will bring Cyrus, “a ravenous bird from the east” to carry Babylon into captivity (Isaiah 46:11).

Unlike the idols, God speaks. Unlike the idols, God delivers. Unlike the idols borne on the shoulder and carried, God carries His own people to salvation.

Today is Sunday, December 25. It is first day of the week, when God’s people assemble to remember the death of our Lord by partaking the Lord’s supper, and worshipping the only true God (Acts 20:7, Colossians 3:16). It is also the day when many gather in their own homes to open presents. Children especially look forward to this day because they receive new toys, clothes and the latest electronic gadgets.

It is also a day when we can remind our children of who the one master of our hearts truly is. Presents are joyful to give and re-

ceive, but they should never replace the anticipation and joy of worshipping our God. Children, set those toys aside, and get yourself ready to go to rejoice with our brethren in the worship of God.

You noticed that you picked up these packages to open them, and carried them to play with them. In like manner, the people in Bible times carried their god and set them up. They had opened their bag of money to purchase their made idols, just like people do today to purchase objects they covet. These are mere toys and neat gadgets that give enjoyment, but they must not become our god.

Oh, do not think that they cannot become your god, for “*covetousness is idolatry*” (Colossians 3:5). Things you want the strongest, can replace the one true God in your heart. You must always “*guard yourselves from idols*” (1 John 5:21).

Dear children, never worship that which you can carry in a bag: money or what you purchase with money. Learn to lay up treasure in heaven, by giving to the poor (Matthew 6:20, Luke 12:33). Worship God who carries you always!