

One and only God– Sunday February 17th 2013.

“Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:

*‘I am the first and I am the last,
And there is no God besides Me.*

*⁷ ‘Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it;
Yes, let him recount it to Me in order,
From the time that I established the ancient nation.
And let them declare to them the things that are coming
And the events that are going to take place.*

*⁸ ‘Do not tremble and do not be afraid;
Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it?
And you are My witnesses.
Is there any God besides Me,
Or is there any other Rock?
I know of none.’” (Isaiah 44:6-8)*

Beloved in the Lord,

This Word of God is so incredibly powerful because it clearly states that there is Only One True God. There are not many gods, there is one God.

There are not many paths that lead to Him; there is only one path. There are not many truths; but one Truth. In this post-modern era that we live this is a concept that many find hard to accept.. The New Age thinker likes to stress that it doesn't really matter what you believe or who you follow. Spirituality is the big word. I am spiritual. God can be whatever you want God to be.

This however is not how God sees things. Very clearly in our text today God tells us that He is The First and The Last, and that there is no God besides Him. End of story. Amen. There is no room here for philosophising or naval gazing.

It is within this truth that our security lies. He is the Only God; He is the Only Way; He is the Only Truth. Jesus put it this way in John 14:6

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

Thank God that there are not many ways and many truths, because if there were then we would always be wondering if we got the best one or not.

Times change, technology is streaking ahead and the way we receive and transmit information is mind boggling at times. People come and go, but God remains exactly the same. He is the same “I AM” who revealed Himself in the Old Testament. He is the same as He always was and always will be. Therein is our security.

It is only natural that from time to time we may have doubts. They can come to us through many different sources. Satan, God's and our enemy loves to use doubt to undermine our faith and trust in God and His Word. Satan uses doubt to distance us from God and His ways. He is working tirelessly day and night to undermine our faith. Did God really say that? Is that really what He means by those words? This was the very way that he deceived Eve in the garden of Eden. He planted a seed of doubt in her mind.

The best antidote to Satan's evil ways is the Word of God. The best antidote to doubt is The Word of God. God's Word is clear, it is powerful, it is living and sharper than any two edged sword. God's Word strengthens and builds our faith..

Our security is in God's promises; in His Word. God says that He is the only God, and there is no other god beside Him. He says: ***"Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any other Rock? I know of none."***

Further on God says: Those who fashion a graven image are all of them futile, and their precious things are of no profit;"

This clearly tells us about the futility of idol worship, yet so many do it. So many people make up gods and then worship them. Idols have no value and they certainly cannot help. It is interesting to read on:

¹³ Another shapes wood, he extends a measuring line; he outlines it with red chalk. He works it with planes and outlines it with a compass, and makes it like the form of a man, like the beauty of man, so that it may sit in a house. ¹⁴ Surely he cuts cedars for himself, and takes a cypress or an oak and raises it for himself among the trees of the forest. He plants a fir, and the rain makes it grow. ¹⁵ Then it becomes something for a man to burn, so he takes one of them and warms himself; he also makes a fire to bake bread. He also makes a god and worships it; he makes it a graven image and falls down before it. ¹⁶ Half of it he burns in the fire; over this half he eats meat as he roasts a roast and is satisfied. He also warms himself and says, "Aha! I am warm, I have seen the fire." ¹⁷ But the rest of it he makes into a god, his graven image. He falls down before it and worships; he also prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god."

¹⁸ They do not know, nor do they understand, for He has smeared over their eyes so that they cannot see and their hearts so that they cannot comprehend. ¹⁹ No one recalls, nor is there knowledge or understanding to say, "I have burned half of it in the fire and also have baked bread over its coals. I roast meat and eat it. Then I make the rest of it into an abomination, I fall down before a block of wood!" ²⁰ He feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside. And he cannot deliver himself, nor say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Is.44:13-18)

God is trying to say to people, wake up. Use your common sense. Who do you think that you are that you can create god. Who do you think you are that you place yourself above God's

Word? Who do you think that you are that you can pick and choose which parts of the Bible to believe and which not? Oh, how we need to let this truth sink deep into our hearts. God says: ***“I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.”***

God could not state it any clearer. These are not just words. This is a fact. Over and over again God showed His people the Israelites that this was true, that He is the only Almighty God. Even a brief overview of a few instances in the Old Testament gives us a clear picture of God’s sovereignty.

Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt believed himself to be god. Through His servant Moses, God systematically and emphatically showed Pharaoh that he was nothing compared to the One and Only True God. Through the ten plagues, each of which was a direct challenge to the god’s of Egypt, God showed His might and power. Pharaoh had to let Israel go. When they got to the Red Sea, God opened a path and His people crossed on dry land. As Pharaoh’s army pursued them, God returned the waters to their place and the whole Egyptian army drowned.

In the time of King Saul, the Philistines who worshipped pagan gods, came up against Saul and his army. The Philistines had a prize soldier named Goliath. Goliath was a giant and no man could beat him. A young lad named David took him on with a sling, stone and the Word of Almighty God. David won and cut off the giants head with his own sword!

In the time of Elijah, the main pagan god was Baal. Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to a contest to see who served the real God. He called them together for the only interfaith service we find in the Bible.

Two altars were built and a sacrifice prepared. Elijah told the 450 prophets of Baal to call upon their God and he would call upon his God. The God that answered by fire would be the real God. The Baal prophets did everything they knew by way of ritual and prayer and dancing and cutting themselves. Elijah taunted them and said that maybe they weren’t being earnest enough. They tried and tried to no avail. At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah instructed that the altar he had built be drenched with water seven times. Then he prayed a simple prayer and fire fell from heaven and burnt up the sacrifice.

In the time of Daniel, his three friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were thrown into the fiery furnace because they refused to bow down and worship an image of Nebuchadnezzar. God saved them from the fire and they came out unsinged. God rewarded their faithfulness to His Word.

Daniel himself was tossed into a den of lions for continuing to pray to his God, despite a ban on all prayer to any god, but the King. God sent an Angel and the lions did not touch Daniel.

Time does not allow me to give more examples, but there are many. All of them serve to prove that there is only One True God.

In the Book of Hebrews we read:

“ Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:1-2)

We are encouraged to strengthen our faith by taking note of those who have gone before us. We are to keep our eyes firmly fixed on Jesus Christ.

Only in Jesus do we have life. Only in Jesus does our life have a purpose. There is salvation in no other, for only the blood of Jesus cleanses us from sin. The answer lies no where else. There is no other way, no other truth, no other God. Jesus said: Who has seen me has seen the Father. I and the Father are one. That is why we preach Jesus and will continue to preach Jesus and Jesus alone.

Paul put it so well in Romans: (11:36)

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.