

What Does God Do For You?

International Bible Lessons

Isaiah 48:14-19, 21-22

Sunday, January 16, 2011

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“Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the LORD your God, who teaches you for your own good, who leads you in the way you should go” (Isaiah 48:17—NRSV).

“Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit, Who leads you in the way you should go.” (Isaiah 48:17—NASB-U).

“Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go.” (Isaiah 48:17—KJV).

God maintains His moral purity and standards at all times; therefore, He will not permit people to keep on sinning without punishing them, or calling them to repent, or finding a way to save them from their sins. When the Jews continued to worship idols, consult demons, and trust in foreign nations to save them from their enemies, God finally punished them. The prophet Isaiah warned about God’s punishment when he called the people to repent, and when they refused, God brought about the destruction of Jerusalem and sent them into exile. After they learned their lesson, God redeemed them from exile in Babylon and called them home.

Isaiah also predicted the Messiah’s coming. About 500 years after the Jews returned from exile, God sent the Messiah to save from sin all those who trusted in Him. Jesus, the Redeemer Messiah, paid the high price of redemption by dying on a cross as a sacrifice for our sins; so, while maintaining absolute moral standards, God can justly forgive repentant sinners.

In addition, for our own good, God promises to teach those He has redeemed. When we study the Bible, the Holy Spirit helps us understand the meaning for the benefit of others and ourselves as we adjust our way of living. God does more for us than point the way through our reading the Bible. God leads us and prepares our path day by day. The Holy Spirit, who indwells every believer, helps us make decisions and gives us the strength to follow God wherever He leads.

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Thinking Further

1. Why does God punish or discipline His people rather than make excuses for their sins and not punish them as they deserve? How can a person avoid God's punishment? What does it cost God to redeem the person He does not punish as they deserve?

2. Today, does God still punish those who say they believe in Him? Why or why not? Give a reason for your answer.

3. Why does God insist that He has not spoken in secret? Since God has not spoken in secret, what kind of responsibility do people have to obey God?

4. Why does God want to teach and lead us? Why is it important for us to share God's reasons with others? In what ways does God teach and lead us today?:

5. Read verse 22 again. In what ways do you find this verse to be true today? How might you explain the truths this verse reveals to someone who is constantly disobeying God and not following the teachings of the Bible?