

Isaiah Chapter 41 Continued

Isaiah 41:14 "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, [and] ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel."

“Worm”: This refers to the contempt of Israel by the ungodly nations, and the same term is used similarly of the Messiah on the cross (Psalm 22:6).

“Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel”: The Hebrew for “Redeemer” refers to a near relative who has the opportunity and responsibility to buy back what a relative has lost. The term occurs 5 more times in connection with the title “Holy One of Israel.”

As the Lord purchased His people from the bondage of Egypt by the blood of the Passover Lamb, He is to do the same from their worldwide exile by the blood of the True Lamb, Jesus Christ, when they turn to Him in faith (Zech. 12:10 – 13:1).

"Holy One of Israel": seems to be Isaiah's favorite way of addressing God. I believe this is speaking of the lowliness of Jacob, when it speaks of him as a worm. The Israelites had been near ruin. God had saved just a remnant.

We know that God did not protect them, because they were a powerful nation. He protected them, because they were His, and He loved them. The only true help for them, or us, is the LORD. The "Redeemer" is speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses 15-16: “Mountains ... hills”: Figurative representations of foreign nations, whom Israel is to grind into nothingness in the time of her kingdom, when the Lord Jesus sets Himself up as King in Jerusalem.

Isaiah 41:15 "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat [them] small, and shalt make the hills as chaff."

They were not to be on the defensive any more. The "sharp threshing instrument" with teeth, means they had power to take over their enemies.

The appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ in Israel a few hundred years from this statement would give new life to the Israelites. They would be visited by the Son of God. Again, Jerusalem would be the center of the world's attention. Their power is from God, not from their own efforts.

Isaiah 41:16 "Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, [and] shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel."

God's power in the Israelites makes them so strong that just the air from the fanning drives their enemies away. The Holy One of Israel is speaking of the Lord Jesus.

Verses 17-18: "Poor and needy": Israel in her deprived state as a captive of foreign nations is spoken of as thirsty for blessing and joy. In the Messiah's future kingdom, the land of Israel will be well watered; a real physical blessing, but symbolizing here the spiritual quenching that will be Israel's in the Millennium.

Isaiah 41:17 "[When] the poor and needy seek water, and [there is] none, [and] their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them."

God will supply their needs, even if they are in captivity. Jesus told the woman at the well, if she drank of the water He provided, she would never thirst again.

This is not only physical water that they thirst for, but the Word of God, which is many times spoken of as water. They will thirst for God for the years they are in captivity. God will never be far away from them. He is their very present help in trouble.

Isaiah 41:18 "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."

Where there was no water before, God will make rivers and streams come forth to quench their thirst. God will provide 4 sources of water for them: the rivers, fountains, pools, and springs. This is supernatural care of the Israelites from God.

Isaiah 41:19 "I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, [and] the pine, and the box tree together:"

Luxuriant vegetation will enrich the Land when God redeems His creation (35:1, 2, 7; Romans 8:19-21).

These are all trees to be desired. The myrtle tree grows only two places in the world. It grows in the Middle East, primarily modern Israel, and in Oregon in the United States.

There is abundant life, where there are trees. We see from this, God's people can build a home, and produce oil for their own use, and sell them. The Cedar is wonderful for building. It has an aroma that wards off bugs.

God is helping them in ways they had never imagined. Even though they are exiled, they are still God's children and under His protection.

Isaiah 41:20 "That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it."

The purpose in God providing this for His people is two-fold. It will keep the Israelites from starvation, but it will also show those living around them, that God provides for them. It might even cause some of them to believe in the God of the Israelites.

Notice, Isaiah has again used the name "Holy One of Israel".

Verses 21-29: The Lord challenges the gods of the heathen nations to “produce your cause” (set forth your case), and to “bring forth your strong reasons” (arguments). The heathen gods are challenged to predict the future and to explain the past. But they can do neither, for they are not gods at all. Thus, the fulfillment of predictive prophecy is shown as proof of divine inspiration.

The Law of Moses (Deut. 18:21-22), gives the stipulation of exact fulfillment of predictive prophecy as an evidence of the divine authority and genuineness of the prophet’s message. Non-fulfillment is an indication of false prophecy. Obviously, Isaiah believed his own prophecies were predictive (an indication of future events), and would be literally fulfilled.

Isaiah 41:21 "Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong [reasons], saith the King of Jacob."

This is a challenge to the false gods. They do not produce productive trees and water for their people. This is perhaps, saying for them to state their case if they have one.

Verses 22-23: “What shall happen ... things for to come”: God challenged the idols to prove their competence by predicting future events, as the Lord has done regarding “the former events,” i.e. the raising of Cyrus (verse 2), the repulsion of the Assyrians from Jerusalem (chapters 36 – 37), and the healing of Hezekiah (chapter 38).

Isaiah 41:22 "Let them bring [them] forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they [be], that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come."

We see more of the challenge here. These false gods say they can tell the future, but God is really the only One who can tell accurately of the future. The verse is actually saying to produce the prophecies made in the past that have come true. Then they will consider the prophecies for the future.

Isaiah 41:23 "Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye [are] gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold [it] together."

“Do good ... or do evil”: God invited the idols to proclaim and execute either deliverance or judgment, as He had done.

We see in this, that the idols they worshipped could not do good or evil, because they are nothings. Isaiah is saying in this, why don't you prove to us that you are a god? If we could only see something you had done either good or bad, you might have an argument.

An idol cannot produce anything, so it is obvious they are not to be worshipped.

Isaiah 41:24 "Behold, ye [are] of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination [is he that] chooseth you."

“Nothing ... nought”: The idols were not what humans claimed they were, because they could not predict the future, nor could they judge or deliver. They were useless.

"Abomination" means revolting sin. In this case, a revolting sinner chooses to worship false gods. Notice also, the word chooseth. This means this is of his own free will.

Isaiah 41:25 "I have raised up [one] from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as [upon] mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay."

“From the north ... from the rising of the sun”: Cyrus, king of Persia, a land East of Babylon, approached Babylon from the North where he had conquered Media before coming to Babylon.

“Call upon my name”: Apparently fulfilled by Cyrus (proclamation in Ezra 1:1-4).

God has chosen Cyrus to come and destroy them. The fact that Jehovah has raised up Cyrus, is proof He is God. The princes Cyrus overcomes will be like mortar in his hands. He will be able to form them into whatever he wishes. Cyrus will call upon the name of God to help him in his battles.

Isaiah 41:26 "Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, [He is] righteous? yea, [there is] none that showeth, yea, [there is] none that declareth, yea, [there is] none that heareth your words."

No soothsayer had predicted future happenings as the Lord had.

The idol gods were not even able to prophesy the coming of Cyrus. God's plans were made from the beginning, and no one but God knows when and where things will happen. God honors His Word. What He says, He does.

Verses 27-29: Idols were helpless in giving “good news” of future events (verse 27), and counsel to people (verse 28), and thus were useless.

Isaiah 41:27 "The first [shall say] to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings."

The First is definitely God. Zion, Jerusalem, or the church belongs to God. God takes care of His own. He promises deliverance from the enemy, and He brings it about. He may use someone like Cyrus to carry it out, but it is actually God who is the Deliverer.

The good tidings is that God will deliver them from bondage.

Isaiah 41:28 "For I beheld, and [there was] no man; even among them, and [there was] no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word."

These false gods and their prophets, are like the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel. They have no power at all. God will destroy them and save His people.

Isaiah 41:29 "Behold, they [are] all vanity; their works [are] nothing: their molten images [are] wind and confusion."

Just as the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel could do nothing, these false gods can do nothing here. They are really figments of man's imaginations, which come to nothing. These molten images are man's creation. God is the Creator of man. He is not a creation of anything else. He is CREATOR GOD, Elohim.

Isaiah Chapter 41 Continued Questions

1. What was Jacob called in verse 14?
2. What special name for God is a favorite with Isaiah?
3. Why had God protected the remnant of Israelites?
4. Who is the "Redeemer"?
5. What encouragement does verse 15 give them?
6. What did the statement "new sharp threshing instrument" tell us?
7. What would give new life to the Israelites?
8. Their power is from God, not from _____.
9. Thou shalt glory in the _____ of Israel.
10. These Israelites are so strengthened by the Lord, that just the _____ from the _____ drives their enemies away.
11. What wonderful promise did Jesus make the woman at the well?
12. What is many times spoken of as water?

13. What 4 sources of water did God provide for them?
14. What trees did He promise to plant in the wilderness for them?
15. In what 2 places does the myrtle grow?
16. Why has God done this?
17. What is verse 21?
18. Who is the only One who can accurately tell the future?
19. Why can these idols do no good, or evil?
20. What would be something they would have room to argue about, if they could do it?
21. What does "abomination" mean?
22. Who chooses to worship false gods?
23. Who had God raised up to overcome them?
24. What will the defeated princes be like in Cyrus' hands?
25. What will Cyrus do for help?
26. Who is the First in verse 27?
27. What is Zion?
28. What is the good tiding of verse 27?
29. Who are the false gods like?
30. Their molten images are _____ and _____.
31. God is not part of the creation, He is the _____.