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BIBLE STUDY

Straightway Church of Christ, Inc.

37 Market Street, New Haven, CT 06513
Bishop M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Servant / Shepherd
The Late Bishop E. Samuel Green, Establishmentarian

THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL

Isaiah 41:14-29

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."

Things were far different, however, for God's servant, Jacob, whom he had chosen. Israel was unique among the nations as God's chosen people. They were to worship him and be his light to the world. God set Israel apart and promised by covenant to be her protector. Kingdoms and empires that not only refused to recognize and bow before Israel's God, but also attacked and abused his people, would be tossed into the dustbin of history. "Holy One of Israel" seems to be Isaiah's favorite way of addressing God. 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.

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 anymore. 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."

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."

They would be ground into dust so fine that a wind will carry them away. God's people, meanwhile, will rejoice and boast 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. 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."

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:"

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. 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, they 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". He promised abundant care for them and will provide.

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

Isaiah 41:22 "Let them bring [them] forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew 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."

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. 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. Once the nations were informed of God's incomparable ability to bring about his will in history, he invited them to call on their useless gods to predict the future.

Isaiah 41:23 "Shew 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."

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 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."

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."

"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. 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. Knowing how that futile exercise would go, God repeated his plan to raise up Cyrus to liberate his captive people from Babylon: I have stirred up one from the north. Although in 41:2, it is said that Cyrus comes from the east, both are correct. Persia lay to the east, but it would attack Babylon from the north. God brings good news on behalf of his people; the gods of the nations perform nonexistent works for theirs.

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 sheweth, yea, [there is] none that declareth, yea, [there is] none that heareth your words."

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

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. 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."

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

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. 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.

QUESTIONS

1. What was Jacob called in verse 14?
2. What special name for God is a favorite with Isaiah?
3. Who is the "Redeemer"?
4. What encouragement does verse 15 give them?
5. What did the statement "new sharp threshing instrument" tell us?
6. What would give new life to the Israelites?
7. Their power is from God, not _____.
8. Thou shalt glory in the _____ of Israel.
9. What wonderful promise did Jesus make the woman at the well?
10. What is many times spoken of as water?
11. What 4 sources of water did God provide for them?
12. What trees did He promise to plant in the wilderness for them?
13. In what 2 places does the myrtle grow?
14. Why has God done this?
15. What is verse 21?
16. Why can these idols do no good, or evil?
17. What does "abomination" mean?
18. Who chooses to worship false gods?
19. Who had God raised up to overcome them?
20. What will the defeated princes be like in Cyrus' hands?
21. What will Cyrus do for help?
22. Who is the First in verse 27?
23. What is Zion?
24. Who are the false gods like?
25. Their molten images are _____ and _____.
26. God is not part of the creation, He is the _____.