

ISAIAH

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Isaiah chapter 41 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study in Isaiah chapter 40 we saw the comfort of God for our lives; we just need to look to Him! As we move into Isaiah chapter 41 this evening we once again see the comfort of God for our lives. We will see that He is the One who is in control and we need to rest in Him. With that as our background, let's begin reading in Isaiah chapter 41 starting in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

ISAIAH 41**VERSE 1**

1. What I see here is a courtroom scene and God is sitting upon the throne to judge the nations. Now as they enter the courtroom the Lord tells them to keep silent before Him. That seems kind of strange. How can they defend themselves if they are to keep silent?

I think the idea here is that you need to gather your thoughts together before you speak; you need to understand what you are going to say before the Judge of the whole earth! And who are these people that will come before the Judge of the whole earth? The idol worshippers and they will try to justify why they are worshipping these idols, whatever they may be, instead of the true and living God.

The problem, obviously, is that they will not be able to justify their behavior and they will not be able to renew their strength apart from the Lord. Remember what we were told in Isaiah 40:31, **“But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.”**

You see, those that wait upon the Lord, those whose faith is in the Lord will have limitless strength because their strength is coming from the Lord. Those who reject the Lord have no god that will strengthen them because there is only One God! Thus, as Isaiah tells us, **“There is no peace,’ says the Lord, ‘for the wicked.’”** Isaiah 48:22. There is no peace, no rest, no renewing of their strength for the wicked!

2. Let’s read on and see how this is all played out for us.

VERSES 2-4

1. Who is this person that God has raised up from the east? Some say it speaks of Abraham but as you read these verses Abraham was not in many battles, so I don’t think that fits. I think this is speaking of Cyrus the King of Persia and God is going to call Him specifically by name some 150 years before he was even born in Isaiah chapters 44 and 45!

You see, Cyrus overthrew the Babylonians and he opened the door for the Jews who were in captivity to return home. Now think about this for a minute. Did the Jews in captivity see the hand of God working in their lives as the Medes and the Persians came to power? Some did but I am sure many did not!

It is often like this story for us. There was this young man who was working on this steep roof. And as he was working all of a sudden he began to slip and slide down the roof and the fall would have injured him severely. All he could do is pray, “Lord, help me not to fall off the roof!” And as he was sliding down, all of a sudden his pants got caught on a nail and stopped him instantly! And this young man responded back to God after this, “Thanks anyway God, the nail stopped me!” You see, God works so many times in natural ways that we don’t even recognize or acknowledge what He is doing. There is no good luck, only the hand of God! May we not forget that!

We truly need to understand that the hand of God is upon our lives every moment of every day! Now we may not always see that, we may not always feel that way, but we can know it because God says that He is with us wherever we go! That is something we need to remember!

2. In these passages we see the word “**Who**” some six times and by the time we get to the last part of verse 4 we see the answer to that question of “**Who.**” We are told, “**I, the LORD, am the first; And with the last I am He.**”

Keep in mind that the word “**LORD**” is in capital letters and that means this is the name of God, *YAHWEH!* He is the One who is in control of human events; He is the One who will raise up this “**one from the east.**” You see, human history is not just a set of random events but there is a God in heaven who is orchestrating these things.

Now according to Revelation 1:11 we are told, “**I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.**” Also, in Revelation 1:17, “**Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.**” And lastly, in Revelation 22:13 we are told, “**I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.**”

These verses are speaking of Jesus Christ. Is that important? You bet it is because we are told here that the One who is called the first and the last is *YAHWEH*, which means that Jesus is Almighty God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity! We will see that more as we continue through our studies in Isaiah, that Jesus is Almighty God, it is not just a New Testament idea!

VERSES 5-7

1. As these pagan nations have an encounter with Almighty God it caused them to fear. And this fear brought them to their knees, they could not go on. But they tried to encourage each other and instead of turning to the Lord they came together and tried to make idols to help them out. The problem with these gods that they were making is that they had to be fastened to the ground so that they would not fall over. Now think about that, if you have to fasten your god to the ground so it won't fall over is that god really going to be able to help you when it can't even help itself? Of course not!

2. People still make idols today. They suppress the truth of God and they worship all kinds of things instead of the Creator of all things. You can read of this in Romans 1:18-25 as Paul tells us, **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man - and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.”**

Man has not learned to bow the knee before Almighty God but tries to live apart from God and that life is depraved to say the least and is headed for destruction. If you don't know the Lord you should fear Him because one day you will stand before Him in your own righteousness which is like filthy rags!

VERSES 8-9

1. We just finished looking at God-rejecting idol-making people in Isaiah 41:5-7 and now we see the comparison with the people of God. The people of God should not fall prey to what the lost are doing, worshipping all the things that can't help them! But, by faith, we trust in God as James 2:23 says, "**And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.' And he was called the friend of God.**"

Notice again what verse 8 says, "**But you Israel . . .**" The word "**Israel**" means "governed by God" and thus, God's people have surrendered their lives to Him and not to worthless idols. Now before we boast about how great we are notice that Isaiah then says, "**Jacob, whom I have chosen . . .**" The word "**Jacob**" means "conniver, schemer, heel-catcher."

In other words, we are no different than anyone else, we are no better than anyone else. The only thing we can boast in is the Lord!

2. Now as Christians, we have a special relationship with God. We are His servants and His friend. Jesus said in John 15:15, "**No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.**"

Two points here. First of all we are servants of God, we serve Him but God sees us as a friend. And not only as a friend, but we are children of God, adopted into the family of God. But as you take that in don't bring down God to your level for He still is a holy and righteous God who can only be approached as the blood of Christ cleanses us from our sins. He is Almighty God and we are not! May we live our lives governed by God and not controlled by the idols of this world!

3. But there is such a battle we face each and every day. The world is trying to conform us into its image and God is trying to transform us into His image and how are we going to win this battle? You won't do it in the power of your flesh but look at what we are told next in Isaiah and you will see where our victory is found.

VERSES 10-13

1. Let's think this through. Where does the world look to for comfort, hope, courage? Their idols, the things that they trust in that are not God. But our hope is in the Lord. Remember what we read in Isaiah 41:2-4, God rules the nations. Then, in Isaiah 41:8-9 we saw that God has chosen us and He loves us and thus, **“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** Romans 8:31-39.

In other words, there is nothing we should fear because God is with us, the One who created the Heavens and the Earth, the One who numbers the hairs of our head and who has named all the billions upon billions of stars in the heavens is with us! He will strengthen us, He will help us, He will hold us up with His right hand of power and thus, what more do we need than the Lord? Absolutely nothing, not even these idols!

2. The Lord is then telling them that the nations who have come against them will be brought down, they will not survive. In Genesis 12:3 God said to Abraham, **“I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”** For those nations that turn against Israel they will be judged by God and brought to nothing.

Barnhouse warns us of nations that have come against Israel and where they are at today as he wrote, “When the Greeks overran Palestine and desecrated the altar in the Jewish temple, they were soon conquered by Rome. When Rome killed Paul and many others, and destroyed Jerusalem under Titus, Rome soon fell. Spain was reduced to a fifth-rate nation after the Inquisition against the Jews; Poland fell after the pogroms; Hitler’s Germany went down after its orgies of anti-Semitism; Britain lost her empire when she broke her faith with Israel.”

An interesting warning for those nations who come against Israel, they will be brought down. America needs to wake-up and heed that warning, don’t turn against Israel and don’t turn against God!

3. Listen again to what verse 13 says because it puts things into perspective for us. And keep in mind it is not that we are holding tight to God's hand because our strength is weak, but notice what is taking place. We are told, "**For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'**" Isaiah 41:13.

We are not holding God's hand, for we may slip. But He is holding our hand, and His grip is sure, He won't let go. And I think of this as a parent holding their child's hand, what a comfort that is as you go out into the world. There is no fear because they are holding tight to your hand. That is the image that is being painted here and thus, we don't need to fear! We are weak but He is strong!

VERSES 14-16

1. Some of you if not all of you, including me, feel insignificant, that we can't do it and these verses should bring us great comfort. You see, God calls Jacob a "**worm**" and I think we feel the same way. A worm is pretty insignificant, it has no teeth you might say, at least no teeth to destroy powerful enemies. And the Lord says, "**I will help you.**" I am thankful for that and this corresponds to what we have just read about the Lord being our arm of strength in our lives.

Redpath put it like this, "I don't know of any other than the Creator Himself who can take a weak worm and make it sharp with teeth! God can do that." We can't do anything about our condition, but He can. He will help us because He loves us.

That is the point that Jesus made for us in Matthew 17:20 when He said, "**... for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. . . .**"

And when we overcome great obstacles with the help of the Lord we know it is His work, that He is the One who has helped us accomplish these things. We are a worm but because of His love for us He has given us teeth to fight these battles and these things are always done in Him! And because we know it is the Lord we rejoice in the Him and not in ourselves. We glory in the Holy One of Israel, not in ourselves.

2. Israel is being pictured here of course and God is saying that He will take this nation Israel, who is weak, who is lowly, like a worm, and raise them up. And out of this weakness they will crush those nations that come against them. In 1948, as Israel declared their independence, a war broke out called the War of Independence. Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq came down upon this little nation that was just established. Israel had no formal army. Many did not speak the same language as they came from various nations from around the world speaking different languages. Israel had no war planes, only one Cessna with a pilot and another person on board. As they flew this other person was tossing Molotov cocktails upon the Egyptian war ships below and these war ships retreated.

Understand it was not because of the strength of Israel, they were like a worm, but it was because of their God that they survived that war and were victorious. And you can see this in every war that has been perpetrated upon Israel since that time; the bigger and better equipped enemy was defeated by God. He is fighting for His people.

I think that is our problem many times as Christians, that we try to fight these battles in the power of our strength instead of the power of God. We fight with physical weapons instead of the spiritual weapons that God has given to us. May we learn the lesson, we are a worm but the Lord is right there reminding us, “**I will help you.**”

VERSES 17-20

1. Notice that God wants to provide water for them but He is waiting for them to call upon Him. How do I know that? Because it says in verse 17, **“I the LORD, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will no forsake them.”**

Not only will the Lord provide water for them but shade and rich fertile soil. He will do this by planting all kinds of trees for shade in the hot sun and the roots of these trees will break up the hard rock and make soil. Pine trees will do that and God will use them to answer the cry of His people.

You see, God has resources and supplies we know nothing about, and He loves to supply us from His hidden resources. Keep in mind that when Israel came into the land in the late 1800's and early 1900's, the land was a barren wasteland. The Turks had destroyed it by cutting down the trees. And, according to the Jewish National Fund they have now planted over 230 million trees!

According to the Jewish National Fund they have “helped build over 220 reservoirs and dams that together provide 40% of the water used in Israeli agriculture, and contribute 300 million cubic meters to Israel's water storage capacity. This has added over 66 billion gallons of recycled and flood water to the national water economy, or 10% of the total water supply. This water irrigates over 112, 000 acres of crops that would otherwise use up much of the fresh water available in Israel. It is expected that by 2015, Israel will recycle virtually 100% of its water. JNF has pledged to build 100 more reservoirs to store this recycled water that will then be used for agricultural purposes, freeing up the much needed fresh water for human consumption.”

In other words, do not fear, God is with you, just look to Him to be the strength of your life!

2. As we move on keep in mind that God is still holding court here and the people who are looking to these other god's are on trial. God is going to challenge them to do something instead of just sitting there like a rock!

VERSES 21-24

1. Years ago Pat Benatar had a song, "Hit me with your best shot" and that is kind of what God is saying here. In other words, "You want to worship these false god's instead of me, great. Then let's see what they can do! Let me see the evidence that shows that these are really gods! Hit me with your best shot!" It was a challenge.

Here they are in God's court and they kept silent. They could not speak. And God tells them that they are worthless, which is very true. They are of no help except maybe as a paper weight! And God rebukes those that are placing their trust in them. It is as Paul said and it is very similar to what we see here, "**. . . we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.**" I Corinthians 8:4. Let us not forget that!

2. Now many times as we read these stories we think of very simple people and they needed these gods to help them in their daily life. But again, they were of no help, they could not even help themselves. But because these were ancient people they did those things but not us, we are more sophisticated today. We don't worship idols any more.

Make no mistake about it, idolatry is alive and well and living not only in America but the world. You see, whatever is the passion of your life; cars, sports, money, work, women, men, entertainment, music, whatever it may be, that is your god. You see, these things have replaced in your life the true and living God, these things are more important to you than God. What consumes your life? What drives you? May it be the true and living God!

Redpath sums it up like this as he wrote, “The spiritual conflict experienced today is exactly of the same nature and of the same character as you find depicted here. The issue is still unsettled in the minds of men, though it is settled eternally in the mind of God. The world is still making every effort to put the best possible show upon its worship of the creature rather than the Creator. Its worship is more the patronizing of the shell of religion than bowing in submission before an empty cross, and occupied throne, and the King of kings in glory.”

How true that is. May we learn the lesson regarding these false gods, “**Indeed you are nothing, And your work is nothing; He who chooses you is an abomination.**” Isaiah 41:24.

VERSES 25-29

1. This again is speaking of Cyrus, who was from the east, from Persia and then he went and defeated Media that was in the north. Wolf makes this point as he wrote, “The ‘north’ is included because the Persians conquered the lands north of Babylon before invading her borders.” Thus, when he came upon the Babylonians he did so from the north. And tradition tells us that as they defeated the Babylonians Daniel came out to meet Cyrus and showed him the scroll of Isaiah where God calls Cyrus by name 150 years before his birth. And Cyrus saw the God of Israel which encouraged him to let God’s people go, letting them return to Israel. I think that is the idea of him calling on the name of God.

2. God said that His people, the Jews, would return to their own land. That Cyrus would be the instrument that He uses to free His people from the Babylonian exile. God has said all this while these idols are silent, not able to speak forth a word, let alone speak of future events that would come to pass. No idol, no god, has declared this except the true and living God, for He knows the beginning from the end!

Thus, why trust in emptiness when you can trust in the true and living God who abides forever? As Revelation 19:6 says, “**. . . ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!’**” Compare that to what verse 29 says and Vine renders this close to what the original Hebrew says, “Look at them all! Vanity! Their productions are nothingness; wind and desolation are their molten images.” (W. E. Vine, *Isaiah – Prophecies, Promises, Warnings*, p. 105).

3. One more point before we move on. Redpath sums it up like this, “This chapter is the great ***WILL*** chapter of the Bible. No fewer than fourteen times in the scope of these verses does God reinforce His authority with the promise, ‘I will.’” Let’s take a look at these “I will’s” of God because they are precious promises to us. They are:

- *I will strengthen you.* (Isaiah 41:10)
- *I will help you.* (Isaiah 41:10, 13, and 14)
- *I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.* (Isaiah 41:10)
- *I will make you into a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth.* (Isaiah 41:15)
- *I will open rivers in desolate heights.* (Isaiah 41:18)
- *I will make the wilderness a pool of water.* (Isaiah 41:18)
- *I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree.* (Isaiah 41:19)

- *I will set in the desert the cypress tree. (Isaiah 41:19)*
- *I will give to Jerusalem one who brings good tidings. (Isaiah 41:27)*

May we learn to put our trust in the Lord, the One who is able to do all things, the One who is able to strengthen us to accomplish great things, the One who **WILL!**

ISAIAH 42

VERSES 1-4

1. This is not speaking of Israel or any man but the God-Man, the Messiah Jesus Christ. How do we know this? The reason we can be so certain that this is speaking of the Messiah is that the New Testament clearly shows us as we see it quoted in the New Testament and attributed to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

In Matthew 12:16-21 we are told, **“But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. Yet He warned them not to make Him known, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; And in His name Gentiles will trust.’”**

2. Not only that but the description we read of here we see in the New Testament attributed to Jesus. He was the servant of God as Isaiah 42:1 tells us and in the New Testament Jesus took on that role when He became flesh as Mark 10:45 says, **“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”**

We see that Isaiah 42:1 describes Him as the One in which the Father delights or as we see in the New Testament that Jesus did those things that pleased the Father, as John 8:29 says, **“And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.”**

Also, Isaiah 42:1 says that the Spirit of God will be upon Him and in the New Testament, during Jesus’ baptism the Spirit of God came upon Him, as Matthew 3:16 says, **“When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.”**

And here is the kicker, Isaiah 42:1 says that He was to bring forth justice to the Gentiles. To the Jew, the only reason a Gentile was born was to fuel the fires of hell. And at the gates of Hell stood Father Abraham plucking out every Jew, for no Jew by reason of his birth would ever be cast into Hell, or so they thought. But Jesus came to tear down those walls of separation, uniting Jew and Gentile into one body.

Paul said in Ephesians 2:13-16, **“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.”** You see, Jesus came to those who had a need, or should I say, saw a need for Him in their life, and He touched them and healed them, both Jew and Gentile!

3. Now as you read Isaiah 42:2 don't get the idea that Jesus was some weak person, not at all. But also understand that no matter what, Jesus was always under control. Even turning over the tables of the corrupt money changer's in the Temple Jesus was under control. He did not lose His temper and act in rage, not at all. The New Testament speaks of Jesus being meek and some read that and miss the point. The word “meekness” means, power under control and that is the picture we have of Jesus from the New Testament! (Matthew 11:29).

4. Now verse 3 speaks of a **“bruised reed”** and that Jesus will not break it. What does that mean? First of all reeds grow abundantly along the Jordan River and they are very fragile, even the wind could blow them and bend them. The point is this, as Jesus sees a person bent over in sin, crushed, in despair, He is not going to come by and break them. His desire is to restore people. I am thankful that God does not want to destroy us.

I like the way that Redpath put it as he wrote, “Think again of that reed: something that has been crushed, or hurt by unkindness, a life that is somehow bent and bruised and shattered, without strength or beauty. There is nothing attractive about a reed, and there is certainly nothing very pleasant about the circumstances in which it lives! Usually it grows in a smelly, unsavory swamp.” The Lord has come to our side and He lifts us up.

5. Not only does Isaiah 42:3 speak of a “**bruised reed**” but also a “**smoking flax**” and Jesus will not put it out. What does that mean? Smoking flax would be a wick going out, and the smoke would become irritating. Jesus is speaking to those whose flame is going out, maybe just a glowing ember that is left, and as you are convicted over this condition, Jesus is not going to quench or put out that spark. You see, as we come to Him He will pour out the fresh oil of the Holy Spirit into our lives, and the spark is once again ignited.

Again Redpath wrote, “We call ourselves Christians, but if you are like me, sometimes you are desperately ashamed of how dimly your light burns. There is far more smoke than fire: so little prayer, so little real testimony, so much depression and discouragement. But the Lord says He will not extinguish the smoking flax.” Again, I am thankful for that.

Also, in the Temple there was the altar of sacrifice where the burnt offering or the offering of consecration was offered, as well as the other sacrifices. And in the morning the priests needed to clean out the old ashes so they would not put out the fire, and these ashes would be carried off to a holy place to be buried. It is then the new sacrifices would be offered.

The point is this. You can't live off the past for if you try to the fire will go out. You need to have a fresh walk, clean out the old ashes on a daily basis or your flame will begin to flicker.

It is as Paul said in Romans 12:1, **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”** Be in the Word of God, be in prayer, apply the things of God to your life and walk by faith and those fires will burn brightly in your life!

6. And here is the wonderful thing as our Lord is ruling and reigning. We won't have to worry about injustice for Jesus will bring forth justice in truth or according to the truth. His judgments will be righteous. And please don't ever think that God is going to fail or come up short in setting up His Kingdom. God cannot go back on His Word. Remember what Paul said of Abraham in Romans 4:20-21, **“He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.”** May we believe it and apply it to our lives, you see, the work of the Servant will extend to the whole earth and all the peoples - even those in the distant coastlands you might say, Jew and Gentile will one day serve Him.

7. How can we be sure that He can accomplish these things? God is going to give us some of His credentials showing us that He is more than able to bring these things to pass.

VERSES 5-9

1. First of all the One who created the Heavens and the Earth is more than able to do those things He promised. He created all this out of nothing surely He can accomplish all that He has promised us! You see, God is sovereign, He is in control, never forget that fact.

He not only created the Heavens and the Earth but He also created man and gave breath to man, not through evolution but He created man from the dust of the earth and breathed life into him. We see that spoken of in Daniel 5:23 as Daniel said to Belshazzar the King of Babylon, **“... you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.”** God is in control, make no mistake about that.

2. Now Isaiah 42:6 speaks of the Jewish people and how they were to be a light to the Gentiles, they were to point the way of God to the Gentiles and they failed. And that light they were to bring to them was Jesus. Remember the prophetic words of Simeon, who was told that he would not die until he saw the Lord's Christ. And as Joseph and Mary brought Jesus into the Temple to be circumcised, Simeon took Jesus in his arms as he praised God and said, **“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.”** Luke 2:29-32.

You see, the Father has sent Jesus to be that New Covenant that is found in His blood. He was that sacrificial lamb that took away the sins of the world. But to allow Gentiles to partake of what God had given to the Jews was a very difficult thing for many of the Jews to accept; even Peter struggled with this issue. And for many Jews, to believe that God became flesh and dwelt among them to take away the sins of the world was something that they could not accept even though the Old Testament spoke of this very thing.

Now the thing we need to remember is that we are to be a light to the world as Jesus tells us in Matthew 5:14-16, **“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”** In other words, we are to bring people to Jesus. The light of Jesus should shine in us and through us to touch the lives of others because God’s grace and mercy is extended to all men. It is as Paul said in Titus 2:11, **“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.”**

People are in darkness, their eyes are blind to the things of God and as Isaiah 42:7 tells us that the ministry of Jesus is to set the captives free, those who have been taken prisoner by sin. He came to open the eyes of those who were spiritually blind. Remember the story in John chapter 9 as Jesus opened the eyes of a man who was born blind. He said, **“... ‘One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.’”** John 9:25.

That is the testimony of all of us here, born blind but made to see by the grace and mercy that God has extended to us! He has set us free from the bondage of sin that we were in. That is what it's all about! Christ has impacted our lives and made a difference, or at least He should and we are to share that Good News with those who are blind in sin today! As Jesus said, "**You are the light of the world.**"

3. As we read on into Isaiah 42:8 we see that God is not going to share His glory with anyone, He is not going to share His praise with idols! Now that seems very selfish unless He is the only one who deserves it, and He is! God is zealous about protecting His glory and I have seen more people taken out of ministry by God because they desire the glory instead of giving it to God, the only one who deserves it! Paul said in I Corinthians 3:21, "**Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours.**"

Now let me say this. Jesus shares in the glory of the Father. Remember what He said in John 17:5, "**And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.**" Now don't miss the importance of this. If God the Son and God the Father each share in this glory, and as we saw here that God shares His glory with no one, then that means Jesus must be God as well as the Father and as we have seen in our studies, the Holy Spirit. One God manifested in three distinct persons!

4. What the idols, the false gods could not do, God does. **“Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them.”** Isaiah 42:9. Make no mistake about it; prophecy is one of the strongest evidences we have for the inspiration of the Scriptures. God has told us beforehand the things that would come to pass and as they come to pass it strengthens our faith.

Peter put it like this in II Peter 1:19-21, **“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”**

This verse can be better translated, **“We also have the more sure prophetic word.”** In other words, God’s Word is surer, it can be trusted more than what Peter saw with his own eyes on Mount Hermon in Caesarea Philippi, the Transfiguration! Thus, experiences will come and go but God’s Word will last forever. Experiences may pump us up for a time but God’s Word will transform our lives!

Now, when Peter speaks of the **“prophetic word”** he is not only speaking of prophecy or foretelling future events. Yes, the Bible is over 25% prophetic in nature and some of these prophecies have already come to pass. No other religious book has prophecies, as does the Bible with 100% accuracy!

For instance, the over 330 prophecies of Christ's First Coming that have all been fulfilled, and we can check them out to see how they all did come to pass. That strengthens our faith in regards to the over 500 prophecies related to Christ's Second Coming. Thus, just as it was predicted of Christ's First Coming and it came to pass, so too will He return to set up His Kingdom, you can take that to the bank! And the idea here brings us back to Isaiah chapter 41 when God challenges the idols to speak forth of the things that would come to pass, and they were silent!

Now Peter's point goes even farther, he is also speaking of forth-telling the things of God and thus, he is speaking of the entire Old Testament at this point. He is saying that the Old Testament is the inspired, infallible Word of God, it is even more sure than what he has seen with his own eyes!

Now the way that verses 20 and 21 are structured in the Greek it is not speaking of how someone interprets the Scripture, as important as that is. In the Greek, the way it is structured, Peter is speaking of the Word of God, of prophecy, that it is not from man's doing but God speaking through man. In fact, if verse 20 is confusing, verse 21 I believe clears things up for us. That phrase, "**as they were moved**" in the Greek speaks of being "continually carried" and Luke uses this word to describe how the wind blows a sailing ship across the waters, (Acts 27:15, 17). Thus, as these men of God raised their sails of faith you might say, as they submitted their lives to God, the Holy Spirit carried them along in the direction He wanted. God was the writer and man was the instrument He wrote with. He didn't change the character or styles of the individuals but just spoke through them. Thus, God's prophetic word fulfilled shows us the confidence we can have in His Word.

VERSES 10-12

1. Here we see a song of praise unto God. Now who should sing this new song? That is simple, everyone who has been touched by the work of the Servant. If you have been touched by God, if you have been born again into the family of God through Jesus Christ then you should be singing songs of praise unto Him!

2. Now I also see this as a future event. Not that we should not praise the Lord now, we should. But I think this is also a picture of God setting up His Kingdom here on the earth and as He does praise fills the land. But before that can happen the Lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world will return as the Lion from the tribe of Judah and He will step forth and pour out His wrath on a Christ rejecting world. Yes, He came the first time as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, but He is coming again as a roaring Lion and we will see that as we read on!

VERSES 13-17

1. What we see here is a day of praise because of the victory of the Lord over all false gods. Now God has been very patient, very longsuffering and I am thankful for that but I also recognize that it is coming to an end very quickly. For once the Tribulation Period starts His wrath is poured out and it will be like a woman in labor, there is no stopping it, and the judgments will increase in intensity and frequency until the Kingdom Age is birthed!

2. Now why do we see in Isaiah 42:2 that “**He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street**” and here we are told in Isaiah 42:13 that “**He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud**”? I think it is the difference between His First and Second Coming! He came the first time meek and lowly and He is coming again with a shout and with wrath!

3. Now for those who reject Christ and put their faith in idols, worthless things, they will be put to shame and brought into judgment. Make no mistake about it; in the end it is certain that they shall be greatly ashamed, those who are trusting in carved images or idols.

VERSES 18-20

1. The children of Israel had seen God do many marvelous things and yet it truly did not sink down into their hearts. They heard the things the prophets said, but again they did not believe. God had given them so much, but they refused to see and hear. Be careful about being too harsh on them because people are no different today! How about you?

VERSES 21-25

1. This speaks of their captivity brought about by their continual sin and refusal to repent. It also speaks of their not recognizing their Messiah, as Luke 19:41-44 tell us, “**Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, ‘If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.’**” And destruction came this time by the hands of the Romans in 70 A. D.

2. Now in verse 21 Isaiah tells us that the Lord “**. . . will magnify the law and make it honorable.**” Some would say, “Hey Pastor Joe, we are under the New Covenant, we are not under the Law.” That is true but that does not mean that the Law is bad. Paul said in Romans 7:12, “**Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.**” The problem is not the Law it is us!

And we do not come to God on the basis of keeping the Law; no one could ever do that. Well, I guess only one and that is Jesus, He kept the Law perfectly, but we are born in sin and we have our own sin in our lives. The Law is good and it points out our failure, our sin and it drives us to the Savior, to Jesus!

3. In Isaiah 42:23-25 we see picture of God judging His people, bringing them into captivity and their refusal to repent and get right with God. Millions of Jews were taken into captivity by the Babylonians and out of that, when they were freed to go home by Cyrus King of Persia, only a little under 50,000 returned home. Many became comfortable living in the world!

And Isaiah tells us that this correction from the *LORD* felt like fire to Israel; yet they did not respond to it. In 1 Peter chapter 4 Peter also relates trials and correction from the Lord to fire. He wrote, **“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you . . . For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?”** I Peter 4:12, 17.

Now here’s the thing for us as Christians. We can allow the fire of God’s correction to burn away the sin, the impurity in our lives or we can allow it to make our lives blacker and harder. The choice is yours! May you be open to what God is showing you and be transformed into His image as you surrender to His will! May we take these things to heart and grow in Him!