

## God's challenge to the nations

As we consider this second half of Isaiah, we shall learn much about God and His relationship to His elect. We shall learn about history because a careful study of history is always of value to the people of God. We shall continue to see that Isaiah is about God, His coming Messiah, His Kingdom and His salvation. The promise of God to the remnant that they will return, and will become a greater nation than the earthly kingdom of Israel could have ever hoped to be. We shall see why one can be assured the promises of God are yea and amen. *For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. 2 Cor 1:20* And above all we will see that all things are to the glory of God as He works in behalf of His elect.

This morning we shall see God as both the Judge and litigant. As such, we will see His challenge to the peoples of the earth. Then we will learn about the victorious servant, and finally the great comfort God provides for His people.

### A. Call to the nations to bring their case before God

Isa 41:1 "Keep silence before Me, O coastlands, and let the people renew their strength! Let them come near, then let them speak; let us come near together for judgment.

1. God is both the Judge and one of the litigants
2. God calls the nations to silence, to hear Him out
3. The issue that is to be settled is this, who controls the history of nations
  - a. Who brings nations into existence?
  - b. Who sets their objectives and establishes their progress?
  - c. Who determines who will rule and who will serve?
4. God challenges them to renew their strength, that is, bring forth their best argument
5. What is their best argument - their gods of gold and wood (God will confront this later)
6. Then God asks, who brought this conqueror from the east - probably referring to Cyrus
  - a. Who gave the nations into his hand?
  - b. Who brought down the kings before him?
7. God then proclaims that He alone is the first and the last
  - a. That is, the beginning and end of all things
  - b. Nothing comes to pass unless He ordains it

*Isa 41:4 Who has performed and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? 'I, the Lord, am the first; and with the last I am He.'*"

### B. Next then we have the victorious servant

*V. 8 "But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the descendants of Abraham My friend.*

1. This is what the history of nations is all about
  - a. I do not mean by that national Israel
  - b. I do mean the Seed of Abraham in whom all the nations of the earth will be blessed
  - c. Isaiah here once again is speaking of the kingdom of God that will cover the earth
  - d. He is speaking of a King who will sit upon a throne that will be eternal in the heavens
2. Abraham His friend, can be understood to mean Abraham who I have loved
  - a. Did not choose Abraham because he was a great nation

*Deut 7:7-8 The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; **but because the Lord loves you***

- b. Nor did God choose Abraham because he was such a wonderful person

*Deut 9:5 It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you go in to possess their land*

- 3. It was because God loved Abraham and therefore God called him out from Ur of the Chaldees

*v. 9 You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest regions, and said to you, 'you are My servant, I have chosen you and have not cast you away*

- a. Many a time God could have cast off the descendants of Abraham
- b. But God had made a covenant with Abraham, in your Seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed

- 4. Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham whom He loved

*Ps 135:4 For the Lord has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His special treasure.*

C. Then we have comfort for God's people in trying times

*Isa 41:10 Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'*

- 1. The kingdom of Israel is coming to an end
  - a. Many will be slain by the sword
  - b. Many will be carried away into captivity
- 2. I am with you, I am your God
  - a. Do not be dismayed - looking around in wonderment and fear
  - b. I will strengthen you, I will be your help
- 3. I will hold you with My righteous right hand
  - a. All His acts will be right and just
  - b. His right hand speaks of His power and authority

CONCLUSION: Who brought all nations into existence?

Who controls the whole of history?

Who rules and overrules all the acts of men?

Isa 41:11 "Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel! I will help you," says the Lord and your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Worm? What is man that God is mindful of him?

Do not trust in yourselves, were but worms - maggots

The comfort is this; our hope is not in ourselves but in God who is our Redeemer