

In Control

Text: Isaiah 41:1-16

Date: 7-31-22 10:30 AM

Review/Introduction to Isaiah 41: Even though Israel may doubt God, nations may think they are in power, and the people may believe idols are capable of successfully defending their interests and worthy of man's worship, Isaiah proves that God is firmly **in control**.

Truth: What unfolds in these chapters will prove without a shadow of a doubt that it is God and not man, that it is Jehovah and not idols who will cause His servant Israel to be brought to captivity and then returned.

"Having proved His eternal deity, He then asserts to Israel His right to their faith and trust" (Hailey 342).

I. **God is in control of Cyrus and the nations and demonstrates the foolishness to think otherwise (Isa. 41:1-7).**

God will be vindicated, His claims proven true, followed by the sentence passed down on the heathen nations and their gods.

Who has raised up one from the east? God called someone according to His righteous standard to a specific task.

God has called this one to do His bidding, that of giving the nations to him, trampling over kings, and making his enemy rulers as dust with a sword and pursuing them as windblown straw with his bow.

Who is this person? Most people think it is King Cyrus of Persia.

With God assisting, the servant Cyrus will have his victories assured.

On the basis of who He is, Jehovah declares unequivocally that this is the Lord's doing. God is the One who brings events to pass. God is the One who determines the destinies of generations. He was with and calls in the first generation and He will do the same with the last one and every one in between. Why? Because He is eternal.

Instead of making defensive preparations, the nations resorted to ever increasing idol making and worship in their desire to stop God's plan.

The nations chose to place their hope in hopeless things for the idols would do nothing to stop Cyrus' conquests. The people encouraged each person involved in the idol-making process to quickly create another idol, but it all would be for naught.

II. **God is in control of working out His promises and proving His sovereignty over His people (Isa. 41:8-16).**

As contrasted with the heathen nations who find their comfort in idols, Israel finds her hope and comfort in her God. Israel as servant will be the recipient of God's blessings, the one honored to do a specific task. Israel had been called to be a kingdom of priests, a peculiar treasure and a holy nation (Ex. 19:6).

Through captivity and the subsequent return, the people would receive the consequences of not acting like God's servant and yet learn instruction on how to be a true servant, one who is obedient to God. In God's grace, He would bring forth a better Servant, one who could fully redeem them from all of their sin and truly make reconciliation with God once for all.

God had chosen Israel on the basis of His grace and love and even though they would be exiled because of rebellion and unbelief, God had not rejected or cast them away.

God's presence gives those who trust Him the solace of living without fear. God's presence strips us of any need to be afraid. God's strength guides and keeps the man or woman who willingly lays themselves at His mercy. This is the place of true peace even in life's storms. God's upholding hand will make certain that His promises will not fail. What reassurance to know the eternal God's presence, power, help, and support in all of life's situations.

How would God prove that it was unnecessary to fear?

- Verse 11 – By confounding the enemies. By making them nothing and destroying them.
- Verse 12 – By reducing Israel's opponents to nothing.
- Verse 13 – By promising to walk with His people as He holds their right hand. He will truly help them.
- Verse 14 – By calling them a worm. Why? God's people are feeble, despised, and run over by the heathen nations. Yet, they are still men! God will still help them. God will be their redeemer. On the basis as the Holy One of Israel, even though they would be deeply humiliated, He would continue to see them as His separated people to their separated God! Through the Lord Jesus Christ, like a humbled worm despised and rejected (Psalm 22:6), He will rise and redeem His people.
- Verses 15-16 – By causing His people to overcome their enemies.