

God's Courtroom Verdict

Text: Isaiah 41:17-29

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Truth: The idols' magic powers are insufficient to rise above our God. Why? Because idols are man-made creations whose only real power is to take our love and devotion away from the true God. The verdict is in and the idols are found to be vanities worthless of any worship.

I. God's protective care for His people (Isa. 41:17-20).

Throughout the prior section the Lord has promised to defeat Israel's enemies, and now He promises to provide for their needs through His gracious love. In the midst of the exodus out of Egypt, on the road in the desert to Canaan, and all the way into the future, God will take care of them and provide until the end. His promise will be to not forsake them. No matter how great the need, the promise was that God would meet it.

After the wilderness of affliction, rivers of living water would flow without ceasing. God's response to His thirsty people will be joy, hope, and help.

So His people would:

- **See** – To understand, discern, reveal who is behind this deliverance
- **Know** – To be aware of the specific truth that Jehovah has a special relationship with His people
- **Consider** – To give careful thought or consideration. This word can mean to *set something up or assign*. The Jews will assign God a new position in their thinking (Hailey 348).
- **Understand** together – To make wise, to have insight. The people will recognize who and what God is doing.

II. God's powerful challenge to the idols (Isa. 41:21-29).

God challenges the nations and their idols to produce results in 4 categories:

1. **Tell us about past events.** "Surely the idols must have had some purpose which they have already revealed and which can now be evaluated as to whether it had been fulfilled. If not, they should make known at the present time any purpose of theirs which will have some bearing on the future" (Hailey 349).
2. **Tell us about what is to come.**
God was mocking them all the while knowing the idols couldn't do any of this. Isaiah's argument is this: "Only God can declare what the future will be. If the idols can declare the future, they are the same kind of beings as God. If they cannot, they are not God, and hence can lay no claim to man's worship" (Young 98).
3. **Do something!**

The idols apparently didn't respond. So God draws some concluding thoughts. Behold!! You idols are nothing. Yes, they are made of materials, but their central purpose to act as God is fake, fictitious, and a fraud (I Cor. 8:4).

Idol worship isn't just stupid. Idol worship isn't just foolish. God says those who choose idol worship are an abominable, contemptible sight to God.

God had proven Himself to His people. He had proven everything about His character, name, word, and promises. He had proven His eternal deity, and He had asserted to His people that He had a right to their trust and faith. But, what had the idols done to earn the people's trust and faith? What was the idol's track record? What had their character and actions been like? Were they at all to be trusted, let alone worthy of Israel's worship? The answer is an emphatic NO! The only thing the people should have been doing with the idols was adding them to the burn pile.

God unmistakably replies: “No idol had declared the upcoming captivity, the coming Cyrus, and the return from exile. No idol had proclaimed it. No idol had heard your words. Only God had!

When the evidence was examined, the answer was obvious: The gods of wood and stone that the people were worshipping had been silent. They were unable to prepare the people for what lay ahead, they were unable to protect the people from the onslaught of the enemy, and they were unable to promise any hope for the future.

God now gives the verdict: The idols and their worshippers are vanity. They are false, a delusion, and nothing. Their metal images lack any real substance. They are like the wind and confusion.

Conclusion

While OJ Simpson’s trial ended with confusion and questions, the victory for Jehovah is clear and complete. The idols have been crushed and proven worthless. No god can compare to the true God. So, why would you trust idols?