

**Study 74: Isaiah, Part 30 Isaiah 41** (Guest teacher)

**Isaiah 41**

“Be silent before me, you islands!

Let the nations renew their strength!

Let them come forward and speak;

let us meet together at the place of judgment.

2 “Who has stirred up one from the east,

calling him in righteousness to his service [Or *east, / whom victory meets at every step*]?

He hands nations over to him

and subdues kings before him.

He turns them to dust with his sword,

to windblown chaff with his bow.

3 He pursues them and moves on unscathed,

by a path his feet have not traveled before.

4 Who has done this and carried it through,

calling forth the generations from the beginning?

I, the Lord—with the first of them

and with the last—I am he.”

5 The islands have seen it and fear;

the ends of the earth tremble.

They approach and come forward;

6 they help each other

and say to their companions, “Be strong!”

7 The metalworker encourages the goldsmith,

and the one who smoothes with the hammer

spurs on the one who strikes the anvil.

One says of the welding, “It is good.”

The other nails down the idol so it will not topple.

8 “But you, Israel, my servant,

Jacob, whom I have chosen,

you descendants of Abraham my friend,

9 I took you from the ends of the earth,

from its farthest corners I called you.

I said, ‘You are my servant’;

I have chosen you and have not rejected you.

10 So do not fear, for I am with you;

do not be dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you and help you;

I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

11 “All who rage against you

will surely be ashamed and disgraced;

those who oppose you

will be as nothing and perish.

12 Though you search for your enemies,

you will not find them.

Those who wage war against you

will be as nothing at all.

13 For I am the Lord your God

who takes hold of your right hand

and says to you, Do not fear;

I will help you.

14 Do not be afraid, you worm Jacob,

little Israel, do not fear,  
for I myself will help you," declares the Lord,  
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

15 "See, I will make you into a threshing sledge,  
new and sharp, with many teeth.

You will thresh the mountains and crush them,  
and reduce the hills to chaff.

16 You will winnow them, the wind will pick them up,  
and a gale will blow them away.

But you will rejoice in the Lord  
and glory in the Holy One of Israel.

17 "The poor and needy search for water,  
but there is none;  
their tongues are parched with thirst.

But I the Lord will answer them;  
I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

18 I will make rivers flow on barren heights,  
and springs within the valleys.

I will turn the desert into pools of water,  
and the parched ground into springs.

19 I will put in the desert  
the cedar and the acacia, the myrtle and the olive.

I will set junipers in the wasteland,  
the fir and the cypress together,

20 so that people may see and know,  
may consider and understand,

that the hand of the Lord has done this,  
that the Holy One of Israel has created it.

21 "Present your case," says the Lord.

"Set forth your arguments," says Jacob's King.

22 "Tell us, you idols,  
what is going to happen.

Tell us what the former things were,  
so that we may consider them  
and know their final outcome.

Or declare to us the things to come,

23 tell us what the future holds,  
so we may know that you are gods.

Do something, whether good or bad,  
so that we will be dismayed and filled with fear.

24 But you are less than nothing  
and your works are utterly worthless;  
whoever chooses you is detestable.

25 "I have stirred up one from the north, and he comes—  
one from the rising sun who calls on my name.

He treads on rulers as if they were mortar,  
as if he were a potter treading the clay.

26 Who told of this from the beginning, so we could know,  
or beforehand, so we could say, 'He was right'?

No one told of this,  
no one foretold it,  
no one heard any words from you.

27 I was the first to tell Zion, 'Look, here they are!'

I gave to Jerusalem a messenger of good news.

28 I look but there is no one—

no one among the gods to give counsel,  
no one to give answer when I ask them.  
29 See, they are all false!  
Their deeds amount to nothing;  
their images are but wind and confusion.