



Week 4: Isaiah 41:1-20

GOD'S POWER, MY FEARLESSNESS!

Isaiah 41 is a message of divine courage. God addresses a shaking Israel, assuring them of his constant presence and protection. In stark contrast to the weakness of idols, the Lord promises to be their unwavering strength and guide. If we can now face the future certain that God will not leave us, what room has fear left to wreak havoc in our hearts?

THE SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 41:1-20

- ¹ Listen to me in silence, O coastlands; let the peoples renew their strength; let them approach, then let them speak; let us together draw near for judgment.
- ² Who stirred up one from the east whom victory meets at every step? He gives up nations before him, so that he tramples kings underfoot; he makes them like dust with his sword, like driven stubble with his bow.
- ³ He pursues them and passes on safely, by paths his feet have not trod.
- ⁴ Who has performed and done this, calling the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.
- ⁵ The coastlands have seen and are afraid; the ends of the earth tremble; they have drawn near and come.
- ⁶ Everyone helps his neighbor and says to his brother, "Be strong!"
- ⁷ The craftsman strengthens the goldsmith, and he who smooths with the hammer him who strikes the anvil, saying of the soldering, "It is good"; and they strengthen it with nails so that it cannot be moved.
- ⁸ But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend;
- ⁹ you whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, "You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off";
- ¹⁰ fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

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- ¹¹ Behold, all who are incensed against you shall be put to shame and confounded; those who strive against you shall be as nothing and shall perish.
- ¹² You shall seek those who contend with you, but you shall not find them; those who war against you shall be as nothing at all.
- ¹³ For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, "Fear not, I am the one who helps you."
- ¹⁴ Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel! I am the one who helps you, declares the LORD; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.
- ¹⁵ Behold, I make of you a threshing sledge, new, sharp, and having teeth; you shall thresh the mountains and crush them, and you shall make the hills like chaff;
- ¹⁶ you shall winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the tempest shall scatter them. And you shall rejoice in the LORD; in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.
- ¹⁷ When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I the LORD will answer them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
- ¹⁸ I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.
- ¹⁹ I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive. I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane and the pine together,
- ²⁰ that they may see and know, may consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it.

LIFEGROUP QUESTIONS: WEEK 4

OPENING QUESTIONS

1. Is there a fear you had as a child that you've outgrown? If so, why do you think you're no longer afraid of it?
2. Our fears can change as we get older. What's something you're afraid of now that didn't scare you as a child? What do you think caused this shift in perspective?

DIVING DEEPER

3. In addition to the tricky poetic language, this week's text is also quite long. To better understand the whole, use the chart below to briefly summarize key sections.

v. 1-7	
v. 8-16	
v. 17-20	
v.21-29	

4. Isaiah 41:2 mentions "one from the east." Considering the context, this may likely refer to what foreign nation? That said, the main point Isaiah conveys in the following verses is that only one is in charge. Who is that?
5. What are your thoughts on God using evil nations to fulfill his purposes? What might some of those purposes be?

6. Even in our own lives, God will appoint seasons of difficulties for specific reasons. Consider James 1:2-4 and 1 Peter 1:6-7 for some ideas why.
7. Examining verses 6 and 7, what seems to be the response to adversity depicted? According to verses 8-10, what is the Lord's call to his people when faced with fear?
8. Isaiah 41:10 is a tremendously comforting truth. Rephrase this verse in your own words.
9. Given the challenges we encounter in life, what specific truth emerges from verses 17 to 20? What is the ultimate purpose behind these trials, according to this passage?
10. In verses 21 to 24, the Lord highlights the ineffectiveness of idols by emphasizing their inability to do what? What forms of idolatry do we see in our world today?
11. In a chapter which looks to address the fears of Israel in the midst of an uncertain future, why do you think the Lord connects idolatry and fear in this chapter? Does this connection seem logical to you?