

Listen To What God Says About The Messiah**Isaiah 41:1-13** (vv. 4, 13)

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I. Historical Background & Biblical Context**A. Historical Background**

Until now, most of Isaiah's ministry focused on the years leading up to the exile and addressed a nation caught in spiritual rebellion, moral decay, social injustice, and political conflict. The people had turned away from God (Isaiah 30:9-11), worshipped idols (Isaiah 2:8), followed corrupt leaders (Isaiah 1:23), protected injustice (Isaiah 5:23), and oppressed the poor (Isaiah 10:1-2), among many other offenses. Rather than trust in the Lord, they placed hope in foreign alliances and human strength.

For God's people to be fully restored, their sin had to be addressed. His justice requires accountability and His discipline flows from love, not to destroy, but to redeem, refine, and ultimately restore (Isaiah 30:15,18). As a result, judgment came to both kingdoms: the Northern Kingdom, Israel, fell to Assyria (2 Kings 17:23), and later, the Southern Kingdom, Judah, fell to Babylon. Jerusalem was left in ruins, and the Temple of God destroyed. The Israelites were taken into exile for seventy years as had been forewarned (Isaiah 39:6-7; Jeremiah 25:11; 29:10).

Chapter 41 speaks hope to a future generation of Israelites who would face the pain of exile: The people would be torn from their homeland, witness the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and be forced to live among foreign nations where idols were worshiped. With their homes destroyed, their leaders gone, and their sacred traditions shattered, the people would feel as though their very identity as God's chosen had been lost. Shame, fear, and guilt followed them. Many faced intense pressure to conform, bow to foreign gods, and abandon the faith. Remaining faithful to God often meant risking persecution, and at times, even death. Many may have questioned: Is God still with us? Have His promises to Abraham and David failed? Do we still belong to Him?

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Isaiah 40 begins to answer these questions, reminding them of God's unmatched power, unwavering faithfulness, and His promise to redeem. Chapter 41 continues that reassurance: God had not abandoned them. And the same holds true for us today. In the middle of fear, uncertainty, or hardship, God is still present. His hand still leads, and His voice continues to speak comfort, hope, and strength to those who trust in Him.

B. Biblical Context

God has always been in control of history, present, and future. Immediately after the Fall, God set in motion a plan to redeem humanity and one that He would fulfill through real people, real events, and real promises. Long before Assyria or Babylon rose to power, before Israel and Judah fell, God knew how it would unfold. In His mercy and wisdom, He gave His people words of hope through the prophet Isaiah, a century before the exiles, to remind them that even in captivity, they were not forgotten, and that deliverance would come. Every part of history was preparing the world for the arrival of the Messiah. From giving the Law and establishing covenants to raising up leaders like Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, the judges, priests, and kings - all of it pointed toward Jesus Christ - the Messiah, the promised Redeemer and coming Savior.

II. Lesson: Listen To What God Says About The Messiah (Isaiah 41:1-13, vv. 4,13)

Chapter 41 opens with a sovereign call from God, commanding the entire world to silence in reverence before Him, who is the true and righteous Judge. The nations are invited to present their cases. However, this is not a conversation, it is God who speaks, and the world is called to listen and pay attention.

1. **vv. 1-4.** God makes it clear that He alone rules over history, over nations, over kings, over the present, and over all that is yet to come. He confirms His role as the One who raises leaders, sees what lies ahead, and always keeps his promises. In verses 2 and 3, God speaks of raising "one from the east" to deliver Israel, a prophecy with both immediate and future fulfillment. Its near fulfillment came when Cyrus, king of Persia, swiftly conquered Babylon and God stirred his heart

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to issue a decree, allowing the first group of exiles to return to Jerusalem and
rebuild the Temple of God (Ezra 1-3).

The prophecy also looks beyond and points to the Servant, the Messiah, who:

- Is righteous (v. 2)
- Fulfills God's plan of salvation (v. 2)
 - Defeats Satan, sin, death, and the grave (v. 2; Matthew 28:18)
 - Judges all nations and brings an end to evil (v. 2)
- Advances with unstoppable purpose (v. 3)
- Is unlike any earthly king (v. 3)
- Was obedient to death and rose in victory (v. 3; Philippians 2:8-11)
- Is eternally with God and is God Himself (v. 4; John 1:1-3)
- Stands at the center of God's plan, called forth from the beginning of time (v. 4)
- Is the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega (v. 4; John 8:58; Revelation 1:8)

2. **vv. 5-7.** As God displays His power, nations will tremble in fear. But rather than turn to Him, they turn to each other and resolve to idols. They build, shape, and adorn false gods, even echoing God's words from Genesis by declaring their work "good." But unlike God, who upholds all things by His powerful word, these idols must be nailed down just to stay upright. It is the same today. As we face wars, economic crisis, natural disasters, we often turn to the news, social media, influencers, and politicians for assurance. We also celebrate our own idols whether that is money, fame, technology, relationships, and call them "good." But when crisis strikes, all idols will collapse because they were never meant to bear our trust. Listening to anything other than God will do nothing for us, but hearing and trusting what God says about the Messiah brings truth, peace, and salvation.

3. **vv. 8-9.** Unlike the idol-worshiping nations, Israel was set apart, chosen by God to be His servant. They were called to reflect His glory and represent Him to the world. God initiated the covenant when He called Abraham, formed a nation through his descendants, and guided them even through failure and exile. He says, "You are Mine." "I have chosen you." and "I will not reject you." The Messiah

is the living proof of this promise to His people. This same grace now reaches us through Jesus Christ, and by faith, we share in these promises (Romans 11:1-6).

4. **vv. 10-13.** The Messiah is the ultimate fulfillment of every promise God declares in these verses. The Messiah is the strength we need (v.10), the victory we long for (vv.11-12), and the help we can always trust (v.13).

In verse 10, when God says, “Do not fear, for I am with you,” that means the very presence of Messiah will stand beside Israel and us. He is Immanuel which means “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14). The Messiah will step into weakness, lift the heavy anxious heart, and gives rest to the weary souls (Matthew 11:28-30). He is not distant. He’s here, He’s near, and He knows exactly what we need (Hebrews 4:15-16). In verse 11-12, when God speaks of silencing every enemy, of bringing those who rage and accuse to nothing, we see the shadow of a greater victory. This is ultimately fulfilled through the Messiah’s victory over sin, death, and Satan, where sin is crushed, death is conquered, and Satan holds no claim. Then, in verse 13: “I am the Lord your God, who takes hold of your right hand” (NIV) is a glimpse into the heart of the Messiah. He’s the one who touched the untouchable, lifted the broken, walked beside the lonely; and He will not change. He is the one who will reach for trembling hands, look people in the eye, and gently say, “Don’t be afraid. I’m right here. I’ve got you”.

III. Conclusion

In Isaiah 41, God’s voice cuts through fear, failure, and false hopes to remind His people that He is still sovereign, still near, and still faithful. Every promise He made finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the Messiah: the One who governs history, silences our enemies, strengthens the weary, and walks beside us in every storm. He remains the First and the Last, the one who reaches into our pain and says, “Do not fear... I am with you.” When life feels overwhelming and our strength runs low, we stand firm in the One who conquered death and promises to never let us go.

The call in Isaiah 41 is simple: **listen**. Listen with a heart that believes, responds, and rests in what God has spoken about the Messiah. Let His Word shape how you face fear, how you fight your battles, and how you understand who you are in Him.