

**“Nobody but God Foretold the Coming of the Holy One”****Isaiah 41:21-29 (26-27)****Teacher, Rev. Alice Tamrie****I. Historical Background and Biblical Context****A. Historical Background**

Some scholars have studied the Book of Isaiah like a botanist studies flowers, dissecting and analyzing them. Using this method demonstrates the beauty and unity of the book, like that of a rose, is almost forgotten as the different parts are pulled apart for examination. We have seen and experience the chapters of Isaiah captivity, how the surrounding nations are inspected, the sins and misery of the people along with the salvation and confidence of God and his care; and the now the promises and the outpouring of the Spirit, the exaltation of the righteous and faithful all turned into a garden of the Lord, with a view of the deliverance from the enemy and finally the predictions, warnings and promises rich with the final coming of Jesus, the Messiah. Nobody but God can do all this!

**A. Biblical Context**

The purpose of Isaiah is to reveal that salvation, physical and spiritual, is of the Lord. This study in Chapter 41 reveals who is the Helper of Israel. Clearly, these verses reveal who the mighty one is. God is making it personal by the “I” which identifies that it is God who was the first one to declare these things to Zion and Jerusalem and this revelation did not come from idols and their prophets. True prophecy came first and only through Jehovah and no one else. **Nobody but God Foretold the Coming of the Holy One.**

**II. The Lesson: Nobody but God Foretold the Coming of the Holy One**

**A review summary of Verses 21-25:** The case is present by the Lord Himself! OMG! He literally informs all to set forth your arguments! When we review Verses 1-20 the Divine calls for silence usually anticipate judgment saying, “quiet down” and renew your strength that results from faith with unassisted human strength. Since God has made a covenant with Abraham, he is doing the same with Israel. God has the strength to deliver and give it to you so fast it was as though your feet did not touch the ground! God’s sovereignty is such that the Lord is eternal not only in that He is not bound by time, but also in that He is the Master of time. He is the Helper in having his assistance so sure

that you know the help is from the living God. There is no assured position that that of a faithful servant is highly honored by the Lord than Prophet Isaiah. No idol can do this divine thing. Nobody but God. Those that are faithful are ones who are chosen and aspire and rely explicitly on than that of his servant. God is the one who rules over the ends of the earth. He bared his right hand and asked that we fear not. The people of God are given renewed assurance that their formidable enemies will be brought to nothing. “I” pulled you in from all over the world, called you in from every dark corner of the earth! Believers are everywhere! Wow, what a word-count on it. Everyone who had it in for you will end up out in the cold-real losers—empty-handed and when you look for them, your adversaries-you won’t find them, not a trace, not even a memory. We have nothing to fear. As threshed grain is tossed in the air to separate the chaff, so too are the victorious people of God who has complete control over his people. God’s provision is bountiful, just as it was in Exodus!

The people’s reception of God’s power and care is the primary concern. God’s hand indicates his power and strength. The case presents “things to come” are the mighty acts of God and what the people would prophetically go through. Ultimately, this refers to the gathering of God’s people and the establishment of Christ’s kingdom on earth. Idols cannot tell the past or the future, by the Lord God can!!

### **1. vv. 21-24: God continues with a daring divine challenge.**

“Set out your case for your gods and bring out your evidence, take the stand on behalf of your idols, offer arguments, assemble reasons. Spread out your facts before us so that we can assess them ourselves. Ask them, “If you are gods, explain what the past means, or, failing that, tell us what will happen in the future. Can’t do that? How about doing something-anything! Good or bad-whatever. Can you hurt us or help us? Do we need to be afraid?” They say nothing, because they are nothing-sham gods, no-gods, fool-making gods.

The hand of the Lord has done this; the Holy One of Israel has done this deliverance. Nobody but God. God alone, and Him alone, knows the final outcome. He has the foreknowledge over everything. Whether something, whether it is good or bad, but you, you are less than nothing! Idolatry and abominations are utterly worthless; whoever chooses such is detestable. What is God to the believer and faithful: Our God, Strength, Helper, Upholder, Redeemer, The Holy One and Power, Supplier of needs, and Gardener! When we praise God with such names, He is well pleased and smiles down upon us. As is said in 41:20: That we have reasons for blessings: That they may see,

and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it.

But there is a challenging prediction – bring it on Cyrus

## **2. v. 25. No Body but God can Foretell about the Future.**

The idea is that God was the first one to declare these things to Zion and Jerusalem, and revelation did not come from idols and their prophets. True prophecy came first and only through Jehovah and no one else.

Cyrus was a powerful king of Persia, who allowed the Jewish captives to return to their homeland in Jerusalem after he led the Persians to become the dominant nation in the ancient world. He conquered the Medes, Lydians, and Babylonians. He is praised most highly in the OT, in Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1, where he is called God's "shepherd" and His "anointed." He was known in Persia as a wise and tolerant ruler. He was able to gain the goodwill of the varied ethnic and religious groups within his large empire. It was not that Cyrus became a follower of Israel's God; rather, he described himself as the one who received "all the kingdoms of the earth." He declared that God "commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem" (2 Chr. 36:23). He was later killed in a battle and his tomb still stands at Pasargadae in southwestern Iran and succeeded by his Son, Cambyses II., who did not personally know God, nevertheless called on God's name when he released the exiles! We may not understand but God uses individuals, people and nations as instruments of Judgment. He acknowledged Jehovah as the true God and the source of his success (Ezra 1:2). God and only God can stir up the Spirit in the most unlike.

## **3. vv. 26-27. God Himself is asking/speaking to the question of "Who".**

**He, God, is the only one as prophesized by Isaiah that from the beginning, could know or beforehand all things, so we could say, "He was right"? No one told, no one foretold, no one heard any words.**

Here God claimed the making of a plan from eternity to eternity, and the making of predictions from the beginning, long before they came to pass, revealing to man what was to happen. This is what He challenged idols to do, as in vs. 21-24, in order to prove their divinity. Everyone knows that only a supernatural Being could do such things; and there are over 6,000 verses of prophecy to confirm this fact! Nobody but God foretold the coming of the Holy One.

The Purposes of prediction (verses 26-29)

- That the end might be known from the beginning (v.26; Acts 15:18; Eph. 1:10; 2:7; 3:10-11)
- That these things might be known beforehand
- That Jehovah might be recognized as the only true and living God being the only one capable of making the future known.
- That such predictions might be known as coming from God, and not from idols or their prophets
- That man might see how absolutely/unconditionally powerless he is to reveal the future (28)
- That idols may be proved less capable of foretelling the future than man (29)

Reasons for God's dealing: that we would **see** God's eternal love; that they might **know** that it is God who provides, protects, and supplies the riches of life here and hereafter; that we might **consider** our ways and be grateful for the providence of God and that they might **understand**, as a whole that God has planned and created all things for the highest good of all.

#### **4. vv. 28-29. Nobody but God Foretold the Coming of the Holy One.**

The bearer of the good tidings from Jehovah referring primarily to Isaiah himself, and secondarily to other prophets who brought such tiding (27, Acts 3:21; Heb. 1:1-2). The reasons for God giving predictions are many, but the main one is that HE is the only one who can foretell future events. No man or his idol can make such things known or even give counsel concerning such tidings. Idols are all vanity, their works are nothing, they are wind and are confusion. Keep the main thing the main thing: **Nobody but God Foretold the Coming of the Holy One.**

### **III. CONCLUSION**

**Prayer: God, nobody but you can do all things well. We acknowledge your power to restore us with your Divine Hand. The future is hidden in you. You are our Helper, a constant reminder, even in tumultuous times. May your spirit stand and be stirred in us so that we may see, know, consider and understand that the Divine Hand of the Lord has done this. If we boast of anything, we boast of you, O God. Amen!**