

## ***Session 14 The Forerunner Message in Isaiah 41-42***

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

A. Isaiah spoke this to the people of Judah sometime before the Assyrians invaded the land in 701 BC.

*Isaiah 41 and 42 go together. Most commentators would agree to that. It is one big topic covered over two chapters. If I had to sum it up in one word, it would be the word, justice. Now you know that Isaiah 42 is a famous chapter. It is one of the famous Isaiah chapters where the Messiah comes and establishes justice in the nations of the world. Isaiah 41 is leading up to the great justice chapter of Isaiah 42.*

*Like many of the other chapters, Isaiah spoke this message to the people of Judah, to the southern kingdom, some time before the great Assyrian invasion of which the nation was fearful because the Assyrians, the super power of that day, were coming down to Judah, surrounding them, and destroying the cities.*

*However, Isaiah 41-42 is far more about the generation that the Lord returns, though it did help the people in Isaiah's day. They did not understand there was a big storyline where billions of people would be on the earth in the generation when God transitions the earth to the age to come. That is where the ultimate lessons of Isaiah 41-42 are really applied in a global way.*

*So we have the outline here:*

B. Outline for Isaiah 41-42

- 41:1-7 The Lord controls human history
- 41:8-16 The Lord will help Israel
- 41:17-20 The Lord will supernaturally help Israel return to the land
- 41:21-29 The powerlessness of false gods
- 42:1-4 God's Servant will establish justice in the nations
- 42:5-9 God's Servant will give light to the nations
- 42:10-17 The end-time prayer movement and Jesus' second coming
- 42:18-25 God's discipline of Israel

C. Isaiah 41-42 should be read as one long prophetic message. These two chapters together set forth important events and principles employed in God's "Justice Masterplan" for human history. These chapters encouraged Judah in Isaiah's generation not to be fearful in light of the Assyrian attack against their cities. The ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah 41-42 is in the generation the Lord returns.

D. ***Isaiah 41-42*** highlights the Lord's "Justice Masterplan"— it includes releasing an unprecedented ***outpouring of the Holy Spirit***, sovereignly ***raising up the Antichrist***, and allowing ***demonic activity*** and ***sin to come to fullness*** (to give one generation the unique opportunity to freely chose to mature in love for God or to pursue the deep things of Satan and sin; Dan. 8:23; Rev. 14:18; 17:5; 18:5), resulting in an unprecedented ***persecution*** of the Church and Israel (including the imprisonment and martyrdom of some; Rev. 12-13), an unprecedented release of ***judgment*** on the nations (Antichrist's empire; Rev. 6-19), an unprecedented ***destruction of cities*** with a ***death toll*** reaching half of the earth's population (Rev. 6:8; 9:15), a great ***falling away*** from the faith (2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5), and a loving but intense ***divine discipline*** of the Church and Israel.

- E. The Lord's "Justice Masterplan" will result in a **purified Church** (Dan. 11:33-35, 12:10; Rev. 19:7), **a great ingathering of souls** (Rev. 7:9), **Israel's national salvation and millennial glory** (Isa. 60), and the earth being **filled with God's glory** (Hab. 2:14) including every sphere of society being **filled with love and justice** (Isa. 42:4) and the **garden-of-Eden** conditions restored to nature.
- F. Isaiah 42 and Isaiah 49 are two prophecies related to Jesus' coming that have many parallels; thus they should be studied together.

## II. THE LORD CONTROLS HUMAN HISTORY (ISA. 41:1-7)

- A. God summons the nations to ask them who controls history (41:1-4). He called them to a discussion about who is able to "strengthen" a nation. The Lord was asking, in essence, who was responsible to raise up the "military super powers" of any given generation. The message emphasizes the superiority of the Lord over idols and that He alone controls history.

<sup>1</sup>***"Keep silence before Me, O coastlands, and let the people [nations] renew their strength! Let them come near, then let them speak; let us come near together for judgment [a formal decision].***  
<sup>2</sup>***Who raised up one from the east? Who in righteousness called him to His feet? Who gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? Who gave them as the dust to his sword, as driven stubble to his bow?*** <sup>3</sup>***Who pursued them, and passed safely by the way that he had not gone with his feet?*** <sup>4</sup>***Who has performed and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD, am the first; and with the last I am He."*** (Isa. 41:1-4)

*Let's look at verses 1-4. It is kind of an unusual passage. What is happening is the Lord is summoning the nations to a discussion. He just said in the verse before—back up one verse—Isaiah 40:31. "Those that wait on the Lord will renew their strength." That is the verse right before. The Lord is saying, as it were, "Nations, I will invite you to renew your strength as well on My terms." So it is not only a promise for Israel, but it is for the nations as well. You have to know this: that if you are going to be strong in that hour of history. you have to do it on His terms and you have to relate to Him on His terms and trust Him on His terms.*

*Now, of course, many of the nations will not do that at all. The Lord has created this dialogue with the nations. The real issue that He is going to make, though the invitation is sincere—though obviously most nations will not receive it, but the invitation is sincere—the real point is the Lord wants to establish who is in control of the nations. That is what is really going on. Particularly, who is the one who establishes the super power in the world at any given generation? At any given generation there are typically one or two super powers that affect all the nations around them. What the Lord is saying through Isaiah, "Who do you think the One is that determines who that super power is? Who gives them the strength to occupy that position of influence that affects all the nations around them?"*

*So, we will look real briefly at this passage. He says in verse 1, "Keep silent before Me." He is telling all the nations, "Pay careful attention and do not answer the question I am going to ask you too quickly." That is kind of what the Lord is saying here. He says, "O coastlands and all the peoples," which means the nations. He says, as it were, "I invite you to renew your strength as I have made strength available to Israel. Let's do this," the end of verse 1, "come near Me and let's have a big discussion. Let's come up with some formal conclusions, draw near together to discern what is really happening on the global level." That is what He is really talking about.*

He goes on, “Here is the question of the hour.” Now this was the question of the hour in Isaiah’s day. It is really going to be the question of the hour in the generation the Lord returns when the Antichrist empire emerges on the earth. The question is, “How did he get to this position of influence? Where is God at, that some empire is so powerful and so oppressive?” So the Lord asks the question in verse 2, “Who raised up the empire that came from the east?” There are several different interpretations regarding which is that empire. Is that Assyria or is that Cyrus with Persia? That does not really matter. The real point is, who raised the super power, whether it is the Assyrians, the Babylonians, or the Persians?

He says in verse 2, “Who gave the nations to this empire? Who made them bow down and gave this empire authority over those nations? Who gave them as dust to the sword?” In other words, who caused all the other nations to be defeated by this evil empire? Who has performed it, calling the generations from the beginning? There is a master plan from way back when. Who is the head of that plan?

Of course, He was really not talking to the Gentile nations. They were not really listening to Him. Israel was listening. The Lord was saying, “Israel what do you think the answer is?” He said, “Here is the answer. I, the Lord, I am the One who establishes the authorities.” That is one of the great offensive truths about the end times, that the Lord Himself raises up the Antichrist.

It is the devil’s rage. It is man’s sin being allowed to be vented in a full extreme. God is overruling it all to purify the Church and bring about the salvation of Israel and the salvation of the nations. To bring a just judgment on wickedness on a global level. The Lord would say, “I have a master plan. I am the One who is orchestrating this whole thing.”

- B. **Keep silence:** The Lord called the nations to listen carefully to Him before they spoke arrogantly about their national strength (41:1). The call for silence was to alert them to listen carefully.
1. The Lord wants all to know that He is in control of the nations and that He alone establishes the “super powers” in the world in any given generation. The message in this passage is that the Lord has a master plan and is orchestrating the course of history.
  2. The call to be silent was a call to pay close attention and not to answer the Lord too quickly.
  3. **Draw near:** This is a call to discern what is happening on the international scene and why.
  4. **Coastlands:** At that time, coastlands spoke of far-away places across the Mediterranean Sea.
- C. **Renew their strength:** The Lord offered to strengthen the nations—this offer parallels how He had just offered to strengthen individuals (40:31). The nations were invited to “renew their strength” by embracing and trusting His leadership. The nations cannot renew their strength by honoring their false gods, by building up their military, or by simply making new political alliances (41:5-7).

He says, “Come, O nations, and renew your strength.”

Again the nations would think they are strong because of their military build-up. They would say, “It is our strategy. It is our army. We put our money in our army. It is good planning. It is our idols that we are worshipping.”

God says, “No, no, that is not why a nation gets to the front, to the place of being a super power and an empire.”

1. Isaiah had just declared that the strength of nations was nothing compared to God (40:15). The combined power of “all” nations is insignificant in their ability to oppose God (40:17). The powerful empires of the ancient world like Assyria, Babylon, and Rome, and even the end-time empire of the Antichrist, are no greater challenge to God than a drop of water.  
**<sup>15</sup>Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket...<sup>17</sup>All nations before Him are as nothing, and they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless. (Isa. 40:15-17)**
  2. **All nations:** The Antichrist’s empire with its 10-nation confederation will have more money, military power, and public support than any empire in history, yet it will be as nothing to God.  
**<sup>12</sup>The ten horns...are ten kings...<sup>13</sup>They will give their power...to the beast [Antichrist].  
<sup>14</sup>These will make war with the Lamb...<sup>17</sup>God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose... to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. (Rev. 17:12-17)**
  3. One important question in the end times will be “Who raised up the Antichrist’s empire?” Many will be offended by the truth that the Lord will raise up the Antichrist. The devil’s rage and man’s sin are involved, but God will overrule all that is negative to purify the church, bring in the end-time harvest and the salvation of Israel, and more.
- D. **Who raised up one from the east:** The Lord was asking who raised up the military “super power” from the east who defeated many nations (41:2-3). Two suggestions for who was this unnamed king and military conqueror from the east are the Persian King Cyrus or the Assyrian King Sennacherib. The emphasis here is to know that God is responsible for raising the “super powers” in history.
1. **Who was the man from the east in 41:2-3?** Who is the man who perished in a war against Judah? Later, in Isaiah 41, the fate of the conquer from the east was described as perishing (41:11-12).  
**<sup>11</sup>...All those who were incensed against you shall be...disgraced; they shall be as nothing and those who strive with you shall perish...<sup>12</sup>Those who war against you shall be as nothing... (Isa. 41:11-12)**

*He asked the question, “Who raised up this man who is over the empire?” Again, whether it is the Assyrians or whether it is Cyrus from Persia, it does not really matter. The real point is, God is the controller of history. Now the reason God wants Israel to know that in their day is so that they will not be fearful. The God who is allowing this evil empire to get in place also says, “Yet I am a God in covenant with you. I love you, and I have plans for good for you. So if I am the master mind behind it, and I am in covenant with you, you do not have to be afraid **if** you will relate to Me on My terms.”*

*The real issue is—and as messengers of the gospel of the kingdom, as end-time messengers we want to ask this question and give the answer—“Where does a nation find its strength to get in that place of power?” The answer is, “If we are in covenant relationship with God, because the Lord has a purpose for us, we need not be afraid of what is going on.”*

- a. **Sennacherib:** This man may be the Assyrian King Sennacherib who warred against Judah in 701 BC. God raised Sennacherib up to conquer many nations, assuring that his “enemies will become like dust” (29:5). The Assyrians perished in context to a war with Judah on the night when the Angel of the Lord killed 185,000 of their soldiers (37:36; 41:11-12).
  - b. **Cyrus:** Many suggest that this man was Cyrus, but he never warred against Judah nor God did cause him to perish in the context of a war with Israel (41:11-12).
  - c. **Nebuchadnezzar:** God raised up Nebuchadnezzar to subdue many nations (Jer. 22:3-10; 25:8-11), and he warred against Jerusalem (586 BC). The prophecy that the Lord would make Judah’s enemies in this war “as nothing” (41:11) as the Lord strengthen Judah against them (41:10-14), and Nebuchadnezzar’s army being reduced to nothing in context to warring with Judah. This does not describe what happened historically.
2. **Who in righteousness called him to His feet?** God has a righteousness purpose is raising up the various military “super powers” in any given generation. This conqueror from the east was raised up to be used by God in the outworking of His righteous plans. Being called to “His feet” implies marching in line with God’s leadership and under His banner.
  3. **Who gave the nations before him:** The Lord gave him victory over many nations and kings.
  4. **Who gave them as the dust to his sword?** The Lord has caused nations to fall before this conqueror from the east. The Lord empowered him to pulverize his enemies into dust (41:2).
  5. **Who pursued them** (41:3): He conquered nations engaging in new military strategies and traveling safely with his army on new routes that had never been tried in a military advance. Traveling successfully on new untested routes was one evidence that God was helping him.
  6. **I the Lord:** He was so successful because the Lord called him to fulfill His purposes.
  7. **The First and Last:** This title describes the Lord’s sovereignty over history. He alone is the orchestrator of history. All history, from the first to the last events, is under His leadership.
    - a. The Lord has a plan for His people that cannot be stopped. He oversees every detail. Nothing will surprise Him, and nothing can hinder Him. Thus, we need not fear because the ultimate plan will come to pass even though enemies resist it along the way.
    - b. *The First and the Last* is the title Jesus used most in Revelation (1:11, 17; 2:8; 22:13). This title is an interpretive key to connect the storyline of Isaiah with the storyline of Revelation, concluding that Jesus is the Messiah and Yahweh, the First and Last.
- E. The message to Israel is that if they walked in right relationship with the Lord, then they would have a glorious future and need not fear the future—even under end-time attacks by the Antichrist.
  - F. The nations rejected God’s offer in 41:1 to be strengthened (41:5-7). Instead, they sought to gain strength from military alliances with each other (41:6) and from their idols (41:7).

<sup>5</sup>*The coastlands saw it and feared, the ends of the earth were afraid...*<sup>6</sup>*Everyone helped his neighbor, and said to his brother, “Be of good courage!”* <sup>7</sup>*So the craftsman encouraged the goldsmith; he who smooths with the hammer inspired him who strikes the anvil, saying, “It is ready for the soldering”; then he fastened it with pegs, that it might not totter. (Isa. 41:5-7)*



1. **Feared:** The Gentile nations were afraid when they saw evidence of the God of Israel's power in raising up a conqueror from the east (41:5).
2. **The craftsman:** Isaiah described some of the process in making idols involving craftsmen, goldsmiths, and others (41:7). These workmen encouraged each other in making idols. Yet, the idols were so weak, being held up only by a peg to keep from tottering or falling over.
3. The end-time message is that the Lord will raise up a global "super power"—the Antichrist's empire with its 10-nation confederation. It will have more money, technology, military power, and public support than any empire in history. Many will be afraid of this global "super power," but the Lord will be in sovereign control of what happens.

### III. THE LORD WILL HELP ISRAEL (ISA. 41:8-16)

- A. The Lord's promises to help Israel are ultimately fulfilled in context to Jesus' return (41:8-16). The Antichrist's empire will be a global "super power" that will attack Israel (Rev. 12-13).

***<sup>8</sup>"But you, Israel, are My servant...the descendants of Abraham My friend. <sup>9</sup>You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest regions...I have chosen you and have not cast you away: <sup>10</sup>Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you... <sup>11</sup>Behold, all those who were incensed against you...and those who strive with you shall perish... <sup>12</sup>Those who war against you shall be as nothing, as a nonexistent thing... <sup>14</sup>Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel! I will help you," says the LORD.. <sup>15</sup>"Behold, I will make you into a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth; you shall thresh the mountains and...make the hills like chaff. <sup>16</sup>You shall winnow them, the wind shall carry them away...you shall rejoice in the LORD, and glory in the Holy One of Israel." (Isa. 41:8-16)***

*Okay, the Lord will help Israel. Let's just fast forward a little bit. Now when this super power strikes Israel in their day, the Lord says, "I will help you if you relate to Me on My terms." Again, this passage has a clear end-time context. There are four or five dimensions of this passage, verse 8-16, that make clear its ultimate fulfillment is in the end times, which means in the presence of the Antichrist empire.*

*The reason that this is so important—of course in Isaiah's day they did not know about an Antichrist; they did not know anything about that, but God does—now just imagine there is one time in history where there will be billions of people on the earth in the most evil empire ever, and that is the hour of the great harvest, the purifying of the Church, and the salvation of Israel. All of those come out of the crucible of the fire of that wicked empire together with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is one master plan where God is working it all together. If we do not get the master plan, and all we see is the evil, and we do not see the end result, then the evil offends us. We draw back in fear, and we just want to quit. We want to give up and give in. The Lord would say, "No, no, no! I am the One in covenant with you. I am the One who loves you. I am the One who has a plan for you. I am overseeing it. Do not give in. Do not cave in. I have a plan that is bigger than the immediate things that are happening right now in the nations."*

*So the Lord spoke these words of promise to Israel. Again, they clearly have an end-time fulfillment you'll see when you read the passage because they are promises that have never happened in history in any full way. They will come to fullness in one short hour of time.*

*The point of these promises is that God is releasing them in context to God raising up the powers that subdue other nations of which we know with New Testament revelation that is the Antichrist empire with his ten-nation*

*confederation which will be more powerful, more cruel, more wicked, have more resources, more military, more force, and even more popular support in the earth than any empire in history.*

*That is the context in which, again, God is going to bring the great harvest, the purifying of the Church, the salvation of Israel. He is going to allow people to exercise their choice to the fullness to go as deep in sin as they want or as deep in righteousness. In one generation there will be the most polarized extremes of human choices in this environment. It is an optimum environment for the Church to be purified.*

- B. ***Descendants of Abraham:*** Israel need not fear because the God who raises up the Antichrist is in covenant relationship with Israel. Therefore, He will strengthen (41:1) Israel to prevail over all those who war against them (41:12). The God who is over all the nations loves Israel, and He is the master mind behind His plans to use evil kingdoms to fulfill His purposes. Those in covenant with God need not be afraid of what unfolds in the end times—all will work for their good (Rom. 8:28).

*Well, He gives the promises to Israel. Through the years Israel has appreciated these promises here in verse 8-16. They do not really understand how important these promises are going to be down the road. We are going to speak these promises over Israel when we comfort them. Not only that, we are going to speak these promises over our own lives, because whatever is true of God's goodness for Israel never changes, so He has the same tenderness and goodwill towards all of His people in the earth. I look at these verses and say, "I am going to comfort Israel with verses 8-16. I am also going to feed my heart on them. I am going to feed the Body of Christ on these truths as well."*

*He starts off in verse 8. He says, "You, Israel, you are My servant. You are descendants of Abraham, My friend." In other words, "I am in covenant relationship with you." That was to make them be of good cheer. He just got through saying that there was going to be a powerful empire that was going to be terrifying to the nations. "No, I raised them up, and you and I are in covenant relationship." They nod, "Okay, that is good."*

- C. ***I have taken from the ends of the earth*** (41:9): Isaiah described a time when the Lord will gather Jewish people from farthest regions of earth to the land of Israel. God promised to regather Israel from ends of the earth, even from the farthest regions in the end times (Isa. 11:11-16; Zech. 10:8-12; 8:7-8). This implied that many Jewish people would be refugees in many nations instead of living in the land of Israel. This challenging reality is developed more in 41:17 and 42:22-24.

***<sup>8</sup>"I will...gather them...and they shall increase...<sup>9</sup>they shall remember Me in far countries; they shall live, together with their children, and they shall return." (Zech. 10:8-9)***

*Verse 9, now He is looking forward to the end. It is a time when God has taken Israel from the ends of the earth, from the furthest regions of the earth, and caused them to come back to the land. Now, that happened a little bit after the Babylonian captivity and a little bit at other times. At the end of the age, it is when the Jewish people have been scattered to the earth, verse 9. All through the years they have wandered, the 2,700 years since Isaiah. They might have wondered, "When are we going to be in the furthest ends of the earth that we have to be brought back?" Isaiah might not have understood the details.*

*The Spirit of God was saying, "You are going to need this truth, and you are going to need this encouragement." Of course, now as we have seen events unfold, Israel is scattered—Jewish people—in the ends of the earth. The Lord is bringing them back to the land. He will bring that to fullness when Jesus returns. It is happening now in historic numbers. I mean they say a million Jewish people with Jewish heritage from Russia alone or from the Russian-speaking countries, a million of them have returned to Israel in the last twenty, twenty-five years. It is the greatest regathering that I know of anywhere in history.*

1. About 50,000 Jewish refugees returned to Israel from Babylonian captivity in 536 BC.
  2. Over 3,000,000 Jewish people have immigrated to Israel since 1948, after being scattered to the nations by Rome in AD 70—a scattering that lasted almost 2,000 years.
  3. Over one million Russian-speaking Jewish people have moved to Israel since 1990.
- D. ***I have chosen you and have not cast you away***: Even though God disciplined Israel as a nation at various times due to their sin, they should not fear that their national calling was being revoked by God. In the midst of Israel's most difficult times, the Lord always preserved a remnant.
- I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! ... <sup>2</sup>God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew...<sup>4</sup>But what does [God]...say to him [Elijah]? “I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men...”<sup>5</sup>Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. <sup>6</sup>And if by grace, then it is no longer of works... (Rom. 11:1-6)***
- E. ***Fear not*** (41:10, 13, 14): Isaiah exhorted them three times in this passage not to give in to fear. When people are fearful, they are vulnerable to making wrong choices. Some in Israel fainting for fear will be deceived into embracing the Antichrist as their messiah. The Lord exhorted Israel to “fear not” seven times in Isaiah 41-44 (41:10, 13, 14; 43:1, 5; 44:2, 8).
- <sup>26</sup>***...men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming... (Lk. 21:26)***

*He says in verse 10, “Fear not.” In these eight verses, the exhortation, “Fear not,” is actually given three times, because Israel is going to be fearful in that day. Now the reason He says over and over, “Fear not,” is because if you become fearful, you make bad decisions.*

*I have here the passage in Luke 21. We have referenced it many times, that Jesus said that in that hour men, strong men, believers even, not just unbelievers, their hearts will fail them for fear. Not they will have a heart attack, though I think that means a little bit of that. They will just give up, and they will just give in. They will agree to whatever they have to agree to in order to get out of trouble with the oppressive powers that be.*

*When you become fearful you make really wrong decisions. So He is telling Israel 2,700 years ahead of time, three times in this one short passage, do not yield to fear. You do not have to, because you are in covenant with the God who is over it all, and He loves you. He loves you.*

*Verse 10, “Fear not, I am with you.” You can read the whole passage. I have edited it down here. “I will strengthen you.” Over and over in this passage, “I will uphold you. I will be with you.” In other words, “My power will be there. Take My narrative, not the Antichrist narrative. If you become fearful, you will join His empire for the instant relief and the sense of pressure being lifted. You do not want to do that; the results are disastrous. Number one, he will turn on you, Israel. He will take his mask off and try to destroy you. Second, you will be in trouble with Me forever.”*

*Fear is probably the greatest vulnerability point of the human family at the end of the age, because with fear we are not objective about the biblical narrative. But if we have the biblical narrative, and we have the promises, we can ward off fear and we can walk in peace. We get the bigger storyline.*

1. They were fearful because of the divine discipline described in the previous verse (42:25). They were not to fear that their purpose in God was over either nationally or individually if they responded to God's grace and leadership.



2. Israel is not to be afraid of any powerful empire (41:10) because the God who raised up the “super power” is in covenant with Israel (41:8).
3. **Comfort Jerusalem** (40:1): The Body of Christ is given specific language in 41:10, 13 to use to comfort Jerusalem. We are to speak God’s promises to them—I will uphold you; I am with you, I will strengthen you (41:10), I will hold your right hand (41:13), I will help you (41:10, 13, 14), and your enemies will perish (41:12).

F. **Those who war against you shall perish:** There is a time when the Lord will totally destroy the armies that war against Israel (41:11-12) including the armies of the Antichrist (Rev. 13:4).

<sup>11</sup>“Behold, all those who were incensed against you...those who strive with you shall perish...

<sup>12</sup>Those who war against you shall be as nothing, as a nonexistent thing...” (Isa. 41:11-12)

He says in verse 12, “Those who war against you,” every nation that wars against you, even the Antichrist empire, the mightiest empire in history far beyond the Assyrians and the Babylonians, “will be as nothing” when He is done with them. Stay steady. Stay in relationship with Him. All of your enemies will be gone in a short amount of time.

He says it again in verse 14. Well, he says it three times totally, “Fear not.” Again, it is just not the message we give to Israel; it is the message we feed on ourselves, because this is straight confession of the Word in our relationship with God. These are terms or phrases we want to get familiar with and use in our conversation with God.

1. The “super power” empires that existed in biblical times—Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome—do not exist anymore. So the fact that tiny Israel still exists speaks of God’s sovereign calling on them as a nation.
2. The extinction of Israel as a nation has been a desire of various nations throughout history such as Assyria, Babylon, Philistia, Edom, and others. But it will never succeed.
3. The “super power” from the east (41:2) that attacked Judah was an empire that soon perished presumably in context to their attack against the Jewish people. Sennacherib fits this description since his army was destroyed by an angel when attacking Jerusalem in 701 BC. Cyrus did not war against Israel and nor did his empire perish as a result of a war with Israel.

G. **You worm, Jacob:** This is a picture of one who is weak, defenseless, and easily crushed.

<sup>14</sup>“Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel! I will help you,” says the LORD... (Isa. 41:14)

He says, “Fear not, you worm Jacob.” When He calls Jacob, a worm, He is not saying something like, “You are sleazy.” That is not what He is saying. He is saying, “You are weak. You are vulnerable. You are easily crushed.” So there is a reason why you are fearful, because a worm has very little ability to withstand an adversary. A worm cannot run off, and it cannot fight back. He says, as it were, “You are easily crushed. You have no defense except for Me, but I am the God of creation, so do not fear.”

H. **I will make you into a new threshing sledge** (41:15): The Lord will make Israel into a mighty threshing sledge that will thresh mountains, speaking of destroying the nations that attack them.

***<sup>15</sup>“Behold, I will make you into a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth; you shall thresh the mountains and...make the hills like chaff. <sup>16</sup>You shall winnow them, the wind shall carry them away...you shall rejoice in the LORD, and glory in the Holy One of Israel. (Isa. 41:15-16)***

Verse 15, look at this. He goes on, saying in effect, “There is going to be a sudden reversal when My Son returns. In this great reversal I am going to make the nation of Israel a threshing sledge with sharp teeth. You are going to thresh mountains.” Now what? They are looking at the little worm Jacob, meaning this nation that has no ability against the Antichrist empire. It is the David-Goliath on a global level. They have no way out. The Lord is going to move in and reverse the situation suddenly.

Now a threshing sledge was like a wooden sledge, and an ox would pull it. It had sharp metal or stones on the bottom, and it would thresh the various crops so they could winnow it. The grain would be cut up in little pieces; that is to thresh it. Then after they would thresh it, they would throw it up in the air to winnow it so the bad stuff would blow away and the good stuff would fall down. In the farming community they understood what a threshing sledge was. He says, “I am going to make you that, and you are not going to thresh various crops. You are going to thresh mountains.”

They think, “Like a big bulldozer taking on a mountain? Like, how are we going to thresh a mountain?”

He explains, “Because the power of God is going to be with you.”

In other words, Israel, do not give up and give in to the fear narrative when against all odds you are surrounded and there is no way out, because I have a bigger plan. Again, for the Body of Christ it is the same thing. When surrounded, and the Antichrist looks all consuming, all powerful, remember the believers are going to be the ones ruling the earth forever. The Antichrist is going to be thrown in the lake of fire with all of his followers.

1. A threshing sledge was a wooden farm instrument fitted with sharp metal attachments. It was pulled by oxen over grain crops to thresh or to crush and separate the hard seed from the straw, preparing it to be winnowed.
  2. The “you” that God will make into a “threshing sledge” speaks of empowering the Israeli military to resist the Antichrist before Jesus returns (41:15; Zech. 9:13; 10:3-7; 12:4-8). The Lord will give Israel a great military victory over the Antichrist’s armies (Rev. 19:19-21).
  3. He will make Israel a threshing sledge to destroy mountains which speaks of nations.
- I. ***You shall rejoice in the Lord*** (41:16, 20): Israel will be the first nation in which every citizen will be born again and walking in righteousness (60:21; Rom. 11:26). In times of trial, Israel must remember that God’s “Justice Masterplan” results in her national salvation and millennial glory.

***<sup>26</sup>And so all Israel will be saved...“The Deliverer...will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” (Rom. 11:26)***

Verse 16, He looks at Israel and He describes the hour of national salvation. When He says, “You will rejoice in the Lord,” that is the same as saying the nation of Israel will be born-again believers. We understand that now. They did not get that back then. They did not know there would be a born-again experience. All of these are going to happen in one timeframe at the end of the age. The presence of the Antichrist empire, the most threatening cruel powerful empire in history. The Lord remembers and says, “Who raises up the superpowers and lets them be? The God who is in covenant with you, so you can trust Me. Do not lose your way as the storyline is unfolding.”

- J. We must see the end-time context of this passage in order to understand and apply it better.
1. Isaiah 41:8-16 speaks about the generation the Lord returns. It references the time when Israel is regathered from the farthest regions of the earth (41:9), when the nations who war against her become as nothing (41:12), when the Lord makes Israel like a threshing sledge (41:15), and when Israel rejoices in the Lord, indicating her national salvation (41:16, 20).
  2. The Church and Israel must remember the promises in 41:8-16 in face of the persecution that they will both endure in the end times (Rev. 12-13). The “woman” in Revelation 12:13-17 speaks of the remnant of Israel with whom the devil is enraged in the end times (Rev. 12:17).  
<sup>12</sup>“Woe to the...earth...for the devil has come down to you, having **great wrath**, because he knows that he has a short time [3½ years].” <sup>13</sup>Now when the dragon [the devil] saw that he had been cast to the earth, **he persecuted the woman** [remnant of Israel] ...<sup>14</sup>But the woman was given two wings...that **she might fly into the wilderness...** <sup>17</sup>The dragon was **enraged with the woman**, and he went to make **war** with... [those who] have the testimony of Jesus. (Rev. 12:12-17)
- K. God’s “Justice Masterplan” includes allowing the Church and Israel to be persecuted (Rev. 12). Many Jews will flee as refugees to the wilderness of the nations (Ezek. 20:35). Soon afterwards, they will be regathered from the ends of the earth (41:9) and saved (41:16; Ezek. 20:37-38).  
<sup>35</sup>“And I will bring you into the **wilderness of the peoples** [nations], and there I will plead My case with you face to face...<sup>37</sup>I will bring you into the **bond of the covenant**; <sup>38</sup>I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me...**Then you will know that I am the LORD.**” (Ezek. 20:35-38)

#### IV. GOD WILL SUPERNATURALLY HELP ISRAEL RETURN TO THE LAND (ISA. 41:17-20)

- A. The Lord will supernaturally help Jewish people to return to their land in the end times (41:17-20). After being empowered as a “threshing sledge” and seeing the Antichrist perish in war (41:12, 15), Jewish refugees and captives will journey from various countries to the land of Israel. The Lord will help them as He promised (41:10, 13, 14).  
<sup>17</sup>“The **poor and needy** seek water, but there is none...<sup>18</sup>I will **open rivers** in desolate heights, and **fountains in the midst of the valleys**; I will make the wilderness a pool of water...<sup>19</sup>I will **plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree...and the oil tree**; I will set in the desert the cypress tree and the pine and the box tree together, <sup>20</sup>that they may see and...**understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it.**” (Isa. 41:17-20)

Okay, so now He says, “When this hour comes, you have these great promises. I am going to save you, oh worm Jacob, defenseless little nation. I am going to make you powerful to thresh mountains,” which would have been the nations; that is what He means by the mountains in this case. He said, “...and you are going to know Me.” He says there is going to be a really challenging transition time. That is in Isaiah 41:17-20.

Now He is describing the same timeframe when all of Israel is saved. The timeframe when Israel threshes mountains, the timeframe when they are gathered from the furthest parts of the ends of the earth. Clearly it is the end of the age timeframe He is talking about.

Verse 17, He is still in that context. Now He is describing this really negative situation. After He gave these great promises, now He is describing this negative situation, but He gives promises in the midst of the negative. The Lord is so masterful in the whole Isaiah 41-42 storyline. It starts off with God's sovereign control of the nations. "Okay," Israel nods.

"God has sovereign control, He has power, and He is in covenant with you."

"Okay, okay."

"It is going to get really heavy. You are going to have a really fierce enemy, but, hey, God is going to be with you, and He is going to deliver you. He is going to use you to smash them."

"Good."

"But there are going to be some challenging moments along the way."

That is why you need to have the whole storyline, not just parts of it, the whole storyline. If you only take one part of the storyline, and you do not understand the other ten or fifteen major parts, then you get confused in what is happening. You know, people ask all the time, "Are things going to get better or things going to get worse?" The answer is both. It is going to get better in the spirit. For people that love Jesus' leadership, it is the greatest hour of human history. For people who love human comfort, it is going to be a challenging hour.

"Well, I like comfort but I like Jesus' leadership more."

Well, then you will line up right. I mean, everybody likes comfort, but a lot of people like comfort the most. It is okay to like comfort, but just make sure it is number two or number three.

- B. **The poor and needy (41:17):** These Jewish refugees are described as seeking for water as they journey through the desert on their way to Israel after Jesus has returned and destroyed the Antichrist. The promises of 41:17-20 have partial fulfillments through history, but their ultimate fulfillment is in the end times—when Israel is gathered from ends of earth (41:9), threshes mountains (41:15), and recognizes Jesus (41:16).

1. Jewish people as well as believers in Jesus will be persecuted by the Antichrist's empire. Some will be captured and imprisoned, similar to what happen under Hitler.
2. When Jesus appears, the persecuted Body of Christ will be raptured to meet Him in air. But the unsaved Jewish survivors of the Great Tribulation will remain.

So He tells them in the midst of all of these encouraging words from verse 8-16, "But the poor and the needy will be looking for water and they will not find any."

You know the people are thinking, "Wait, wait! The verses before, verse 15-16, we were threshing mountains and rejoicing in the Lord. Now we are poor, wandering refugees looking for water, and we cannot find any?"

He says, "Yeah, yeah, you are getting it."

Like, where did that come from? Here, because in the larger storyline, what happens is that the city of Jerusalem is surrounded by the Antichrist empire. Many Jewish people flee as refugees. That is, they flee to other nations similar to what happened in the Nazi-Germany thing with Hitler. Many Jewish people left Europe. They said, "I am out of here." Some of them landed comfortably, and others of them had a really difficult time. I mean they fled Germany, they were hiding around Europe, and it was really challenging for them for the next couple of years. Other Jewish people and also believers—not just Jewish people, but also believers—the



*Antichrist will capture them and imprison them very similar to what happened in the Hitler regime, except the Antichrist is far more powerful, far more intelligent, and far more cruel than Adolph Hitler.*

*So there will be the refugees. They are going to be returning after Israel is the threshing sledge when the Lord has anointed them and the Antichrist has been defeated. Millions of Jews—I do not know about millions, I do not know the numbers, but large numbers—will be scattered all around, and they will want to return back to the land.*

*If you have ever seen the documentaries of World War II—I have mentioned this a few times, I find it very helpful to grasp it. The next three to five years, not even the next few months but years, there were millions of people, particularly the first couple years, that were migrating hundreds of miles, walking back home. The roads were destroyed. The cities were in ruin. There was no water, there was no food, and there was starvation. There were all kinds of criminal activity. It was so dangerous. So much of Europe was in transition, moving back home from where they found themselves at the end of the war for many different reasons. They were in the military or they were in prison or prisoners of war or in death camps or whatever or fleeing in fear and hiding. They were walking back home.*

*That is going to happen after the Lord returns. Millions, I think it will be millions, of Jewish people will be scattered around, and they will need to be coming back home. The same will be true of the Body of Christ, but they will be raptured and will meet the Lord in the air. Of course if they are Jewish believers, they will be caught up in the rapture. I am talking about the unsaved survivors of the tribulation who are Jewish. They did not take the mark of the beast, they did not get raptured, and they are in the nations. They are liberated from prison. They are liberated from hiding places. They are liberated in faraway places.*

- C. ***I will open rivers in desolate heights*** (41:18): The Lord will supernaturally cause clean water to flow on the mountain tops and break forth in valleys, as well as pools of water and springs in the desert. This promise of fresh water is literal. It is neither poetry nor symbolism as some commentators suggest.

*They are walking back. They have children, they have families, and they do not have supplies. They are looking for water. Their children are crying. Suddenly, verse 18, “I will open rivers on the mountaintops.” Some will be walking on some big hill when, all of a sudden, clear fresh water will start flowing. They will say, “Like, what? Where did that come from?”*

*He went on, “Fountains will break out in the valleys.” This is literal. Now a lot of folks take this as poetic and symbolic. That is okay to do, as long as you do not leave it there. You can make it symbolic and enjoy it, but know this is literal and real. He said, “I will make wilderness a pool of water.” In the desert—wilderness and desert you can often use interchangeably—pools of water will just spring up.*

*Now we are telling this message to unsaved Israel ahead of time while we are comforting them. They are thinking, “Yeah, right, right. Whatever.” Then the Antichrist is destroyed, the Church is raptured, and now they are saying, “Hey, those guys told us about water! Maybe the Messiah...maybe it is true. All of a sudden water begins to show up all over the place—amazing!”*

*Can you imagine being a refugee making your way back hundreds of miles and having fresh clean water in abundance while you are walking through the desert. I mean, that will make them stop and say, “Maybe? Wow! Whoa, huh? This is good.”*

1. Isaiah described the challenging transition period when unsaved Jewish survivors of the Great Tribulation travel to the land of Israel. These refugees will need water in their journey.

2. This is a very important promise for refugees journeying hundreds of miles with the fear of their children dying of thirst and then suddenly clean water breaks out in the desert.
3. At the end of the Great Tribulation many cities will be desolate at a result of bowl judgments (Rev. 16); thus many cities will lack adequate food or water for those who survived.
4. I believe water will be provided to Jewish people but also to some unsaved Gentile survivors of the Great Tribulation. Since God never changes, it is reasonable to believe that He will do similar miracles for some unsaved Gentile survivors of the Great Tribulation.

- D. ***I will plant trees in the wilderness*** (41:19): Isaiah mentioned seven types of trees that provide shade. This will aid refugees walking through the desert. At this time, these trees are not found growing together anywhere in the world. It will be unusual for them to all grow in the desert.

*Verse 19, He says, "I will plant in the wilderness," and He lists seven types of trees. Now the thing that makes these trees important is that they are all trees that provide shade. Walking through the heat of the desert, there is this simple little detail, not that that is the only reason these seven trees are there. These are seven trees that do not grow typically in the desert. They are not clustered together in an agricultural sense, but they are going to be there in the desert. They are going to provide shade from the scorching heat.*

- E. ***The hand of the Lord has done this*** (41:20): Israel will understand together as a nation that God's hand orchestrated His end-time plan. This is the second reference to Israel's national salvation in this passage (42:16, 20). In her national difficulties and trials, Israel must not forget that God's "Justice Masterplan" for Israel results in her national salvation and millennial glory.
- F. ***Understand together***: This refers to the unsaved Jewish survivors of the Great Tribulation (41:20). The Body of Christ must comfort Jerusalem by declaring the promises of 41:17-20 to them ahead of time. Many will not receive them before or during the Great Tribulation, but will remember and acknowledge them as being done by the hand of Jesus after the Antichrist is destroyed.

***<sup>20</sup>That they [Jewish survivors] may see and know, and consider and understand together that the hand of the LORD [Jesus] has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it. (Isa. 41:20)***

*Verse 20, then Isaiah says it again. "When you see the water and you see the shade, "verse 20," you are going to understand together." Again, these are unsaved survivors, Jewish survivors. The same thing will be true of unsaved Gentile survivors because the Lord is going to do these miracles all around, but He is just focusing on the Israel story. God never changes, so if He does it here, He does it there. He is the same.*

*They stop, verse 20, and they see it together. They say, "The God of Israel did this. This is miraculous." Now this does not seem like a big deal unless you are hundreds of miles in the desert, and your children are about to die of thirst. Water, clean fresh water, breaks out everywhere you go. That is quite a remarkable reality.*

1. They will remember how the Lord's messengers in the Body of Christ told them before the second coming that Jesus would provide water for them according to Isaiah 41:18.
2. Multitudes of Jewish people will embrace Jesus as their savior (Zech. 12:10; Rev. 1:7).

## V. THE POWERLESSNESS OF FALSE GODS (ISA. 41:21-29)

- A. The Lord challenged the nations to prove that their gods had wisdom and power (41:21-24). He called the nations to give examples of times where their gods prophesied important international events in history (former things) or of significant events in the future (things to come). The Lord taunts the national leaders who look to idols to make an important contribution. Isaiah returned to the theme of the Lord challenging the nations to show the destructive folly of idolatry from 41:1-7.
- <sup>21</sup>**“Present your case,” says the LORD. “Bring forth your strong reasons,” says the King of Jacob.**  
<sup>22</sup>**“Let them bring forth and show us what will happen; let them show the former things, what they were, that we may...know the latter end of them; or declare to us things to come. <sup>23</sup>Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods; yes, do good or do evil, that we may be dismayed and see it together. <sup>24</sup>Indeed you are nothing, and your work is nothing; he who chooses you is an abomination.” (Isa. 41:21-24)**

*Now He has laid out this scenario with the nations that He started off by saying, “Hey, who raises up the superpowers? Who gives the nations strength?” The nations answered in verse 5-7. By the way, I skipped that part, but I have it in the notes. They did not take the Lord up on His offer. They trusted in their military coalitions together. They trusted in their false gods and their idols and the demons behind them. They said, “We do not need the God of Israel. We will be good as we will make alliances, military alliances, and we will worship our false gods. We will get strength.”*

*The God of Israel says, “No, that is never going to work.” Here He challenges them. I will skip this passage, verse 21-29. You can read it on your own. It is not an end-time passage per se, but it is a really important lesson. He says, as it were, “Okay, false gods, I am going to challenge you. I challenged the leaders of your nations in verse 1-4. Now I am going to challenge you, false gods. Give a prophecy of an international event in the past that you prophesied and you made come to pass.” Of course the false gods and the people that worship them cannot think of one event in the past where one of the idols prophesied an international event and made it come to pass. He goes on, “Okay, prophesy one in the future, any event. Let’s see your wisdom and your power. If you are going to give the nations strength, show yourself strong then.” Of course they cannot.*

1. **Present your case:** The Lord summoned the nations to bring forth evidence to prove that idols possess divine power. They were to prove their case by declaring the past and future events that their idols prophesied and demonstrating what the significance of these events have in world history. The nations did not embrace the Lord’s offer to strengthen them (41:1-4), but instead trusted in their military alliances and idols (41:5-7).
2. **Let them show us what will happen:** The Lord called on Gentile leaders in conjunction with their idols to predict future international events and then release power to bring them to pass.
3. **Do good or do evil:** God challenged the idols to do “something”—good or bad—that would cause the nations to be fearful of their power. God mocks these idols, calling on them to do something that is unusual that will cause people to fear and recognize their power as a god!
4. **Abomination:** The conclusion is that any who trusts them is an abomination to God.
5. The most significant embrace of idolatry in history will be in context to the Antichrist. Jesus called His people to watch for the abomination of desolation—an event launching the Antichrist’s global worship movement that will be rooted in idolatry (Mt. 24:15; Rev. 9:20).

***<sup>20</sup>But the rest of mankind...did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood... (Rev. 9:20)***

- B. The Lord raised up a mighty conqueror from the north (41:25-29). The Lord demonstrated that He has the power to predict significant international events (in contrast to the idols' inability to do so in 41:21-24). The Lord's general argument in this passage is that He alone can raise up the military "super powers" in any given generation (41:1-4, 25). He alone is in sovereign control over them.

***<sup>25</sup>"I have raised up one from the north...from the rising of the sun he shall call on My name; and he shall come against princes as though mortar, as the potter treads clay. <sup>26</sup>Who has declared from the beginning, that we may know? And former times, that we may say, 'He is righteous'?... <sup>27</sup>The first time I said to Zion, 'Look, there they are!' and I will give to Jerusalem one who brings good tidings. <sup>28</sup>For I looked, and there was no man...there was no counselor, who, when I asked of them, could answer a word. <sup>29</sup>Indeed they [idols] are all worthless..." (Isa. 41:25-29)***

Now again I am just sharing this with you so you understand the flow of the chapter, not because this is particularly an end-time subject itself. The Lord says in verse 25-29, "Okay, the truth is, I will give you an example. There is going to be another king rise from the north. Another superpower is going to rise up." Of course we know it is Cyrus. "I am going to make it happen. This man is going to know Me before it is over." He says, "False gods and pagan leaders, see if your gods can do something like this: foretell the future, determine the next superpower, put him in place, and then have them bow down and acknowledge you publicly."

So here these are leaders with the false gods, the idols, but this is going to be the Antichrist reality as well, although he will do supernatural false miracles. There is only one God who will tell the future accurately and have the power to establish it. Even this same argument, I believe, will come into play again, so it is a good passage to be a little bit familiar with as well.

1. ***I raised up one from the north:*** Isaiah did not identify the conqueror that the Lord was to raise up from the north. He is not necessarily the same conqueror mentioned in 41:2.
  - a. Most agree that 41:25 refers to King Cyrus whom Isaiah later identified (44:28; 45:1; cf. 2 Chr. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4). Cyrus can be said to come from either the north or the east. He came from the north because he was a Mede on his mother's side. (Media was northward of Judah). He came from the east being a Persian on his father's side. (Persia lay to the east of Judah).
  - b. Some see this as Nebuchadnezzar—he came from Babylon, northward of Judah.
2. ***He shall call on My name:*** This speaks of this conqueror acknowledging the God of Israel as a source of his military success—Cyrus did this (Ezra 1:1-4). However, there is no evidence of Cyrus being a devout worshipper of the Lord.
3. ***He shall come against princes:*** He shall make war against various princes and their nations (41:23). In other words, he was victorious over many nations—this conqueror was a mighty military "super power" in that day.
4. ***Who has declared from the beginning:*** The question about who can predict the future in 41:26 is similar to what the Lord asked in 41:4 and 41:22. Who among the idolatrous soothsayers prophesied Cyrus' sudden rise as a "super power"? The Lord prophesied Cyrus' rise to power about 150 years before it happened—this was not foreseeable by any others.



5. ***As the potter treads clay:*** This pictures Cyrus' military power as dominating the nations with which he went to war. Cyrus trampled opposing armies as easily as a man treads down mortar or mire in the street or like a potter who does whatever he wants with clay. Mortar was a mixture of lime and sand used to hold bricks or stones together when building a wall.
  6. ***There is no one who shows:*** None of the oracles of the idols predicted nor anticipated the rise of Cyrus as an international super power.
  7. ***There is no one who hears your words:*** Because idols cannot tell accurately predict the future, no one hears or takes their "prophetic oracles" to heart.
  8. ***Former times:*** This speaks of no one prophesying concerning Cyrus before he arose to power.
  9. ***That we may say, "He is righteous":*** This refers to saying that "he is right" about Cyrus. Being righteous here does not refer to God's character, but to the prediction being right.
  10. ***The first time I said to Zion:*** Some translate this as, "I was the first that said to Zion." In other words, the Lord was the first to proclaim prophetically the coming of Cyrus and the deliverance of the Jewish exiles in Babylon with their restoration to the land of Israel.
  11. ***Look:*** This was prophetically describing seeing the exiles returning from Babylon (41:27).
  12. ***One who brings good tidings:*** The messenger of good tidings gave the good news of the return of the exiles from Babylon. Cyrus is not in view here but the ones who gave reports to the people in Jerusalem of Cyrus' military victories and of him liberating the Jewish people.
  13. ***Zion:*** This speaks of Jerusalem and sometimes refers to the Jewish people in general.
  14. ***There was no man:*** There was no man among them who could predict future events. The Lord looked for one among the idol-worshipping nations who had prophesied of these events. The Lord sarcastically spoke of "looking" for one to predict the coming of Cyrus, and then He asked for a counselor to defend the idols by pointing out their accurate prophecies.
  15. ***Wind and confusion:*** The conclusion is that the works of the "idol-based religions" will always come to nothing. Their idols were merely molded images that produced confusion. The conclusion is clear: idols and all other false gods are "worthless and nothing."
- C. Isaiah 41 prepares us for the storyline of Isaiah 42. The Lord will manifest His sovereign power by raising up an international leader from the east (41:2) and another from the north (41:25), but His ultimate work of power will be to raise up a Man from heaven—the Messiah. This Man will bring justice to all the nations and will remove all the evil empires from the earth forever.
1. Isaiah described One who would surprise many by His leadership values and style. He will establish justice in a way that no other leader would ever imagine. Some might assume that He would use only positive events to establish justice in the earth. But Jesus will confront rebellion with His judgments and will wake up His people with divine discipline.
  2. God's justice involves more than stopping evil leaders from oppressing people; it also creates the optimum environment where people voluntarily choose love—toward God and people.
  3. Jesus will not force anyone to say yes to His leadership, but He will create the optimum environment where people will want to say yes to Him.

## VI. GOD’S SERVANT WILL ESTABLISH JUSTICE IN THE NATIONS (ISA. 42:1-4)

- A. Isaiah starts prophesying of the nature of Jesus’ ministry (42:1-4). He spoke both of aspects of His ministry at His first coming (42:1-3) and how justice will prevail worldwide at His return (42:4).

***1“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles [all the nations]. 2He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. 3A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. 4He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth...*” (Isa. 42:1-4)**

Now this is the glory chapter, the justice of God. This is the chapter for which Isaiah 41 is preparing, the storyline of Isaiah 42. The Lord says here, as it were, “Not only am I going to raise up a man from the east, back in Isaiah 41:2 in the beginning, but I am going to raise up a man from the north, Isaiah 41:25. And, I am going to raise up another man who is of an entirely different order.” He is in the same conversation. He says in verse 1, “This man is My personal servant. He is not like Sennacherib with the Assyrians or Cyrus with the Persians or Nebuchadnezzar with the Babylonians. He is not ‘My servant’ in the sense that He is a crass man serving My purposes by disciplining My people. This One, verse 1, I really enjoy Him. Our fellowship is so delightful to Me.” As a matter of fact this is the very verse the Father spoke out when Jesus was being baptized, as He, you know, kind of bend over the balcony of heaven, He said, “Jesus, I like You, Isaiah 42:1! I have a Bible verse to back it up.” I am sure it did not happen that way! The Father declared He delights in Jesus, and the baptism is where the Holy Spirit dove came on Jesus. So even that baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3 actually fulfills this. This is really precious.

He went on, “But let Me tell you the real storyline. This Man is going to be used to bring justice to the nation. He is going to cure all the evils that are happening in the earth. He will get rid of the false, evil empires. He will get rid of all injustice in the earth. He will bring forth justice”—now here is the shocker—“not only to Israel, but to Gentiles.

The Israel audience is thinking, “Well, I thought the Gentiles were the bad guys! I thought the Gentiles were the people who worshipped false gods that You were rebuking in Isaiah 41.”

“Well, yes, Gentiles can do that, but I am going to have”—well, I will just make up my own number—“a billion of Gentiles at the end of the age who are going to come in through the great harvest. I am going to bring the harvest to them, then in the Millennium justice is going to be in every single Gentile nation. Every nation in the earth is going to be filled with justice.” He goes on, as it were, “But let Me tell you a little bit about this guy. He is going to surprise all of you because the way that He will establish justice will be a way that no other human leader would ever imagine.” We assume when Jesus establishes justice, it is only going to be good and easy.

1. Isaiah 42 is an overview of God’s solution to the crisis in all the nations—He raised up a Man who will establish justice that lasts forever in all nations. One message in Isaiah 41 is that the nations are not able to establish justice by the strength of alliances and idols (41:1-7, 21-29).
  2. The Father spoke *about* the nature and success of Jesus’ work (42:1-4).
  3. The Father spoke *to Jesus* directly about His work and ministry (42:5-9).
- B. **Justice:** Justice is making wrong things right. It includes love being expressed in practical ways in society—in personal relationships, in context to social and legal systems, etc.

1. **Repeat:** The Lord's "Justice Masterplan" includes an unprecedented outpouring of the Holy Spirit, sovereignly raising up the Antichrist, and allowing demonic activity and sin to come to fullness (to give one generation the unique opportunity to freely chose to mature in love for God or to pursue the deep things of Satan and sin; Dan. 8:23; Rev. 9:21; 14:18; 17:5; 18:5), resulting in an unprecedented persecution of the Church and Israel (including the imprisonment and/or martyrdom of some; Rev. 12-13), an unprecedented release of judgment on the nations (Antichrist's empire; Rev. 6-19), an unprecedented destruction of cities with a death toll reaching half of the earth's population (Rev. 6:8; 9:15), a great falling away from the faith (2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5), and a loving but intense divine discipline of the Church and Israel. The Lord's "Justice Masterplan" will result in a purified Church (Dan. 11:33-35, 12:10; Rev. 19:7), a great ingathering of souls (Rev. 7:9), Israel's national salvation and millennial glory (Isa. 60), and the earth being filled with God's glory (Hab. 2:14) including every sphere of society being filled with love and justice (Isa. 42:4) and the garden-of-Eden conditions restored to nature.
2. Justice involves both positive and negative activities.
  - a. The positive activities include things like release of the Spirit's presence and power, godly legislation that protects the oppressed, practical activities like feeding the poor or adopting a homeless child, and the transformation of society and many more things.
  - b. The "negative" activities include the release of God's judgment that confronts and kills cruel oppressors (of the Antichrist's empire) and the release of divine discipline on God's people to wake them so as to restore their relationship with God.

*When Jesus establishes justice, He is going to use the Antichrist to discipline His people. Then He is going to wake up His people, and He is going to get them to say yes to Him with all of their heart. Jesus is not going to make anyone say yes. He is going to create an optimum environment where people will want to say yes. It would not be justice if He programmed them or gave them a pill to love Him. He wants the love to be voluntary and from their heart. That is part of the justice program. It is not just stopping bad people; it is creating an environment where people across the earth choose love voluntarily.*

*You think, "Oh, how wonderful!" Well, much of the Body of Christ love Jesus in that sort of way, but they are not really pressing into Him. He is going to wake them up too, because He wants them to love Him with all of their heart. He has a plan, and it is called justice.*

*Typically when we think of justice, we say, "Yes. Justice is the end result of the master plan." Well, the master plan has a couple negative dimensions in it that we do not typically think of as justice. We think of it as "Ugh, that is the God of the Old Testament."*

3. Isaiah prophesied about justice more than any other person in Scripture (Isa. 1:17, 27; 2:2-4; 9:6-7; 16:5; 28:6; 28:17; 30:18; 32:1, 16; 33:5; 42:1, 3, 4; 51:4; 56:1; 61:8).
- C. **Till He has established justice in the earth** (42:4): After Jesus returns, He will establish justice, love, and humility in every sphere of society in every nation on earth (42:4; cf. Ps. 45:4). Under His leadership the whole earth will be filled with God's glory forever (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14).
1. Jesus will present a world full of justice to the Father at the end of the Millennium (1 Cor. 15:28).

***<sup>24</sup>Then comes the end [of the Millennium], when He [Jesus] delivers the kingdom to God the Father...<sup>25</sup>For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet...<sup>28</sup>then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him [the Father] that God may be all in all.***  
***(1 Cor. 15:24-28)***

2. In the end times, the subject of justice is a primary theme in the kingdoms of both God and Satan. The utopian dream of a world filled with justice has been in the human heart since Eden. The Antichrist will capitalize on this “longing” to seduce multitudes with a false justice movement that disregards the Bible, Jesus, and His leadership.
  - a. ***False justice:*** Satan will raise up a counterfeit justice movement in the end times that will be rooted in humanism and occultism. It will use biblical terminology, but the spirit of it will be radically different. It will seduce some believers, causing them to fall away from the faith. I recommend Stuart Greaves’ book “*False Justice.*” In it he outlines important truths related to true justice and exposes lies rooted in false justice.
  - b. The distorted-grace message opens wide the door for false justice by promoting a Christianity that is not based on the what the Bible says about Jesus and His salvation nor does it call for genuine faith and repentance.
  - c. God’s justice is rooted in God’s eternal perspective, while false justice is only focused on gaining temporary benefits for this age without any regard for the age to come.

D. Isaiah described elements of Jesus’ ministry of justice at His first coming (42:2-4).

***<sup>2</sup>He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. <sup>3</sup>A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice...***

***<sup>4</sup>He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth...” (Isa. 42:1-4)***

*He would say, “No, no. My Servant, the One who is going to fill the earth with justice in the millennial kingdom”—I mean He is doing it a little bit in this age, but He is going to do it in fullness in the age to come—“He is different.” Verse 2, “At His first coming He will not raise His voice. His voice will not be heard in the street.” It does not mean that He is not going to preach in the streets. It means He is not going to stir up a political or a military uprising to overthrow Rome. He is not a counter-revolutionary, military-operative guy. He will preach in the streets, but that is not what this meant. It meant stirring up a revolution like Barabbas and the zealots were trying to do.*

*He said, “He will not do that. He gets the master plan. He understands He will not be recognized as King for another 2,000 plus years. He gets it. He is very patient. He knows the master plan. He is not moved by the delay nor the obstacles.” The obstacles were that He was resisted by the religious leaders, and even by His own friends and family at different times He was resisted, and by the nation as a whole. He did not lose heart and then He has to wait 2,000 years plus in order for His kingship to be honored across the earth.*

1. ***He will not cry out:*** He did not lift His voice in the street seeking to stir up a political or military uprising to overthrow the wicked Jewish government nor to raise an army to revolt against Rome. The popular expectation was that the Messiah would come as a triumphant king to crush Roman rule and remove all oppression. Jesus did not use military force or street violence. He refused to support revolutionary groups like the Zealots who fought Rome.



2. **Bruised reed:** Jesus expressed God's justice in offering tender mercy to the broken (42:3). A bruised or broken reed was fragile and weak. In this way, a bruised reed includes areas of weakness and pain in the lives of His people individually or corporately.

*He says, verse 3, "but, a bruised reed He will not break. The smoldering wick"—you know, the wick is almost out, and another man would just, whew, blow it out and be done with it—the Lord will fan the flame of that smoldering wick."*

*That bruised reed, you know, I think of when, as a boy, I threw the ball in the neighbor's yard and broke a tomato plant. The tomato plant went, "boop." I remember, I went over there. I was about twelve years old. I taped it back. I tried to prop it up, tape it. The lady caught me. The thing, the tomato, went "doop." Anyway that has been forever in my mind a broken reed, a bruised reed. He will not tape it. He will fix it supernaturally.*

*Now here is the amazing part: while He is pursuing justice in the earth, He would not rise up ahead of time and start a military revolution at His first coming. In His zeal for justice, He will have a tremendous zeal to restore lives and to restore nations, because the bruised reed is a broken life and the bruised reed is a broken nation. The bruised reed is end-time Israel. The bruised reed is the end-time Church in a Laodicean spirit that needs to be awakened and put eye salve on. A bruised reed is a broken life.*

- a. Jesus' commitment to heal bruised reeds includes individuals, Israel, and the Church which are currently entrenched in a Laodicean spirit of compromise (Rev. 3:14-21). Jesus will release a great outpouring of the Spirit across the nations with divine discipline in addition to the Antichrist's persecution in order to wake up and strengthen the end-time church.
- b. **A "bruised reed" generation:** The generation that the Lord returns will be the most sexually broken generation in history. A pornified culture empowered by technology that includes holograms, artificial intelligence, human like robotics, virtual reality, augmented reality, and much more will result in multitudes being sexually broken.

*You know, we are entering the timeframe where, because of all the internet perversion and where the sexuality is going with artificial intelligence and technology, you give it five or ten or twenty years it will be the most sexually bruised generation in human history by far. It probably already is. People will have so much wounding from their own experiences or the abuse of people who are fully demonized in perversion in all the different shades of right, left, and in between, all the different shades between from total perversion to total abuse. There will be so many broken lives.*

*The Lord could say, "In My zeal for justice, I will be tender towards Israel. It will not look like I am tender because I have a plan that is going to have some difficult moments in it. I will be tender for the Church, but it does not look like it because I am going to let the enemy, the Antichrist, make war against the Church. There will be a lot of martyrs, but I will wake up the Church worldwide. My Church will love Me. They will step across that line with a resurrected body. They will be rulers over the earth forever and forever. They will be so grateful that I, the Lord, held the line and created the environment for them to make deep choices for godliness and love." Because the choices we make in this age, we take with us to the age to come.*

3. **Smoking flax:** The ESV translates this as "a faintly burning wick." This speaks of areas in our life that have lost "the fire" or passion for God that we once had. A smoldering wick struggles to keep burning. It is flickering. Jesus will not give up on His people, but He will bring their life to the fullness of His purpose as they submit to Him with faith and obedience.

4. **He will not be discouraged:** Jesus did not “give up” by feeling exasperated by strong resistance, constant obstacles, cruel mistreatment, or by the delay of God’s promises to Him.

*Here is the bottom line: He is going to establish justice. Verse 4, He will not be discouraged. When His family rejected Him, when the nation rejected Him, when the leadership of Israel rejected Him, when His disciples betrayed Him, He did not cave in. He saw the big picture. That is the key. He will stay steady until justice fills the entire earth.*

- a. Jesus was rejected by the political and religious leaders of Israel and eventually by the nation as a whole. Even His friends and family rejected Him on occasions. But He responded with patience and humility, entrusting His life and future into God’s hands (1 Pet. 2:23).
- b. Jesus displayed great perseverance in His commitment to complete His mission of establishing justice across the whole earth (42:4). He was not discouraged by the delay God’s promises to Him, but He waits patiently for His kingship to be openly honored across the earth.
- c. His people can be sure that He understands the challenges of persevering in face of the increased mistreatment and rejection that will come from standing for truth in the end times. We can have courage, knowing that He understands our struggle.

*Isaiah 42 would be the classic biblical chapter on justice. If you love justice, which all of you do, Isaiah 42 is a must-read. More than a must-read, it is a must-understand. So I have a little bit written out here, some of the things that are highlighted in the justice movement at the end of the age. I have not had time to develop all of these.*

- E. **Litmus test:** Isaiah 42 provides the clearest biblical model for partnering with Jesus’ mandate to establish justice in the nations. The kingdom approach to justice must be in deep **allegiance** to Jesus (42:8), released by **intercessory worship** (42:10-12), and operating in the Spirit’s **power** (42:1, 7), resulting in **evangelism** (42:17) and support for the **remnant of Israel** (42:7, 22) from lives of **righteousness** energized by **intimacy** with God (42:1, 6).

*We must approach justice in a kingdom way. It will be rooted in deep allegiance to God, devotion to God, loyalty to Jesus’ leadership. Justice will be released by intercessory worship. We will get to that verse in a moment. It will operate in the Spirit’s power. It will result in evangelism. It will support the remnant of Israel. It will flow out of lives rooted in righteousness that are energized by intimacy. That is my quick, little summary of the litmus test of the kingdom approach to justice at the end of the age from Isaiah 42.*

1. Jesus’ character never changes, so the tenderness that He demonstrated in healing “bruised reeds” will forever be expressed in His leadership and is a grid to interpret His heart when He confronts darkness in His people and in His enemies in context to His return (42:13-25).
2. Jesus understood that He was to establish justice in two stages.
  - a. At His first coming, He used appeals to the heart and offered tenderness to those resisting Him, both to Israelites and Romans—He did not use military force.
  - b. At His second coming, He will continue to appeal to the heart and to offer tenderness, but He will use an added element— that of confronting rebellion with force.

3. Jesus was rejected by His nation at His first coming due to His refusal to use force in dealing with the Romans. His commitment to use force to judge the Antichrist's empire with wrath and to discipline His people (to restore them to love) will cause some of His people to be offended at His leadership related to His second coming.

F. **Justice in the earth:** Jesus acted on and referenced aspects of Isaiah 42 during His ministry.

**<sup>4</sup>He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth...** (Isa. 42:4)

1. Jesus anchored His mandate to bring justice to the earth to night-and-day prayer (Lk. 18:7-8). Isaiah developed this theme in 42:10-13. The context of Jesus' parable on prayer is the end-time injustice of Antichrist that is stopped when the "Son of Man comes" (Lk. 18:8) to destroy his empire and kill his armies (Lk. 17:27, 37; Rev. 19:19-21). This parable is connected to the Isaiah 42:4 prophecy of the Messiah releasing justice in the earth.

**<sup>26</sup>"As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: <sup>27</sup>They ate, they drank...until the day...the flood [judgment] came and destroyed them all...<sup>34</sup>In that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken [destroyed in judgment] and the other will be left..."<sup>37</sup>They...said, "Where, Lord?" He said, "Wherever the body [dead body, NIV] is, there the eagles [vultures, NIV] will be gathered together."** (Lk. 17:26-37)

**<sup>1</sup>Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart...**

**<sup>7</sup>"Shall God not avenge [bring about justice, NAS] His own elect who cry out day and night to Him..."<sup>8</sup>I tell you that He will avenge [bring about justice, NAS] them speedily...when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith [agreement] on the earth?"** (Lk. 18:1-8)

Now I am going to highlight Isaiah 42:4. Jesus will not be discouraged. He will not be discouraged until He establish justice in all the earth. I already quoted that verse a minute ago. That is kind of the really important line-by-line, the really critical statement of where this thing is going. Jesus actually referred to this in Luke 18. He was actually referring to His own mandate to bring justice to the earth in Luke 18. If you read Luke 18 carefully in context to Luke 17, you'll see it is one message. Luke 18, the famous night-and-day-prayer to release justice, is in context to the Antichrist empire. If you read Luke 17 and 18 together, if you read those things together, you will see that the Antichrist empire and the night-and-day prayer movement are in the same context. Jesus is actually anchoring His mandate for justice to night-and-day prayer of the end-day Church right here.

- a. The word "then" (Lk. 18:1) links this parable on prayer to the passage immediately before it when Jesus spoke the end-time destruction of the wicked (Lk. 17:26-37).
- b. In Luke 18, Jesus taught on praying to confront injustice and oppressors. Jesus, as the greatest social reformer in history, highlighted the importance of dealing with injustice in the spirit realm and not only with political processes and works of justice.
- c. Many do not see their need for Jesus, the Judge, who releases His end-time judgments because they have not been hurt by a cruel national oppressor.
- d. The Antichrist will be the cruelest oppressor in history. He will far surpass Hitler in evil. Then the need for God's justice with His judgments will be clearly evident to all.

- G. It is essential to prioritize justice and approach it in the way in which the Scripture teaches us. One of the most important moments in IHOPKC's history was on September 19, 2009, when we committed by the grace of God to ***combine 24/7 prayers for justice with 24/7 works of justice***.
- H. Every sphere of society in every nation will be filled with justice by the end of the Millennium. Some are confused by how much justice to expect in this age—justice will be present and growing, but not dominant. There will be continuity between our work for justice now with what Jesus will do in the Millennium.

## VII. GOD'S SERVANT WILL GIVE LIGHT TO THE NATIONS (ISA. 42:5-9)

- A. The Father spoke directly to Jesus, assuring Him of intimate partnership unto victory (42:6-8). Isaiah related parts of a conversation within the Trinity. There are two messages in this passage. The first message (42:6-7) gives a specific charge to "You" or Jesus, the Servant. The second message (42:8-9) is directed to others explaining how God will not allow any false gods to be glorified as His "new thing" or plan unfolds as He establishes justice in the nations through Jesus.

***<sup>5</sup>Thus says God the LORD, who created the heavens and...who gives breath to the people on it...<sup>6</sup>"I...called You [Jesus] in righteousness, and will hold Your hand; I will keep [sustain] You and give You as a covenant to the people, as a light to the Gentiles, <sup>7</sup>to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house. <sup>8</sup>I am the LORD... My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images. <sup>9</sup>Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them."***  
(Isa. 42:5-9)

*Let's go on now to Isaiah 42:5-9. The Lord says, verse 6, "Yes, I have called you, Jesus." Here is the amazing thing: Isaiah is hearing a conversation between the Father and the Son, because the conversation is the Son to the Father and the Father back to the Son. They are going back and forth. Isaiah is recording this inner-trinity dialogue. It is a really amazing passage.*

*Again, this is the very passage the Father speaks over Jesus' baptism. This is the passage from which Jesus talks about the night-and-day prayer related to justice. This is the passage in Matthew 12 where He says of His healing ministry, "I will not break that bruised reed. I will not break it. I am going to heal it," speaking not just of individuals, but of nations and the Body of Christ and Israel itself. So verse 6 says, "I, the Lord, have called you, and I am going to hold your hand. I will sustain you." Here is something the Father says to the Son. He makes this very unusual statement. He says, "I am going to give You as a covenant to the Gentiles."*

*Now, again the Jewish nation is a little bit surprised. They say, as it were, "He is going to be a covenant to the Gentile people? I thought He was the source of the covenant for us, the Messiah?"*

*The Lord would say, "He is, but it is about more than you. It is a global storyline. Israel, you are a part of a global, millennia-long, big storyline. It is not just about "us four and no more." It is about the glory of God filling the earth. You see, if Israel thinks it is just about their survival, and their prosperity, and their prominence, they are going to get lost in the storyline and get offended. It is about the glory of God filling the earth with justice and beauty over the whole earth.*

- B. ***Who created the heavens***: God appealed to His power as Creator to assure them that His prophetic promises were authoritative. The Lord understands what is best for the human race because He gives breath to all people. God establishes justice in a way that shows His empathy for His people.



1. ***I called You in righteousness:*** God's righteousness is seen in His work in calling and sustaining His Servant, the Messiah. Righteousness in this context is a reference to God's covenant faithfulness in relating to Jesus and fulfilling His promises to Jesus.
  2. ***I will keep You:*** The Father protected and sustained Jesus, enabling Him to finish His task.
- C. ***I will give You as a covenant to the people:*** Jesus is the means by which people enter into a covenant relationship with God. He is the way to the Father (Jn. 14:6) and is the messenger of the covenant (Mal. 3:1). He embodies and enables all that pertains to the new covenant (Jer. 31:31-34). The book of Hebrews expounds on this promise (Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24).
- D. ***As a light to Gentiles:*** This passage emphasizes the global dimension of His plan of redemption. The Father said it was too small a thing to send Jesus for Israel only (49:6).
- “Indeed He says, “It is too small a thing that You [Jesus] should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.” (Isa. 49:6)***
- E. Jesus' ministry of justice will be manifested in healing blind eyes and liberating prisoners (42:7). He will open blind eyes both physically and spiritually and will liberate prisoners both physically and spiritually. The Lord has fulfilled this promise in part throughout history, but the ultimate fulfillment of this promise will occur in context to Jesus' return in the end times.
- “I will...give You as a covenant to the people, as a light to the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house.” (Isa. 42:6-7)***

*He says in verse 7 that He is going to do two very surprising things when He returns. There is a spiritual sense in which this is happening, but there is a physical sense in which this happens at the second coming. Verse 7, two very surprising details related to the second coming. He said, “I am going to open the eyes of blind people physically.” He means it spiritually, too, throughout history and even at the end of the age. In addition to that, He is going to bring prisoners out of prison camps or prison cells, anyway you want to put it. There are going to be millions of them, so that is why I add the word “camps.” He is talking to Gentiles here. Then, in the New Testament, there are several verses about various ones in the end-time Church having to endure martyrdom, dying, being in camps, or privation of various privileges. So He says, “When I come,” verse 7, “I am going to open blind eyes” physically because Jesus is coming. Of these unsaved survivors of the Tribulation who are in camps or are refugees, some of them will be blind. He is going to heal them, produce water for them, and lead them back to the land. He is going to open the prison gates, like the Dachau and the Auschwitz camps, that will have Jews and Gentiles in them across the earth who have stood against the Antichrist kingdom.*

*Verse 9, He says, “Well, I challenge the false prophets and the idols to tell me something about the future that was going to happen. I just told you something about the future. I am going to open blind eyes and unlock prison camps.”*

*Israel is thinking, “Prison camps?”*

*The Gentiles are thinking, “You are going to open? What? What are you talking about?”*

*Isaiah might have said, ‘I do not really get it all. The Holy Spirit just gave it to me.’*

1. **To open blind eyes:** The Lord promised to heal the blind—this includes physical and spiritual blindness (Ps. 146:8; Isa. 29:18; 35:5; 42:7; 42:16; Jer. 31:8; Lk. 4:18).
  - a. Jesus healed people of physical blindness (Mt. 9:27-28; 11:5; 12:22; 15:30-31; 20:30; 21:14; Mk. 8:22-23; 10:46-49; 10:51; Lk. 7:21-22; 18:35; Jn. 9:1-25; Acts 13:11).
  - b. There are testimonies of Jesus physically healing blind eyes throughout church history.
2. **To bring out prisoners:** The Lord promised that the Messiah would liberate prisoners—both physical and spiritual prisoners. God will redemptively use Satan's rage and man's cruelty in persecuting Gentiles to purify the church and to bring in the end-time harvest of souls.
  - a. **The prison house:** Those who sit in a "prison house" describes physical prisoners.
  - b. The Lord sent an angel to open the prison door for Peter (Acts 12:5-11) and an earthquake to open prisons doors for Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25-26).
  - c. Under the Antichrist's reign of terror there will be more people martyred or imprisoned than in any other time in history. There will be prison camps holding captive both Jewish and Gentile people who stood against the Antichrist's kingdom.
  - d. Jesus will open blind eyes and prison doors when He returns. Some unsaved Gentile survivors of the Great Tribulation will be physically blind. Jesus will heal them.

*He will also bring out prisoners from the prison. He elaborates on this point in verse 22. Now, make no mistake about it, the people are in prison because of the rage of Satan and the cooperation of sinful people cooperating with Satan. So it is evil Satan and evil people working together to persecute Jews and Gentiles, Jews because of their bloodline heritage to Abraham, and Gentiles because they have said yes to Jesus. Revelation 12-13 lays it out pretty clearly. Revelation 12-13 really makes it clear. The point of it is that God is going to use Satan's rage and man's sin in this hideous strategy of imprisoning and martyring people. He is going to bring in a great harvest. He is going to purify the Church. He is going to bring the salvation of Israel. He is going to transition the earth to the age to come through that travailing womb of three-and-a-half years of travail.*

- F. There will a significant amount of idolatry in the Antichrist end-time worship system. The Lord will openly confront it. God's justice that will be established in the nations will be loyal to Jesus.

**<sup>8</sup>My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images. <sup>9</sup>Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them."**  
(Isa. 42:8)

1. **My glory I will not give to another:** The Lord will not give the praise due His name to idols (42:8).
2. **The former things:** "Former things" speak of some of the Lord's earlier prophecies that had already been fulfilled such as rise and attack of the Assyrians. These provided assurance that the new things that Isaiah prophesied about the Messiah would also come to pass.
3. **New things I declare:** The new things speak of what God will do through His Servant in establishing justice on the earth (42:4), healing blind eyes, and opening prison doors (42:7).
  - a. The ultimate new thing is related to the full blessings of the new covenant including the transformation of nature and the nations in the Millennium (11:6-9; 41:18-20).

- b. These new things involve the positive and negative things related to Day of the Lord events that include the Great Tribulation (Rev. 6-19) and the millennial kingdom.

### VIII. THE END-TIME PRAYER MOVEMENT AND JESUS' SECOND COMING (42:10-17)

- A. Isaiah prophesied a global intercessory worship movement (42:10-13) that will be connected to Jesus' return (42:13) and the release of His end-time judgments (42:14-15). In 42:10-12, we see how beautifully the Body of Christ in the nations will respond to Jesus' end-time leadership.

*<sup>10</sup>Sing to the LORD a new song, and His praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you coastlands...<sup>11</sup>Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits. Let the inhabitants of Sela sing...from the top of the mountains...<sup>13</sup>The LORD shall go forth [Jesus' return] like a mighty man; He shall stir up His zeal like a man of war. He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud; He shall prevail against His enemies..."*  
(Isa. 42:10-13)

Now He is going to get right down to what I believe to be the number one weapon of the end-time Church. This is not an end-time passage, by the way. This is about justice. Even the prison thing is part of God's justice master plan. Yes, Satan's rage and sinful men working together in injustice and oppression. In the master plan, God sees the bigger picture of what that is going to produce. He allows it for a short period of time. It is a very short period of time, three-and-a half-years. It produces such radical changes in the Body of Christ and in the nation of Israel.

He highlights right in the middle of this justice program this commitment to the prayer movement at the end of the age. Look at verse 10. It looks like He is changing the subject, but He is not. He is talking about justice in the presence of oppression and evil. He says—here is the answer—"Sing to the Lord a new song." Like, what? Sing to the Lord in agreement with heaven, and release the power of God. This is the greatest weapon on the earth. It is the end-time prayer and worship movement.

Notice He says that the prayer movement will spring up to the ends of the earth. He says, "Go down to the sea." They will have prayer rooms down there. Go to the coastlands or the major cities of the earth that are on coastlands. They will have prayer ministries all over through them. Go to the wilderness, the desert. It is really hard to get vibrant prayer and worship going in the desert. You have to get sound equipment there and you know all that stuff. You will find it there. Look at this: the villages of Kedar and Selah. Kedar is Saudi Arabia. Beloved, there will be worship movement in Saudi Arabia, a Jesus-worship-prayer movement in Saudi Arabia in small villages, not just the big resource centers, but right in the midst of the little, out-of-the-way places. In the midst of the hostility of Islamic persecution against them, they will worship Jesus. He will have a worship movement that will not back down anywhere. In Selah, in Jordan, they will do the same, these Islamic villages.

So Isaiah identifies these five places of the earth that are really hard to mobilize people. The mountaintops, the islands, the sea, the seacoast, the desert. He said that everywhere you look across the earth, people will be joining the prayer and worship movement, many different expressions. It is a justice movement; it is the "Luke 18 justice night and day" and with music and the prophetic spirit empowering it.

What is going to happen? Verse 13 is one of my favorite second coming passages. This is about the second coming here. The Lord is at the right hand of the Father in heaven. He looks at the Father. This is my version, of course. The Father says, "You can go, Son." They know who they are. The Lord arises like a mighty man. He stirs up His zeal like a man of war. He cries out, and He comes forth and destroys the Antichrist empire, that is the enemy in context at the end of the age.

1. Jesus is not coming in a vacuum, but in answer to a global worship movement. The passage gives us the clearest picture of the place of prophetic singing before Jesus' return. In this prophecy, we see the Holy Spirit's zeal to raise a worldwide worship and prayer movement.

*Let's look at the prayer movement a little bit more. Jesus is not coming in a vacuum. He is coming in an answer to a global cry, "Come, Lord Jesus! Release justice in the earth. Release Your beauty. Magnify Yourself all over the earth."*

*God is visiting people. It is a glorious reality. I have watched it in the last ten years, just thousands of prayer ministries springing up across the earth. Most of them are still little, but they did not exist ten and fifteen years ago, thousands of them. College campuses, military bases, prisons, all over the earth they are putting music and worship together. They are getting the end-time scriptures as part of their lyrics and part of their intercessory cry before God. I call it intercessory worship. It is intercession, and it is fueled by prophetic music.*

*Here is what the Lord says: I am going to repeat it again, verse 13. The Lord will hear this cry in the mountains, the villages, the deserts, the Islamic villages, the major cities of the earth, in the midst of persecution or the Antichrist reign of terror. They will not back down, "We love You, Jesus! O, we love You." The Spirit and the Bride crying, "Come," with prophetic music all over the earth.*

*Beloved, the Lord ambushed us in this little place here. I look up, and I say, "Lord, thank You for ambush." All of you have been ambushed. You are a part of it—whether you are here a part of it or there a part of it—and you have been ambushed. You are a part of something you will never be able to shake off. You will be doing this billions of years from now. Once you get caught up in that stream of worship and intercession, you will be doing it in the age to come and beyond and beyond and beyond. We will never go back. I will never **not** do harp and bowl, ever, though we will do it a lot better.*

*Verse 13, "The Lord will go forward like a mighty man. He will stir up His zeal. He will cry out, yes." Isaiah says, "Yes, you heard me. He will cry out." Now He is in the sky, in flaming fire, with all the angels in the glory of the Father. He shouts aloud.*

*I have said to the Lord over the years, "What are You going to say? I am just wondering what are You going to shout? What are Your first words?"*

*I have asked some people. They thought He is going to tell the Antichrist, "You are finished!"*

*I say, "I do not think so. I think that He says that second. I think He says something to the Bride in the earth, like, 'Yes, I love you too.' I think it is going to be something like that. Then He is going to say, 'You are in big trouble, Antichrist empire! You have touched My Bride. I am coming like a Man of war with My zeal. I am coming in response to people who are in unity with My heart.'"*

*All over the earth, they are crying out. He says in verse 14, "I have held My peace long time." Other translations I like say, "I have been silent." "I have held My peace." You could use either translation you want, but I like the "silent, I have restrained Myself." When God says, "I have been silent," it does not mean He has not spoken His Word to anybody. He means His global end-time judgments to openly confront evil on the earth. He says, "I have been silent. I have been wanting to confront evil in this way that the Scripture talks. The Father says, 'Not yet, not yet.'" He goes on, "I have restrained Myself when I have seen them persecute My people. The Father says, 'Not yet, Son, not yet.'" I mean, there are little judgments here and there, but there is this whole storyline coming where He is a Man of war and confronts darkness and demons on a global level.*

*He says here, "Father, the hour comes when I am not restrained. I will cry like a woman in labor, I will pant. I will gasp." Verse 15, "I will lay waste mountains." That is earthquakes destroying the Antichrist empire. "I*



will dry up vegetation.” That is drought. You find all of these earthquakes and drought in the book of Revelation, in the prophets. I have a few verses here on them. Drought and earthquakes striking the Antichrist empire is a clear emphasis of the prophetic scriptures. He says, “I will make the rivers coastlands.”

What happens when a river, fifty miles in, is now the coastline? That means a giant earthquake just hit. When the river is the new coastline, that is bad for the people on the other side. When you look at that, I say, “Ugh. Do not miss that.”

2. Isaiah moved from a prediction of what He will do (42:1-9) to instruction on how the Body of Christ can participate with Him in it. (42:10-13).
  3. God will fill the earth with prophetic songs that declare the beauty of Jesus and release His power.
  4. Jesus will lead the end-time church in the greatest worship and prayer movement in history. It will be the greatest weapon on earth—the Bride of Christ in agreement with her King.
  5. Isaiah is not changing the subject in 42:10-15; rather, He is taking about how justice will be released in context to the Antichrist’s empire of oppression and injustice.
  6. The Holy Spirit will release a “new song” that will bring the end-time Church into profound unity with His leadership.
- B. The end-time worship movement is a justice movement because it releases God’s justice and culminates with the King of justice coming back to the earth to release the fullness of justice (42:4). Prophetic worship and prayer is the first place that heaven and earth are in dynamic unity.
- C. **New song:** The prophetic “new songs” mentioned in Scripture are released by the Spirit at important times in history when God makes a dramatic shift in salvation history. The new songs will communicate God’s new work or “new thing” mentioned in 42:9 and 43:19.
1. The content of the “new song” is connected to the return of Jesus in power to deliver and save His people and judge His enemies (Ps. 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1; Isa. 42:10; Rev. 5:9; 14:3). The Lord wants the nations singing about the return of Jesus before He comes. The fact that the Lord instructs us in this tells us how important it is to Him.
  2. These new songs will instruct and stir desire in the hearts of many for Jesus’ return as well as release His power unto a great harvest of souls (Rev. 7:9-14).
  3. The command to sing is in context to the prophecy of Jesus coming to release justice. The “new songs” are a response to the prophetic promises that Jesus fill the earth with justice.
  4. If you are looking for a something to throw your life into—this is it.
- D. **From the ends of the earth:** Isaiah highlights five of the most challenging regions of the world that will join in the end-time worship and prayer movement.
1. **You who go down to the sea and all that is in it:** This includes sailors and merchants who go down to the sea in ships (Ps. 107:23), and it includes the nearly 12,000 inhabited islands that are in the sea. This has a profound application for many island regions including Asia.

<sup>23</sup>**Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business on great waters... (Ps. 107:23)**

2. **Coastlands:** This includes the major population centers on the coastlands of the earth. Many of the largest cities on earth are on the coasts. They have many people and economic resources along with many diverse challenges.
    - a. A parallel term for “nations” is coastlands.
    - b. The word “coastlands” is translated by some as “the islands.”
  3. **Wilderness:** This includes the small cities in the wilderness and desert regions of the earth.
  4. **Villages of Kedar and Sela:** Islamic villages in Jordan (Sela) and Saudi Arabia (Kedar); Kedar is a collective name for Arab tribes (Isa. 21:16; 60:7; Jer. 2:10; 49:28; Ezek. 27:21).
  5. **Mountain tops:** a difficult place to assemble people for worship and prayer
- E. Isaiah makes it clear that night-and-day singing would not be limited to the temple in Jerusalem, but would expand to fill every part of the earth. This was a completely new idea.
- F. Our vision is to see 24/7 prayer with worship established in every tribe and tongue on earth.
- G. Jesus will prevail against His enemies by releasing His judgments against the Antichrist’s empire (42:13-15).
- <sup>13</sup>The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man; He shall stir up His zeal like a man of war. He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud; He shall prevail against His enemies. <sup>14</sup>“I have held My peace a long time; I have been still and restrained Myself. Now I will cry like a woman in labor, I will pant and gasp at once. <sup>15</sup>I will lay waste the mountains and hills [earthquakes], and dry up all their vegetation [drought]; I will make the rivers coastlands [earthquakes]...” (Isa. 42:13-15)*
- H. **The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man:** This speaks of Jesus’ second coming.
- I. **He shall stir up His zeal like a man of war:** The Lord showed Himself to be a warrior (Ex. 15; Judg. 5; Isa. 28:21; 30:30-31; 31:4; 59:16-18; 63:3-4; Zech. 9:14; 14:3). He fights for His people and against injustice.
- J. **He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud:** The Lord will shout when He returns (1 Thes. 4:16-17).
- <sup>16</sup>For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout...the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together...to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thes. 4:16-17)*
1. When Jesus returns, He will shout or roar so that all the earth hears and trembles before Him (Ps. 47:5; Isa. 42:13; Jer. 25:30; Hos. 11:10; Joel 3:16; 1 Thes. 4:16)
 

*<sup>16</sup>The LORD also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth will shake; but the LORD will be a shelter for His people... (Joel 3:16)*
  2. Jeremiah described the Lord as roaring in context to Jesus’ second coming (Jer. 25:30-32).
 

*<sup>30</sup> The LORD will roar from on high...He will give a shout, as those who tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. <sup>31</sup>...the LORD has a controversy with the nations;*

*He will plead His case with all flesh. He will give those who are wicked to the sword...  
(Jer. 25:30-31)*

- K. *He shall prevail against His enemies:* Jesus will free the oppressed and stop oppressors (42:14). The Antichrist's system will be far more powerful and cruel than the Nazi regime under Hitler. The release of justice includes Jesus' supernatural confrontation against oppressors.
- L. *I have held My peace a long time:* Jesus held His peace or was "silent" in terms of His end-time judgments openly confronting evil across the earth. He restrained Himself according to Father's timetable. He has held His peace for a long time—almost 2,000 years since the cross. Jesus' silence has been strategic and based in love, not in His inability to intervene.
- M. *Now I will cry like a woman in labor:* Jesus feels deep anguish over the injustice and wickedness on the earth and He has urgency to give birth to a new world order (Lk. 18:7-8; Ps. 2:8-9). Crying out, gasping, and panting are associated with a woman in the final stages of labor. Jesus and the prophets associated the end of the age with labor pains. When Jesus is described as "panting like a woman in labor," the result is desolation of the Antichrist's empire by earthquake and drought.
- N. *I will lay waste mountains:* He will lay waste mountains by earthquakes. Isaiah highlighted earthquakes and drought (42:15) that are described in the prophets and in the book of Revelation which will destroy the Antichrist's resources and infrastructures (Isa. 2:10, 19, 21; 13:13; 29:6; Ezek. 38:19; Hag. 2:6, 21; Zech. 14:4-5; Heb. 12:26-27; Rev. 6:14; 8:5; 11:13; 16:18-20).  
*<sup>18</sup>There was a great earthquake...a great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth... (Rev. 16:18)*
- O. *I will dry up the pools:* The two witnesses will release a drought for 3½ years or the same length of time as the drought when Elijah prophesied (Rev. 11:3-6).  
*<sup>6</sup>These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy. (Rev. 11:6)*
- P. *I will make the rivers coastlands:* An inland river becomes coastland via an earthquake.

## IX. GOD'S DISCIPLINE OF ISRAEL (42:18-25)

- A. The tragedy of Israel is described in highlighting two challenging themes that are related to God disciplining His people—being spiritually blind and in physical prison (42:18-25). God's messengers must speak these themes to the Body of Christ to prepare them to help Israel in that hour. Here are aspects of Jesus' "Justice Masterplan" that are unfamiliar and unsettling to us.  
*<sup>18</sup>"Hear, you deaf; and look, you blind, that you may see. <sup>19</sup>Who is blind but My servant, or deaf as My messenger whom I send?... <sup>20</sup>Seeing many things, but you do not observe..." <sup>21</sup>The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will exalt the law [Word] and make it honorable. <sup>22</sup>But this is a people robbed and plundered; all of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prison houses; they are for prey, and no one delivers....! <sup>23</sup>Who among you will give ear to this? Who will listen and hear for the time to come? <sup>24</sup>Who gave Jacob for plunder, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not the LORD, He against whom we have sinned? ... <sup>25</sup>He has poured on him*

*the fury of His anger...yet he did not know; and it burned him, yet he did not take it to heart.  
(Isa. 42:18- 25)*

Now He is going to come and bring the teaching of justice to this very uncomfortable place. This is one of the heaviest passages. He says, as it were, “Israel, I have a storyline, Isaiah 41. I am raising up the superpower of the east. I am setting leaders in place. I have given you promise after promise. I have wooed you. I have spoken tenderly to you, but you know I am committed to justice. I am going to bring it to the earth. I have a plan for you, and justice demands I create an environment where the great harvest will happen, the Church will be purified, and Israel will be saved. I am going to do it all.” So there are going to be some challenging parts of the justice master plan.

Look at verse 18. I will just bring this to an end really quickly here. He is talking to Israel. Well, He is talking to His people, whether it is Israel in context or the Church who calls on His name. It is the people who say, “I call on Your name.” That is who He is talking to.

He says, “Hear, you deaf. Look, you blind.” He means spiritually deaf and spiritually blind. God is pleading with them, “Wake up to the message of My storyline!” He says in verse 19—this is very painful; this is like a rebuke with a sharp edge—He says, “Who is as blind as My servants?” That is, “They call on My name, they possess My Word, it is all in front of them, but they do not see hardly any of it besides just the little bitty points that make them feel a little happier here and now. Who in the earth is as deaf as the people who claim to know Me, that have My Word and My words before them, but they do not know hardly anything about it? I am going to have the greatest most dramatic hour of history where I am going to transition the entire planet to the age to come. Most of My servants do not know anything about it.” He says in verse 19, “Who is blind but My servant? Who is deaf as My messengers, the very messengers I sent with My message that bear My name?”

Verse 20—and you can read the whole passage later. Again, in my upgraded notes, I will add a bunch more than this than you have right here—“Seeing many things, but they do not connect the dots; they do not observe.” That is, they see, they hear the stuff, but they do not connect it because they are so preoccupied in their own agenda and their own lifestyle.

He would say, “Well, I will tell you, number one, good news, I am going to have the greatest revival of the Word of God in history at the end of the age.” The Lord is pleased He is going to exalt His Word in the earth, because remember what is happening to the Word of God in the culture—Psalm 2—the kings of the earth and the rulers of the culture are trying to drive the Word of God out of the culture. God says, “I am going to exalt My Word in the very hour where they are opposing My Word. You wait and see.”

- B. **You deaf and blind:** The Lord described His people as being spiritually blind and deaf messengers (42:18-20). They are ignorant of what Scripture says the Lord will do in their generation.
  1. Some who claim to know the Lord are spiritually blind. He called them to be His messengers and gave them His Word, yet they do not understand His plans that are laid out in His Word.
  2. In the most dramatic hour of history many of them will not understand what is happening.
- C. **Hear and look:** The Lord called His messengers to understand what He said that He would do.
- D. **He will exalt the law:** In the end times, the Lord will exalt or magnify the Word of God at a time when billions of people will be in need of understanding the gospel of the kingdom (Mt. 24:14). The law or the *tôrâ*, translated as “instruction or law,” here speaks of God’s Word.



<sup>1</sup>...Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified... (2 Thes. 3:1)

Oh, the prayer, “Lord, let Your Word run swiftly. Glorify Your Word.” Beloved, an hour of the power of God on the Word is coming, far beyond the book of Acts.

1. The Lord exalted or glorified His Word in Asia by confirming it with miracles (Acts 19).

<sup>10</sup>...so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord...<sup>11</sup>God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul...<sup>20</sup>So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed. (Acts 19:10-11, 20)

Look what happened in Acts 19. All in Asia heard the Word of God. Miracles confirming the Word. Verse 20, the Word of the Lord grew mightily. I think the Lord would say, “You think it was mighty in Acts 20? Wait until you see how I honor the Word of God with power in the generation when I return.” Again, this is flowing out of the crying out night and day, the new songs across the earth. The Word is being exalted with power and signs and wonders.

2. Some of the leaders who resisted Jesus were probably among those who eventually believed in Jesus and were saved in the book of Acts (Acts 6:7; 15:5).

<sup>7</sup>The word of God kept on spreading...and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith. (Acts 6:7)

- E. **Hidden in prison houses:** The Lord will allow some Jewish people to be put into prison in the end time (42:22-23). Here Isaiah describes one of the most offensive aspects of God’s end-time plan to bring salvation to Israel. Israel must not forget that God’s “Justice Masterplan” for them that will result in their national salvation and millennial glory (41:16 20; 60:21; Rom. 11:26).

<sup>22</sup>But this is a people robbed and plundered; all of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prison houses; they are for prey, and no one delivers...! <sup>23</sup>Who among you will give ear to this? Who will listen and hear for the time to come? (Isa. 42:22- 23)

He could say, “That is not all I am going to do. It is not just the greatest revival, but there is going to be a great persecution. I am going to use that persecution for divine discipline. I am going to use Satan’s rage redemptively to wake up Israel and to wake up the Body of Christ.” He is talking to Israel now. He was talking to the Gentiles in verse 7. He is talking to Israel here in verse 22.

1. The Lord sent military invasions as a divine discipline to “wake up” Israel to respond to God.
2. Israel’s most destructive military invasions in the Scripture were by Assyria in 701 BC, Babylon in 586 BC, and Rome in AD 70. The most severe attack will be in the end times.
3. **Robbed and plundered:** Isaiah described some in Israel at the end of the age as a people robbed and plundered. The enemy stole their homes, bank accounts, possessions, etc.

He describes many in Israel at the end of the age. This is a passage that, again, you are not going to hear taught very often, but it needs to be in the dialogue of the Body of Christ in the end-time Church. He said, “This is a people robbed and plundered.” What is robbed and plundered? It means robbed and plundered. In Nazi Germany, they stole their homes, they stole their bank accounts, they stole everything, all of their possessions, and put them in camps. They were robbed and plundered. Did you know the Nazi attack against the Jews in Europe was more about covetousness and theft than it was the true occultist religion of Adolph Hitler? I mean the Nazi command a few levels down, they just wanted the guy’s house. They did not care about Hitler’s

occultist religion. They said, “Who cares? I want that mansion of that doctor who is now in a camp somewhere.” It was theft! That is what it was.

He says this most terrifying passage in verse 22 about Israel. He just said this in verse 7 about the Gentiles. He says, “All of them are snared in holes.” Like, what? They are hidden in prison houses. Ugh. They are prey. They have been preyed on by the nations of the Antichrist empire. Nobody stood up to deliver them. In other words, no nation stood up against the Antichrist to free these Jews from captivity. No nation stood up is what they are talking about.

4. Isaiah describes one of the most offensive and difficult aspects of the Lord’s end-time plan—He will allow Jewish people and Christians to be put into prison camps (Ps. 102:20; Isa. 27:13; 42:7, 22; 49:9, 21, 24-26; 61:1; Jer. 30:3, 8, 10, 17; 31:16, 23; Ezek. 39:23-29; Joel 3:1-2; Amos 9:14; Mic. 4:6; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:11-12; 13:8; 14:2; Mt. 10:21-22, 28; 24:9; 25:43; Lk. 12:4-7; 21:16-19, 24; Jn. 15:18-16:4; 2 Tim. 3:12; Rev. 6:9-11; 11:7; 12:11, 17; 13:7, 10; 16:5-7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; 20:4).

- F. **Who among you will give ear to this:** The problem highlighted here is that Israel did not know that such terrible afflictions were part of His plan to “wake them up” to His desire for relationship.

Verse 23, now He talks to His messengers. He says, in effect, “Who among you will even pay attention to this part of the justice message? Who will listen to this part of the storyline?” He says, “My servants are deaf. My messengers will not connect the dots when I say it clearly.”

1. Isaiah addressed the messengers, calling them to listen to this part of the biblical narrative.
2. Many of His people are unprepared in their understanding of His plans that are laid out in Scripture. The Lord challenged them to understand this difficult situation that was coming.
3. The Lord highlighted this message to me in September 1997. He wants His people to understand this as part of His redemptive plan to establish justice and love in the earth.

This is the verse that the Lord really struck me with some years ago. I do not mean many years, but maybe ten or fifteen years ago. Well, it was in 1997. I remember specifically on September 17 specifically, however long ago that was. I said, “Lord I will listen. I do not get it, but I am going to lean into this.” I am saying, “Who will listen for the time to come?”

Remember earlier He told the false prophets or the idol guys, “Hey, tell Me something about what is coming that nobody knows about.” Remember in verse 7 of this passage of Isaiah 42, He said, basically, “I am going to tell you something that is coming.” He connected it with the whole persecution and captivity. Like, ugh. The reason why this theme is emphasized quite a few times in the Old Testament is because God does not want His people surprised by it. He wants His people to see it as part of a redemptive plan to establish justice and love in the earth, and not see it as God forgot and the train fell off the tracks. That is not what is happening. God would say, “I am working for justice in the earth.”

- G. Isaiah asked and then answered the question, “Who gave Israel up to the robbers?” (42:24-25).

<sup>24</sup>**Who gave Jacob for plunder, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not the LORD, He against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in His ways, nor were they obedient to His law.**

<sup>25</sup>**Therefore He has poured on him the fury of His anger...it has set him on fire all around, yet he did not know; it burned him, yet he did not take it to heart.** (Isa. 42:24-25)

*He went on, verse 24, for those who will listen. Here is the most burdensome message. He said, in effect, “I have a question.” This is going to be one of the primary questions at the end of the age for Israel and for the Church in the nations. Well, Israel and the Church is who I mean. He said, “I have got a question.” Isaiah must have run out of town after he said this one. No, I mean I am thinking of a preacher—I am a preacher—saying this. Are you kidding? “Who gave Jacob up to be plundered and stolen from and beat up? Who gave Israel to the robbers?” Pause, pause. “Was it not I the Lord who did it?”*

*What? No, no, the devil did it.*

*He would say, “Oh yeah, the devil did it, but was not I the One overseeing it to wake up My beloved people? Was I not waking up the Church by this adversary, this great enemy rising up at the end of the age against the Church and Israel?”*

*He said, verse 25, “The Lord has poured on him the fury of His anger.” The Lord has said to His covenant people, “I want you in relationship with Me. I gave My Son. I gave My heart to you.” Again this is Body of Christ and Israel; put us all in one big conversation. Various verses point out one or the other.*

*He said, “The Lord has poured out,” it says, “the fury of His anger” I would like to say, His discipline with redemptive purposes. “Yet Israel did not know it. He was burdened by it, but Israel did not take it to heart.” So He asked, basically, “Who is going to connect the dots?”*

*You know, I have shared these verses with some of my Messianic leader friends. We have sat around—and it is sober and it is painful—and we look at it and say, “It is Isaiah. It is not the New Testament or a Protestant Reformation leader. This is an Old Testament prophet saying this.”*

*I know this: you cannot make sense of verses 22-25 without going back to Isaiah 41. Who is the Lord who sets superpowers in place? It is the Lord who is going to help His people. It is the Lord who is suddenly going to make His people a threshing sledge. It is the Lord who is going to cause His people to know Him. It is the Lord who is going to bring justice. It is the Lord who is going to cause the bruised reed to be healed. It is the Lord who is going to awaken a prayer movement in the earth and release the power of God, who is coming back with zeal. It is the Lord who is going to cause the Word of God to be exalted in the earth in that final hour before the Lord returns.*

*Beloved, I say to the Lord, “As messengers, Lord, we want to speak the whole message. We do not want to cherry-pick the message. We want to study it. We want to eat the scroll. We want to take time to connect the dots.” That is what He said here: which one of you hears it and observes it or connects the dots?*

1. **Who gave Israel to the robbers?:** This is one of the primary questions at the end of the age.
2. **Was it not the Lord:** Isaiah answered his rhetorical question by declaring that it was the Lord who did this to Israel just as He warned them through Moses (Lev. 26; Deut. 27-28). The Lord allowed various military invasions of Israel, though no specific war is mentioned here.
3. **Yet he did not take it to heart:** Israel did not know it was God who was disciplining them with fire. They did not “connect the dots” in recognizing their sinfulness caused their defeat.
4. Only by being anchored in the theology and promises that are set forth in Isaiah 41 can we make sense of the tragic events of 42:22-25. The Lord who sets “super powers” in place (41:2, 25) is the Lord helps and delivers His covenant people (41:8-20).
5. Only those who are hungry for understanding will be given insight into God’s end-time plans (Jer. 23:20; 30:24; Dan. 11:33-35; 12:10; Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17; Rev. 3:18; 13:18; 17:9).

<sup>33</sup>*Those of the people who understand shall instruct many... <sup>35</sup>*Some of those of understanding shall fall [martyrdom], to refine them, purify them. (Dan. 11:33-35)**

<sup>20</sup>*The anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly. (Jer. 23:20)*

*Well, amen and amen. Let's stand before the Lord. That is why we are laboring through these. I mean I love them and yet do not love them. I love God, and I love His Word. I trust it. As a community we are intentionally laboring through these chapters. Then we are going to do Jeremiah in the spring. Then we are going through the Old Testament and then New Testament. I am going to do Micah and Nahum and each one of these chapters. We want to catch the storyline in its fullness.*

*Holy Spirit, we need Your help!*

*We cannot understand it without the Holy Spirit's help. We cannot understand it without being in community with one another. We only will get it in community together and in community with the Body of Christ in the earth. Not just "us four and no more" here. Connectedness around the earth to the Body of Christ. We will only get it by eating the scroll, by what the angel told John the apostle: study it, eat it, devour it. Devour it. Chew on it, chew on it, chew on it! Revelation 10, eat the scroll, chew on the message.*

## **X. APPENDIX #1—THE PERSECUTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE**

- A. The New Testament describes Christians suffering persecution and even being taken captive (Mt. 10:21-22, 28; 24:9; Lk. 12:4-7; 21:16-19; Jn. 15:18-16:4; 2 Tim. 3:12; Rev. 6:9-11; 11:7; 12:11, 17; 13:7, 10; 16:5-7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; 20:4).
- B. The Old Testament focuses on Jewish people being scattered, persecuted, and/or taken captive (Ps. 102:20; Isa. 11:11-14, 16; 14:1-3; 19:23; 27:12-13; 40:11; 42:7, 16, 22; 45:14; 49:9-12, 21, 24-26; 60:10, 12, 14; 61:1, 5; Jer. 30:3, 8, 10, 17; 31:16, 23; Ezek. 39:23-29; Hos. 11:11; Joel 3:1-2, 8; Amos 9:14; Mic. 2:12-13; 4:6-7; 5:6; 7:12; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:11-12; 10:10-11; 13:8; 14:2).
- C. Isaiah describes one of the most offensive and difficult aspects of the Lord's end-time plan—He will allow Jewish people and Christian to be put into prison camps (Ps. 102:20; Isa. 27:13; 42:7, 22; 49:9, 21, 24-26; 61:1; Jer. 30:3, 8, 10, 17; 31:16, 23; Ezek. 39:23-29; Joel 3:1-2; Amos 9:14; Mic. 4:6; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:11-12; 13:8; 14:2; Mt. 25:43; Lk. 21:24).

## **XI. APPENDIX #2—IDENTIFYING THE SERVANT OF THE LORD**

- A. **Jesus:** There are four prophecies in Isaiah describing Jesus' messianic ministry that are commonly referred to as the "Servant Songs" (42:1-9, 49:1-13; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12). The German theologian Bernhard Duhm was the first to use the phrase the "Servant Song" in his commentary in 1892. Jesus, at His first coming, partially fulfilled them. He will fulfill them completely at His second coming.
  - 1. First Song (Isa. 42:1-9): Jesus came to earth to establish justice (Mt. 12:17-21).
  - 2. Second Song (Isa. 49:1-13): Jesus was rejected by Israel, but will succeed in bringing Israel and all the Gentile nations to God. When Simeon saw Jesus as an infant in the temple, he quoted this Song calling Jesus, "a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel" (Lk. 2:32).



3. Third Song (Isa. 50:4-11): Jesus was treated with contempt by the Jewish people. Jesus pointed to this Song saying, “How is it written concerning the Son of Man, that He must suffer many things and be treated with contempt?” (Mk. 9:12).
  4. Fourth Song (Isa. 52:13-53:12): Jesus is afflicted in saving Israel by receiving God’s wrath. Jesus referred this Song saying He would be “numbered with the transgressors” (Lk. 22:37).
- B. **Faithful Israel:** referred to as the Lord’s servant (14 times; cf. Lev. 25:42; Isa. 41:8; 42:19; 43:10; 44:1-2, 21; 45:4; 48:20). Today many rabbis believe the Servant Songs are a reference to the faithful within the nation of Israel.
- C. **Individuals:** Various individuals were referred to as God’s servant— Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Ex. 32:13), Moses (21 times; cf. Ex. 4:10; 14:31); Joshua (Ex. 5:14; Josh. 5:14); David (21 times; cf. 2 Sam. 3:18; 7:19; 1 Kgs. 8:24; 1 Chr. 17:17, 23-27), the prophets (9 times; cf. 2 Ki. 9:7), Job (7 times; cf. Job 1:8), and even Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 25:9; 27:6; 43:10).

## XII. APPENDIX #3—THE NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTS JESUS’ MINISTRY TO ISAIAH 42

- A. The New Testament connects Jesus’ ministry to Isaiah 42 (Mt. 3:17, 12:18, 17:5; Lk. 18:7-8).
- B. #1 The Father had great delight in Jesus (Mt. 3:17; 17:5).  
**“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights!” (Isa. 42:1)**
1. At Jesus’ baptism, the Father spoke of His delight in Him (Mt. 3:17).  
<sup>16</sup>*When He had been baptized...the Spirit of God descending...upon Him...<sup>17</sup>A voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Mt. 3:16-17)*
  2. At Jesus’ transfiguration, the Father spoke His delight over Him (Mt. 17:2).  
<sup>2</sup>*and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun...<sup>5</sup>and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!” (Mt. 17:2-5)*
- C. #2 The Father empowers Jesus by the Spirit (42:1; 61:1-3).  
**“Behold! My Servant...I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles” (Isa. 42:1)**
1. At Jesus’ baptism, the Father spoke of His delight over Him (Mt. 3:16).  
<sup>16</sup>*When He had been baptized...the Spirit of God descending...upon Him... (Mt. 3:16)*
  2. After Jesus preached in Nazareth, He spoke of the Spirit anointing Him (Lk 4:18-21).  
<sup>18</sup>*“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives...”  
<sup>21</sup>*And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Lk. 4:18-21)**
- D. #3 Isaiah described elements of Jesus’ ministry of justice at His first coming (42:2-4).

<sup>2</sup>***He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.*** <sup>3</sup>***A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice...*** <sup>4</sup>***He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth...*** (Isa. 42:1-4)

1. ***He will not cry out:*** He did not lift His voice in the street seeking to stir up a political or military uprising to overthrow the wicked Jewish government nor to raise an army to revolt against Rome.
2. ***Bruised reed:*** Jesus expressed God's justice in offering tender mercy to the broken (42:3). When Jesus healed all the sick in the great multitude, Matthew interpreted this as Jesus fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy about Jesus not breaking a bruised reed (Mt. 12:15-20).  
<sup>15</sup>***...And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all...***<sup>17</sup>***that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah...***<sup>20</sup>***A bruised reed He will not break...*** (Mt 12:15-20)
3. ***He will not be discouraged:*** Jesus did not "give up," feeling exasperated by strong resistance, constant obstacles, cruel mistreatment, or by the delay of God's promises to Him. Jesus was rejected by the political and religious leaders of Israel and eventually by the nation as a whole. Even His friends and family rejected Him on occasions. But He responded with patience and humility, entrusting His life and future into God's hands (1 Pet. 2:23).

E. #4 The Father spoke about the success of Jesus' ministry to bring justice to the earth (42:4).

<sup>4</sup>***He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth...*** (Isa. 42:4)

1. Jesus anchored His mandate to bring justice to the earth to night-and-day prayer (Lk. 18:7-8).  
<sup>7</sup>***Now will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night*** <sup>8</sup>***He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?*** (Lk. 18:7-8; NAS)
2. In Luke 18, Jesus taught on praying to confront injustice and oppressors. Jesus, as the greatest social reformer in history, highlighted the importance of dealing with injustice in the spirit realm and not only with political processes and works of justice.

### XIII. APPENDIX #4—A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE RELEASE OF JUSTICE

- A. Jesus initiated His commitment to bring justice to the earth at His first coming. It has increased under His leadership through church history. It will increase even as darkness increases at the end of the age.
- B. In the parables of the kingdom (Mt. 13), Jesus taught that the nature of the kingdom in this age was to start as a seed that grows in context to increasing darkness with mixed responses.
- C. There is significant continuity of our labors now with what Jesus will do in the millennial kingdom. Justice is released in different *measures* of victory in different *geographic areas* and in different *spheres of society*. In other words, in some places it will be much stronger than in other places. Some are confused as to the amount of victory we can expect in this age. It is substantial, but not total. In the parables of the kingdom (Mt. 13), Jesus taught that the nature of the kingdom in this age was to start as a seed that grows in context to increasing darkness with mixed responses.

- D. Jesus released justice **partially** at His first coming, is causing it to **increase** throughout church history, and will cause it to triumph **fully** in the millennial kingdom after the second coming.
1. We cannot know with certainty which areas of society and which geographic areas of earth will have what degree of increase of light or darkness.
  2. There is **continuity** of the Body of Christ's labors in seeing justice released in part in in this age with what Jesus will do in the millennial kingdom. Yes, there will be continuity between what we do in this age and what happens in the age to come.
- E. Justice is released in different **measures** of victory in different **geographic areas** and in different **spheres of society**. In other words, in some places it will be much stronger than in other places. We do not know much victory God will release. I referred to this as the "perhaps of God" (Joel 2:14; Zeph. 2:3; Hab. 3:17; Jon. 3:9; Amos 5:14-15; 7:3-6; cf. 2 Chr. 34:27; Dan. 4:27; 2 Sam. 12:22; 24:14; Gen. 18:32; Ex. 32:14; Mal. 3: 17; Ezek. 33:11; 18:21; Jer. 18:8; 5:1; 51:8; Dan. 11:34)