

# The Judgment and Blessing of God – A Study in the Book of Isaiah

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## 15 - THE MAJESTY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD (ISAIAH 40:1-41:29)

### I. The Coming Deliverance (Isaiah 40:1-11)

#### A. Comfort God's People (Isaiah 40:1-2)

- The prophet is to speak words of comfort to Jerusalem.
- The prophet is to acknowledge that they have received the penalty for their sin.

#### B. The Voice of One Calling (Isaiah 40:3-5)

- A voice calls out for the people of God to prepare the way for the Lord.
- The prophet states that the road will be smoothed in preparation for the Lord.
- The Glory of the Lord will be revealed and all will see it.

#### Scripture John 1:19-23

<sup>19</sup> Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" <sup>20</sup> He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

<sup>21</sup> And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." <sup>22</sup> Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" <sup>23</sup> He said: "I am *'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the Lord,"* ' as the prophet Isaiah said."

#### C. The Frailty of Humanity (Isaiah 40:6-11)

- The prophet is to proclaim the frailty of humanity.
- Men are like the flowers of the field in that their existence is only temporary.
- While men are temporary, God's word stands forever.
- The messenger is to proclaim that God is coming to Jerusalem.
- The Lord God will come to rule and care for his flock.

### II. The Incomparable God (Isaiah 40:12--31)

#### A. The Majesty of God (Isaiah 40:12-26)

- The prophet conveys that God is one who created this world.
- The prophet asks who can say that they have instructed or counseled God.
- Compared to God, the nations are considered nothing and worthless.

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- The prophet states that nothing can compare to God.
- The Lord God watches over his creation and its inhabitants are like insects.
- The Lord God establishes rulers and deposes them at his will.
- God asks the readers to compare him to anything if they can.

## B. God watches over his people (Isaiah 40:27-31)

- The prophet questions why Israel believes that God has forgotten them.
- God, who is eternal and never grows weary, gives strength to the weak.
- Those who hope in the Lord will regain their strength and soar as eagles.

## III. The Lord of History (Isaiah 41:1-29)

### A. The confrontation of the nations (Isaiah 41:1-7)

- The Lord confronts the nations to come near to him for judgment.
- The one from the East refers to Cyrus, king of Medo-Persian Empire.

#### **Historical Note:** Cyrus

Cyrus, also known as Cyrus the Great, reigned over Persia between 539—530 BC. He was the son of Cambyses, King of Anshan. After defeating the Medes, he became ruler of what would become the Persian Empire. Cyrus's forces moved against Babylon, which was taken by his viceroy, Darius the Mede (see Daniel 5:31; 6:1,6,9,25,28; 9:1; 11:1). He entered into Babylon as the liberator of the people. He allowed the images of the gods to be transported back to their original cities. He also instituted a policy of repatriation for captive peoples to return to their lands. This allowed the Hebrews to return to Judah and rebuild the Temple.

See: 2 Chronicles 36:22,23; Ezra 1:1,2,7,8; 3:7; 4:3,5; 5:13,14,17; 6:3,14; Isaiah 44:28; 45:1; Daniel 1:21; 6:28; 10:1.

- The Lord states that he is the one who called forth this king and gave the nations to him.
- The Lord affirms that he is the one who brings the events of history to pass.

### B. The protection of Israel (Isaiah 41:8-20)

- The Lord chose Israel to be his servant and to do his will.
- The Lord will not protect nations who oppose Israel.
- The Lord will help Israel to defeat her enemies and they will rejoice in his help.
- The Lord will provide water to the thirsty and they will know that the Lord did this.

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### C. The knowledge of the future (Isaiah 41:21-29)

- The Lord challenges the nations to declare what will take place in the future.
- Because they cannot do this, they are worthless and detestable.
- The Lord answers his own challenge by stating that he will raise up one from the north, who is Cyrus.
- The true God can predict the future but the nations cannot.
- The false gods of these nations are nothing.