

## 20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 25 (June 17-23, 2018)

In these turbulent times, it is wonderful to know that our Sovereign God is in full control of the nations as well as the events taking place in our world. We will continue to explore these truths from the book of Isaiah this week.

**Sunday**, June 17 (read Isaiah 41:1-4)

*Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord—with the first of them and with the last—I am He. (Isaiah 41:4)*

The prophecy given in today's text is one of the most amazing passages in the Scriptures. Last week, we saw God's forewarnings to the Jews that they would go away from their land because of their disobedience. This occurred between 597-586 B.C. when King Nebuchadnezzar conquered the nation of Israel and carried the people to Babylon. In today's passage, God prophesies that He will stir up a nation from the east to conquer Babylon (v. 2). This nation is Persia (modern day Iran) and the prophecy was fulfilled in 539 B.C. Amazingly, the Lord even calls their leader by name (Cyrus, see Isaiah 44:24-28 & 45:1-7) 150 years **prior** to this event. In today's printed verse above, God asks, "Who has done this and carried it through?" In case you hesitate, He gives you the answer in the same verse. Is there any reason to question God's Word in view of this?

**Monday**, June 18 (read Isaiah 41:1-10)

*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)*

Read this entire text so that you will see God's provisions for Israel, even in the midst of judgment for the other nations that are conquered by the Persians (v. 2). The pagan nations see the conquering king coming, but they only encourage each other to produce more idols to worship (v. 5-7). Israel, on the other hand, is reassured of the mercy, grace and protection offered to them from the Creator of the universe (v. 8-9). I printed v. 10 above in hopes that you will memorize it. The promise is given, not only to Israel, but also to all those who come to faith in Jesus Christ. I want you to live a life free from fear, even in these perilous days. Can you trust Him to give you daily strength not only to **endure**, but also to **thrive** during these "times of the signs?"

**Tuesday**, June 19 (read Isaiah 41:11-16)

*All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish. (Isaiah 41:11)*

Israel is currently surrounded by nations that want to destroy her, but God's Word promises everlasting protection for her people (v. 11). Sadly, most of the Jews have rejected their Savior, Jesus Christ, and they continue to try to work out their own safety and protection. Someday, they will realize that their people have been protected, **not by their weapons of war or their high tech military**, but rather **by the hand of God** who made a forever promise to Abraham (v. 8, 12-14). At that time, the Jewish people will finally rejoice in the victory and give glory to their faithful God (v. 15-16). This same promise is applicable to all who have become followers of Jesus Christ because believing Gentiles have been accepted into God's family through adoption (see Ephesians 1:4-5). The Lord still says, "Do not fear; I will help you" (v. 13b).

**Wednesday**, June 20 (read Isaiah 41:17-20)

*But I the Lord will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. (Isaiah 41:17b)*

God is foretelling of the time when the Jews, who have been scattered throughout the world for centuries, will return to Israel and restore the land. After 2000 years of dispersion, they returned to become a nation again on May 14, 1948. That date started the countdown to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Just like today's text says, the land has been restored and the citizens have become wealthy, creating jealousy among the other peoples in the Middle East. What is not fulfilled, however, is the glory that God will someday receive when the Jews acknowledge His hand in all of their success (v. 20). Pray daily that their eyes may be opened to the truth of this prophecy. Thank God for telling us about it 2700 years ago.

**Thursday**, June 21 (read Isaiah 41:21-29)

*Bring in your idols to tell us what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come, tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods. (Isaiah 41:22-23a)*

Many, if not most, preachers ignore **prophecy** because they do not trust God's Word enough to present what is going to happen. They choose to teach the Bible as though it is only a lesson in history instead of the Living Word of God. Personally, since I trust prophecy, I can live at peace because I know what the **future** holds for believers and unbelievers. I try to persuade men and women to trust God's written Word enough to have tranquility in this fallen world. God challenges the nations that worship idols to present their evidence that they are worthwhile. Let **them** tell what the future holds (v. 22-23). In our studies, we have learned that God controls all the nations, their leaders and their activities (v. 1-4). We also know that He is the Protector of Israel (v. 8-20). Can't we trust Him to protect those of us who have given our lives to Jesus?

**Friday**, June 22 (reread Isaiah 41:21-29)

*Who told of this from the beginning, so we could know, or beforehand, so we could say, 'He was right'? No one told of this, no one foretold it, no one heard any words from you. (Isaiah 41:26)*

God's questions demand an answer. Do you know any other religion that has a book that can be trusted to tell the past and foretell the future with perfect accuracy? **It does not exist**; prophecy separates the Word of God from all other books. Can we afford to ignore it in our witness? In my early days of ministry, I was known for preaching the second coming of Jesus Christ. Many scoffed when I told them from Revelation 20:4 about the beheadings that would take place just before and after He returned for His Church. Is anyone laughing now? Please study this text carefully and understand the perfect accuracy of all of God's Word. You can have peace in the midst of the storms around you!

**Saturday**, June 23 (reread Isaiah 41:21-29)

*I look but there is no one—no one among them to give counsel, no one to give answer when I ask them. See, they are all false! (Isaiah 41:28-29a)*

Become very familiar with this text that you have read for three consecutive days. Use it to answer all those who place the Koran or the Book of Mormon or the Watchtower Magazine on equal footing with the Bible. "See, they are all false!" Jesus is the only way to salvation and the Bible is the only Word of God. Reject the politically correct crowd and learn to trust in His Word alone. You will find that your faith grows stronger as you acknowledge the absolute truth and accuracy of His Word for the past, the present, and the future.