

Title: Who Has Done It?

Text: Is 41: 1-20

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Chapter 40 begins declaring Christ has accomplished our warfare. I said to you that the first 39 chapters of Isaiah was full of judgment and from Isaiah 40 on is a word of comfort from our Lord for his people. During the time of those 39 chapters of judgment, the nation of Israel was free—the children themselves considered themselves free and fat and in need of nothing. But from chapter 40, the nation is in captivity to foreign nations and the children of Israel saw themselves surrounded on all sides by enemy nations

Before the Spirit reveals Christ in our hearts—before Isaiah 40 is made known in our hearts—we think we are free. Yet due to our captivity to our sin-nature the judgment of God is upon us. After the Spirit reveals Christ in our hearts, a believer is like Israel in captivity. Due to our sin-nature and this world about us we see ourselves surrounded by enemy nations. Yet we have the comfort of God that we are free in Christ and he is providing all for us.

The one speaking in chapter 41 is the King of Jacob—Christ Jesus, the King of God's elect Jacob's, the Head of his church. Our King begins by speaking to all men in the world who oppose him. Then he uses Abraham as the example—he declares what he did for Abraham. Then he comforts his people, commanding us to fear not—our Savior is doing for us what he did for Abraham his friend.

Proposition: Christ our King is declaring he is the one who raises up his people from the dust, he provides, protects and keeps us and saves us.

ORDER IN THE COURT

Isaiah 41: 1: Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew *their* strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment.

The Lord begins like a judge calling order in the courtroom. God commands everyone to keep silence. Then he calls to all who believe not, to those in distant lands all over the world. In chapter 40, God promised to renew strength in his people who wait on him. But here God tells those that do not believe on him to renew their strength themselves. God is challenging every unbeliever to muster up as much strength as he can in himself to make his case against Christ.

WHO HAS WORKED AND DONE IT?

Isaiah 41: 2: Who raised up the righteous *man* from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made *him* rule over kings? he gave *them* as the dust to his sword, *and* as driven stubble to his bow. 3: He pursued them, *and* passed safely; *even* by the way *that* he had not gone with his feet. 4: Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I *am* he.

The Lord holds up Abraham as the example for his case. “*Who raised up the righteous man from the east?*” The Lord Jesus declares I have worked it and done it. I called Abraham from the beginning. Christ holds up Abraham as the first. Our Lord made Abraham the father of God's elect among many nations. Abraham was a Gentile idolator living in the east in Ur, worshipping his father's idol gods. Christ raised up Abraham from the beginning.

Since he speaks to the Gentiles, this can apply to the first one Christ raised and sent to the Gentiles, the apostle Paul. Paul was an idolator in the midst of Israel. He was using God's law to worship his own will and his own works.

These two men cover all God's elect. Whether we were in religion using God's word like Paul or whether we did not have God's word like Abraham, we all were idolators worshipping ourselves: worshipping the imaginary god we dreamed up and worshipping the works of our hands. It is Christ alone who raises up his elect from the dunghheap and sits us among princes.

THE RIGHTEOUS

He calls Abraham the “*righteous.*” But scripture says “*there is none righteous, no not one.*” Why does he call Abraham or any of his people the righteous? Abraham, Paul and every elect child who Christ raises up are righteous only through God-given faith in Christ, the Lord our Righteousness.

Before the foundation of the world, Christ raised us up when he entered covenant to redeem us. Christ raised us up when he lived in perfection under the law as the GodMan. He raised us up when he was raised up on the cross and put away all the sins of his people and made us the righteousness of God in him. Then he sent the gospel, quickened us, and gave us faith to believe he alone is our Righteousness raising us up off the dunghheap and sitting us among princes.

CALLED TO HIS FOOT

Notice, where Christ called Abraham and Paul—*He called him to his foot.* Christ brought Abraham down from his lofty pride. He made Abraham see he was the sinner and to behold Christ his only Righteousness.

Paul was raging against Christ's saints but Christ brought Paul down to the dust. Christ said, "Why persecutes thou ME?" Paul answered, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Christ sent Paul forth to preach Christ who saved him. Paul did not confer with flesh and blood.

Every preacher Christ sends is a sinner saved by the grace and power and righteousness of our Lord the same as those to whom he is sent. He must know he is the sinner saved by grace so that he preaches salvation by the power and grace of God alone in Christ our Righteousness alone. Christ's preacher must know he is the sinner so that he is touched with the feeling of the infirmities of those to whom he ministers. The same is true of each of you who he has called through the gospel.

A COVENANT MADE

Christ entered covenant with Abraham—*he gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? he gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them, and passed safely;*

Our Lord promised to give the nations to Abraham.

Genesis 15: 18: In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

That seed is Christ.

Galatians 3: 16: Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

All things belong to Christ the Seed. He has entered into covenant with us who he has called, declaring, "*All things are yours.*" So Christ made Abraham *rule over kings? he gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them, and passed safely.*

Genesis 15: 1:...the word of the LORD came unto Abram...Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward.

When the Lord called Paul and sent him forth at Corinth there was much contention against Paul:

Acts 18: 9: Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: 10: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. 11: And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Paul's weapons were not carnal, but spiritual, mighty through God. His sword was the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. His bow and arrow was the Gospel of Christ. As Paul preached the gospel, Christ went forth conquering, and to conquer. Christ gave the nations of the Gentiles to Paul by Christ calling his redeemed people to faith through the gospel.

WALKING BY FAITH

So by Christ's promise, by his power and grace, his people walk by faith in Christ. Abraham went forth by faith trusting Christ to lead him—*even by the way that he had not gone with his feet.*

Hebrews 11:8: By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Abraham's rule of life was Christ who lead him and instructed him and kept him as the apple of his eye. The same is true of every child Christ calls. We walk by faith, not by sight.

THE VERDICT

Christ called the court to order. He made his case. Now he passes the verdict. He declares—*Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.*

Christ is All. He is Alpha and Omega, the Author and Finisher of faith.

He is all in the Father's election, all in the Father's thoughts, purpose, and decrees. The Father is pleased that all fulness dwell in his Son, that his Son have all preeminence

Christ is all in the Covenant. He is the Covenant to his people. In him all God's promises are yes and in him amen.

Our Redeemer is all our Wisdom. When God makes Christ our Wisdom then we know he is All.

He is all our Righteousness and Sanctification and Redemption. Christ wrought and accomplished it for each elect child the Father entrusted to him. It is by Christ's will performing the will of God for his people that we are sanctified. He called

Abraham and kept Abraham separated and consecrated Abraham to himself. It his HIS Holiness we have been make partakers of

Christ is all in our Adoption and Preservation.

He is all in our Resurrection and Glorification.

Christ is All our Salvation—"*Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.*"

SINNERS WITHOUT CHRIST, SINNERS CALLED BY CHRIST

Isaiah 41: 5: The isles saw *it*, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came. 6: They helped every one his neighbour; and *every one* said to his brother, Be of good courage. 7: So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, *and* he that smootheth *with* the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the sodering: and he fastened it with nails, *that* it should not be moved. 8: But thou, Israel, *art* my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. 9: *Thou* whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou *art* my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.

The Lord Jesus declares what sinners will do if left to themselves. The unregenerate Jews and Gentiles in false religion saw the progress of the gospel of Christ. They saw multitudes confess Christ on the day of Pentecost and multitudes added later. They feared but they did not fear God, they feared losing their vain works, their vain refuge. So they stirred up one another to continue in their vain will-worship. We see an example in Demetrius, a craftsman at Ephesus. He made his living making trinkets used to worship the idol Diana.

Acts 19: 24: For a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; 25: Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. 26: Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: 27: So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. 28: And when they heard *these sayings*, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians. 29: And the whole city was filled with confusion:

Personal profit is always the reason men reject the gospel of Christ: For Demetrius and the craftsmen it was money made from their craft. But the gospel of Christ destroys a man's works, whereby he thinks he has profited himself spiritually. Christ creates peace in the heart and among his people. But when Demetrius stirred up the people there was confusion in the city among the people. It is always so when man stirs up men.

James 3: 13: Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. 14: But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15: This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish. 16: For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work. 17: But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18: And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. 4: 1: From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members? 2: Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. 3: Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts. 4: Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. 5: Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

Until born again of the Spirit of God, sinners will not confess that their very best religious works are as evil as their very worst deeds. Demetrius tried to protect his financial life. But men reject the gospel to protect their religious works they think are their righteousness. In reality, those deeds are evil. But they will not come to Christ confessing that. They will not come to Christ confessing Christ worked all the works to make them righteous. Christ said that!

John 3: 18: He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20: For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. [he will not confess that his very best religious deeds are evil] 21: But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

But Christ said all who are born-again "doeth truth." We come to Christ confessing that all our works were worked in Christ. Christ did the works to make us righteous. That is his application to us in declaring this to us in our text—*But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.*

THE LORD'S APPLICATION TO HIS PEOPLE

Hear Christ's word to us, brethren. This is his promise to you to whom Christ is All.

Isaiah 41: 10: Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. 11: Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. 12: Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, *even* them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. 13: For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. 14: Fear not, thou worm Jacob, *and* ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

He called us to preach HIM. He declares what he makes us and what he does through the gospel we preach.

Isaiah 41: 15: Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat *them* small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. 16: Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, *and* shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel. 17: *When* the poor and needy seek water, and *there is* none, *and* their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, *I* the God of Israel will not forsake them. 18: I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. 19: I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, *and* the pine, and the box tree together: 20: That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

Amen!