

Title: Every Believer's Assurance

Text: Isaiah 41: 8-13

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In Isaiah 41, Christ our Mediator is declaring that he raised up Abraham and made him a conqueror. He did the same for Paul. The Lord declares that when the Gentiles saw Christ call out his people among them they feared losing their false refuge. They came together and encouraged one another to continue worshipping the works of their own hands.

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 soldering: and he fastened it with nails, *that* it should not be moved.

They wanted to kill Paul. A man named Demetrius stirred up the people. They were incensed against Paul. It means they were enraged. This were their hearts toward Christ so it was their heart toward Paul. They wanted to kill him. I encourage you to read Acts 19: 23-32. The same as the gospel stripped those craftsmen of their money, the gospel strips every vain religionist of his vain works.

Romans 8: 5: For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6: For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. 7: Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8: So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

For you who believe on Christ, why did you not continue in your vain refuge? Who made you to differ? Who will save you from men who hate the gospel of Christ? Listen to Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 41: 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.

It pleased God our Father to hide these things from the wise and prudent and to reveal them unto babes. So it seemed good in his sight.

Subject: Every Believer's Assurance

Proposition: The Lord calls his people by names Israel, Jacob, and the seed of Abraham. They are those he took from the ends of the earth, those Christ called and separated and has not cast away. Therefore, the Lord promises his people that we have nothing to fear.

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. 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.

NOT ALL ISRAEL ARE ISRAEL

When we hear the Lord call his people Israel, Jacob and the seed of Abraham, understand who he is not speaking of. The name Israel does not refer to the political nation. When he calls his people Israel, Christ is not speaking of the nation Israel. Most in Israel rejected Christ!

When he calls his people Jacob, he is not calling every son of Jacob his Jacob's. Most people deny the very thing that he brings his Jacob's to confess—that we are the sinner, the supplanter—that we need Christ to be all Salvation unto us.

When he calls his people the seed of Abraham, he is not speaking of all the children of Abraham. All three major religions claim to be the children of Abraham—Jews, Muslim and Christians. Christ has elect called out from among all three. But not all are the seed of Abraham. The majority of Abraham's natural children do not believe on Christ.

Let's see who the Lord speaks of. Who are his people? Paul prayed for his countrymen in the nation Israel who rejected Christ. But he says,

Romans 9: 6: Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8: That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9 For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. 10: And not only *this*; [next he declares who his Jacob's are] but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac; 11: (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12: It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. 13: As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

Salvation does not begin with the sinner but with God the Father choosing whom he would in Christ by his sovereign grace, not based on anything in us. Does that make God unrighteous? No, that is his glory! When Moses asked to see his glory, God put Moses in the cleft of the rock, “And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.” (Ex 33:19 AV)

Child of God, this is why our Savior commands us to “Fear not!”

Isaiah 41: 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. 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.

ISRAEL

These three names declare who God’s people are. Our Savior declares of his elect, those he redeemed,

Isaiah 41: 8: But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

Israel is Christ’s name.

Isaiah 49: 1: Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. 2: And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; 3: And said unto me, Thou *art* my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified

In our text, the Lord is declaring he has done this for us. he gives us his name Israel and a mouth to speak his gospel. But in Isaiah 49, Christ declares “Israel” is his name. This is Christ called Israel because this can only be said of Christ.

Isaiah 49: 8: Thus saith the LORD [to Christ], In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; 9: That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that *are* in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures *shall be* in all high places.

Christ’s name is Israel. He gave his name Israel to Jacob. He gives his name Israel to each one he redeemed when he calls us to faith in him.

Israel means Prince: one who as a prince has power with God and men and has prevailed. That is Christ the Prince of Peace. He had power with God and men because he is the God-Man Mediator. Christ brought God and his people together in him by his precious blood and by his Spirit within us.

When he calls us, Christ makes us his willing-bondservants—*But thou, Israel, art my servant*. The willing bond-servant was free to go but he loved his Master. He was free. So he willingly served his Master as his freeman. Christ has made us free by redeeming us and regenerating us by the Spirit. He has opened our ear to hear that Christ paid all the debt we owed and set us free.

Romans 8: 1: There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3: For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

JACOB

Isaiah 41: 8: But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

But our King also declares our name is *Jacob*. Jacob is our name from Adam. It means supplanter, sinner. That describes each person born into this world because all are sinners. But the Lord brings his Jacob’s to confess it is so of us. He brings us to confess to him we are the sinner! We never cease being Jacob in our sin-nature. That is why the Lord has to assure us we have no reason to fear. *Thou,...art...Jacob whom I have chosen*.

We see how Christ gives us his name in what he did to Jacob when Christ gave Jacob his name, Israel. Preachers preach from this passage, declaring to men they should wrestle with Christ in prayer until they get what they want. That is not the message of this passage. Jacob was alone and terrified that his brother Esau would kill him. In our text our Lord teaches us to fear not because we are Jacob whom he has chosen.

Genesis 32: 24: And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. 25: And when [Christ] saw that [Jacob] prevailed not against him, [Christ] touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

Jacob did not prevail with Christ because Jacob was trying to prevail by his own strength. We never prevail with Christ wrestling against him or his providence in our own strength. Whatever trial our sovereign Savior sent us, it is Christ doing for his elect what he did for Jacob in this passage. Christ touches us in power, making us behold our complete weakness like he did Jacob, making us see our sins and our need of Christ so that we cry to Christ for mercy, begging Christ to be our Strength and our Salvation.

Genesis 32: 26: And [Christ] said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And [Jacob] said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

This is where preachers use this passage to speak of wrestling with God in prayer until you get what you want. No! That is not what happened here. By the Power of Christ, Christ touched Jacob and made Jacob totally weak so that the only thing he could was beg Christ for mercy. That is how Jacob prevailed. That is what Hosea declares.

Hosea 12:4: Yea, [Jacob] had power over the angel [Christ is the Angel, it means Messenger; he is the Messenger of the covenant], Jacob had power [with Christ] and prevailed: [how?] he wept, and made supplication unto him: [Christ] found him *in* Bethel, and there [Christ] spake with us;

There in Bethel, in what Christ did to Jacob, Christ teaches us the one way we have power with Christ. It is by Christ making us behold our total weakness so that we fall at his feet begging mercy. When he brings us there, he makes us prevail. He gives us mercy. He gives us his name.

Genesis 32: 27: And [Christ] said unto him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob.

Christ always brings us to confess our sins to him and beg mercy from God for the sake of Christ Jesus. Jacob confessed his name is Sin! Supplanter! He confessed his need of Christ to save him! That is how Christ makes his chosen Jacob's prevail. It is how he made us prevail when he first called us and that is how he keeps making us prevail with him until the end.

Genesis 32: 28: And [Christ] said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

Christ's name is Israel because he is the Prince of peace. He had power with God and with men by bearing the sin of his people. He prevailed by redeeming us from the curse of the law, making all his elect the righteousness of God in him. Christ has power with God to send the Holy Spirit and the gospel and touch the hollow of our thigh and bring all his Jacobs to confess our sins and beg him for mercy. That is how Christ gives us his name Israel. It is by his power and grace that he brings us to cry out to him for mercy.

Genesis 32: 29 And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And [Christ] said, Wherefore *is it that* thou dost ask after my name?

Christ just told Jacob his name when Christ gave his name to Jacob.

Genesis 32: 29...And he blessed him there. 30: And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. 31: And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

Like as the sun arose on Jacob so Christ, the Sun of Righteousness rises upon us with healing in his wings (Mal 4: 2). From that day forward we have a new walk. We walk by faith utterly dependent upon Christ because now we see we have no strength in ourselves. Now we know we are the worm Jacob. Now we know it is in Christ our Righteousness that we are Israel.

Christ never stops working this work in us. When that mob tried to kill Paul at Athens, it was Christ touching the hollow of Paul's thigh, reminding Paul that he had no strength in himself so that he would not trust in himself but in Christ who delivered him. In 2 Corinthians 1: 9 that is what Paul declared that Christ taught him again that day in Athens.

But that is why he tells us to "fear not"—*thou [art], Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, ...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. 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.*

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM MY FRIEND

Isaiah 41: 8: But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

Christ assures each believer thou art *the seed of Abraham my friend*. Our Savior promised Abraham that he would have a seed. He promised to work this in all his elect.

How was the first true, spiritual seed of Abraham made? Isaac, was the son of promise, born of God, born of a miraculous birth. That is how Christ makes every seed of Abraham. Each true believer is a child of promise, one Christ promised Abraham that Christ would create. We born of a miraculous birth. Born from above of the Holy Spirit. God gives us faith to believe on

Christ. Through faith God robes us in Christ's righteousness. That is how he makes us one with God and one with our brethren. We are one in Christ—elected in Christ, made righteous by the same blood, born of one Spirit, given one faith in one Savior, Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3: 26: For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27: For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29: And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

There is but one reason, brethren, that you differ from other sinners. There us but one reason we have to fear not. But this is ALL! This is why we ought never fear. Christ is our All! When Demetrius and that multitude wanted to kill Paul, Paul later said this. This is the lesson Christ keeps teaching us. It is what Christ keeps doing for us to keep us trusting him alone.

2 Corinthians 1: 9: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: 10: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;

This who made us to differ, brethren. This is why we have no reason to fear. Christ promises,

Isaiah 41: 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. 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.

Amen!