



# ShalomAZ Ministries

*In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption*

## **“Loved, Chosen, Lifted, Transformed – With Purpose!”**

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### **Devotion and Discussion Questions**

**Key Texts (TLV):** *Is 41:8-20; Isaiah 40:31; 41:1-7; Deut. 7:7-9; Is. 1:18; Ex. 14:13-14; 17:1-7; Gen. 26:3, 28; 39:2, 21-23; Deut. 31:8; Ephesians 2:1-4*

Some of the most comforting words in all of Scripture are packed into these “chapters of consolation” in Isaiah. In the Jewish calendar, right after *Tisha B’Av*—the season that remembers the destruction of the Temple and the tragedies tied to exile—come the Seven Weeks of Consolation. And the Haftarah readings during that time lean hard into passages like this: “*Comfort, comfort My people.*” That’s the atmosphere here. This isn’t God lecturing His people from a distance—this is the Holy One stepping close, speaking identity into discouraged hearts, and reminding them who He is and who they are to Him.

And it matters because when you look at the nations, when you look at people far from God, it’s easy to slip into disgust, eye-rolling, or fear. But the Lord keeps pulling us back to reality: *WE TOO* were there. He loved us to life when we were still in the stench of sin. (Eph. 2:1-4). So Isaiah 41 opens like a courtroom scene—God calls the coastlands, the ends of the earth, to come near and be silent, to “renew their strength,” to face the question: who is truly Lord of history? And then, in front of everybody, He turns to Israel and says, “Now let Me tell you who you are to Me—and what I intend to show the world through you.”

#### **1. YOU’RE NOT AN ACCIDENT: YOU’RE LOVED AND CHOSEN**

God looks at Israel in the middle of this courtroom moment—with the nations watching—and He says, “*But you, Israel My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, descendant of Abraham My beloved.*” (Is. 41:8). He doesn’t start with Israel’s performance; He starts with relationship. “My servant... My chosen... seed of Abraham... My beloved.” This is covenant language—belonging language. And it’s stunning: the Lord of the universe identifies Himself with the least, the bullied, the pushed-around kid on the playground. He walks past the loud athletes and the big bullies and picks up the weakling hiding in the corner—puts him on His shoulders—and says, “You’re Mine now.” Then when someone asks, “Who are You?” He points at the one He rescued and says, “I’m his Dad. I’m his.”

And this has always been God’s way. He said it plainly: “*It is not because you are more numerous than all the peoples that Adonai set His love on you and chose you—for you are the least of all peoples. Rather, because of His love for you...*” (Deut. 7:7-8). So if you’ve been reading your life through the lens of “Why me?” or “What did I do to deserve this?”—the Lord interrupts that whole narrative with: “You’re chosen because I love you. And I love you because I set My love on you.” That’s not favoritism—it’s mission... purpose. It’s God attaching His Name – His Reputation to the powerless so the world learns what kind of God He is.

#### **2. YOU’RE NOT ALONE: EXCHANGE FEAR FOR HIS PRESENCE AND STRENGTH**

Right after establishing identity, God aims directly at fear. He doesn’t pretend exile isn’t real. He doesn’t deny the threats. He just refuses to let fear be Israel’s anchor. “*Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. Surely I will help you. Surely I will*

*uphold you with My righteous right hand.” (Is. 41:10). That word “dismayed” is so vivid—like your eyes darting around, scanning for danger, trying to locate safety. God says, “Stop looking everywhere else for security. With you—I AM.”*

And this is where the “stuffed animals” hit home. The nations draw near to God in the courtroom scene, but instead of receiving strength from Him, they turn to each other and to their idols: “Be strong... it’s good... fasten it with nails so it won’t totter.” (Is. 41:6–7). That’s what we do too. We grab our little talismans—money, control, approval, distraction, outrage, a thousand coping mechanisms—and we try to nail them down so they won’t wobble. And the LORD invites us, “Exchange your stuffed animals for a Father.” Not positive thinking—presence. Not denial—covenant. The command “*fear not*” rests on two rock-solid reasons: “*I am with you*” and “*I am your God.*” (Is. 41:10, 13). That’s the exchange: your weakness for His strength, your panic for His steadying hand.

### **3. YOU’RE NOT JUST PROTECTED: YOU’RE LIFTED AND TRANSFORMED FOR A WITNESS**

Then ADONAI takes it further. He doesn’t only promise defense; He promises transformation. “*Fear not, you worm Jacob... I Myself will help you... your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.*” (Is. 41:14). “Worm” isn’t God being cruel—it’s God naming reality: small, powerless, easily crushed. And even there, He calls Himself “*the Holy One of Israel*”—Israel’s Holiness—meaning He binds His Holy Name to the weak. Then comes the shock: “*Look, I will make you a threshing sledge... you will thresh the mountains... make the hills like chaff.*” (Is. 41:15). The worm becomes an instrument that can pulverize what used to feel immovable. The obstacle doesn’t get the final word. God does.

And the transformation spills outward as provision and renewal: “*The poor and needy ask for water... I, Adonai, will answer them... I will open rivers on the bare hills... I will make the wilderness a pool of water... I will plant in the wilderness...*” (Is. 41:17–19). Water and shade in the desert—life where there was none. And why does the Lord do it? Isaiah says it as directly as anywhere: “**SO THAT they may see and know, consider and understand together, that the hand of Adonai has done this—the Holy One of Israel has created it.**” (Is. 41:20). This is the purpose of chosenness: God working in our inadequacy to make His glory unmistakable—SO THAT the nations stop propping up tottering idols and finally recognize the living God!

### **CONCLUSION: THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW**

So here’s what the Lord is saying over His people in exile, and over every believer who feels outnumbered, threatened, or forgotten: “You are loved. You are chosen. I have taken hold of you. I have not rejected you. Don’t be afraid—because with you is Me.” (Is. 41:8–10). While the world shouts, “Be strong,” God doesn’t just command strength—He offers Himself as the **SOURCE** of that strength. The invitation goes out to the coastlands, to the ends of the earth: renew/exchange your strength—exchange your emptiness for His fullness. The tragedy is that so many draw near and still choose idols that totter.

But God’s people are meant to be the living evidence that another kind of strength exists. The worm becomes the threshing sledge. The thirsty get water. The desert gets shade. And the point isn’t just our comfort—it’s God’s revelation: *so they may see and know.* (Is. 41:20). You weren’t loved to be shelved. You were loved to be lifted—so the world can look at what God has done in you and say, “That had to be the hand of Adonai.”

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Where do you most naturally look for “security” when you feel threatened—God’s presence, or “stuffed animals” you try to nail down?
2. What stands out to you about God identifying Himself as *“the Holy One of Israel”* while speaking to “worm Jacob” (Is. 41:14)?
3. How does *“Fear not... for I am with you”* (Is. 41:10) differ from positive thinking or simply trying to calm yourself down?
4. What “mountain” feels insurmountable in your life right now—and what would it look like to believe God can transform you into His instrument (Is. 41:15)?
5. Isaiah says God works this way *“so that they may see and know...”* (Is. 41:20). Who is meant to “know” God through what He’s doing in you?

### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

*Avinu Malkenu*, Our Father, Our King, we come before You and we admit how quickly we look for strength in the wrong places. We confess the idols we’ve tried to fasten with nails—things we’ve depended on for comfort, control, and safety. Forgive us for exchanging Your presence for our “stuffed animals.” Today, we hear Your word: *“Fear not, for I am with you... I will strengthen you... surely I will help you... surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”* (Is. 41:10). We receive that promise—not as a slogan, but as covenant reality.

Holy One of Israel, Redeemer, take hold of us again. Where we feel small, powerless, and outmatched, transform us by Your Spirit. Make the dry places pools of water. Bring rivers where there were bare hills. Give shade where there has been scorching exposure. And do it in such a way that people around us would *see and know, consider and understand together* that Your hand has done this (Is. 41:20). We yield ourselves to You—loved, chosen, lifted, and transformed—with purpose.

*B’Shem Yeshua*, In the name of Yeshua, amen.