

# (The Word for Today) Isaiah 41:8 - Part 2

by Chuck Smith

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*Pastor Chuck Smith emphasizes God's unwavering support and the futility of false idols in his sermon on Isaiah 41:8.*

**Duration:** 25:59

**Scripture:** Isaiah 40:28-41

**Topics:** "Expositional"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of recognizing God's hand at work in our lives. He encourages listeners to see, know, and consider the ways in which God has intervened and provided for them. The speaker also challenges the false gods to prove their divinity by prophesying future events, highlighting the power of biblical prophecy as evidence of the Bible's divine inspiration. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the need to acknowledge and appreciate God's involvement in our lives and to rely on Him rather than attributing our blessings to luck or human intervention.

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## Transcript

Welcome to The Word for Today. The Word for Today is a continuous study of the Bible, taught by Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California. Pastor Chuck is currently teaching from the Old Testament, and if you're following along in your Bible, we'll be continuing today in Isaiah chapter 41, beginning with verse 8. As we continue with an in-depth message entitled, The Greatness of God.

And now with today's study, here's Pastor Chuck. Jesus said, I no longer call you servants, but I call you friends. I love that.

A friend of God. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and I said unto thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, I've chosen you, I'll not cast you away.

Fear thou not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yea, I will help you, yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness.

Now I want you to hear this as God is just speaking it to you tonight, no matter what the situation or difficulty that you might be facing. God has chosen you to be His servant. God has called you as His.

And God is saying to you, as you're looking at the prospects of this next week, as you're looking at the situation that you're going to be facing, the difficulties that lie in front of you, the Lord is saying, fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yea, I will help you, yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness.

If God before us, who can be against us? Fear not. God said, I am with you. Behold, all they that were incensed against you will be ashamed and confounded.

God will take your part. God will defend you. They shall be as nothing, and they that strive with you shall perish.

Oh, the blessing of being a servant of God. How blessed. When God takes my part, when God defends me, you will seek after those that were your enemies, those that were incensed.

You will seek after them, you'll not even be able to find them, even those that were contending with you, fighting with you. They that war against you shall be as nothing, they will be less than nothing, a thing of naught. For I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, fear not, I will help thee.

I love that. God said, I will hold your right hand. As my children were growing up, and we would come walking down the street, come to the street corner, I would always say to them, let Daddy take your hand.

I'll hold your hand while we cross the street. And I always held their hand to cross the street. I never said to them, hold Daddy's hand.

I always said, let Daddy hold your hand. Because if sudden danger should arise, I wanted to be holding their hand rather than them holding my hand. Because in danger, and if I had to pull suddenly upon them, their hand could slip.

They were weak. I wanted to make sure that I could pull them out of danger because of my strength. God doesn't say to you, hold my hand now, we're going to go through some tough times here.

He says, I will hold your hand. We're going through some rough water. Oh, how comforting it is to have God holding my right hand.

I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto you, don't be afraid, I will help you. Oh man, I love that. Don't be afraid, I will help you.

What more do you need? Fear not, thou worm Jacob, ye men of Israel, I will help you. Don't be afraid, I will help you. Sayeth the Lord, the Redeemer, here we have it now, the Goel, the Kinsman Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, the introduction of Jesus here, who is the Kinsman Redeemer.

We'll get into that. He uses this seven times and we'll go into it more fully when we get to the 59th chapter and we have a better opportunity to deal with it. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument.

This is what I'm going to do. I'm going to make you subdue the enemies. I'll make you like a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth and you will thresh the mountains of grain or corn.

You'll beat them small and you will make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them and the wind shall carry them away, that is your enemies. The whirlwind will scatter them and you will rejoice in the Lord and you

will glory in the Holy One of Israel.

I'm going to work in your behalf that you might glory in the Lord and rejoice in Him. When the poor and needy seek water and there is none and their tongue is failing for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them. I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

I will open rivers in high places, fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree and the myrtle and the oil tree.

And I will set in the desert the fir tree, the pine, the box tree together that they may see and know and consider and understand together. The hand of the Lord has done this. The Holy One of Israel created it.

God said, I'm going to be with you. When you're going through difficult places, you think you're going to perish. I will provide.

I will be there. I will provide for you. Your life seems like it's just drying up.

You're going to die for thirst. You cry unto me. I will be there.

I will open up rivers, fountains in the valleys, pools of water in the wilderness, dry and in the dry land springs of water, artesian wells. God is just, take this in a spiritual sense. He's just saying, I will be to you everything.

I will provide for you all that you need. I'll take care of you. And then I will make you fruitful.

There in that barren area of your life, you'll become fruitful. There in the wilderness, all of the trees to be planted. And the whole idea is found, or the purpose of it is found in verse 20.

That you may see the hand of God at work, that you may know and that you might consider and that you might understand that the hand of the Lord has done this. God wants you to recognize His work in your life. And God works in our lives that we might see and know and consider.

Wow, it was God who did that. God is at work. Look what the Lord has done.

And He wants you to recognize His hand. So many times we call on the Lord in our hour of need and desperation. And we say, Oh God, you know, help.

If you'll just get me out of this Lord, I'll do anything and all. And then God comes through and we say, Boy, I was so lucky. You can't believe how lucky I am, you know.

Like the little kid sliding down the barn roof, falling, tumbling, saying, God, help me. And about that time, his pants got caught on a nail. He came to a ripping halt.

And he said, Never mind, Lord. Nail caught me. So typical.

We call on the Lord for help and then because God works in natural ways so many times to give us help. We say, Well, never mind, Lord. My friends came through.

Never mind, Lord. It's OK now. It's all worked out.

Well, who worked it out that you might know, that you might see, that you might consider? It's the Lord that was watching over you. It was the Lord that took care of you. Now, we're in court.

God has brought these other gods in. And he's going to, he's the prosecuting attorney and the judge, but with him, it's all right. He says, Produce your cause, saith the Lord.

Bring forth some strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring forth and show us what is going to happen. Let them show us from the former times things that will take place in the future, what they will be, that we might consider them and know the latter end of them or declare to us things that are going to come.

Now, here's the challenge of God to these other false gods. You say you're gods. All right, fine.

Prove it. Tell us something that's going to happen. Tell us what will be the outcome of this event here.

Tell us what's going to take place in the future. Prove that you are gods. Give us some evidence.

And this whole area of prophecy is one of the strongest apologetics for the proof that the Bible is the word of God, the inspired word of God, because he told us in advance of things that would take place. As Jesus said, And now I have told you before it happens, so that when it does happen, you might believe. And so God is challenging now.

And for the next few chapters, he's going to be challenging the false gods to go ahead and prophesy something. Tell us something. Amaze us, astound us.

Do something. And that's basically what he said. Declare to us things that are going to come.

Show us the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods. Yea, do something. Either good or bad.

That we might be dismayed. Do something that will just dismay us. Anything.

There you are just sitting there, you little god. Now do something. Say something.

Do anything. That we might be dismayed. Wow, did you see that? Did you hear that? And so God is challenging all these.

Bring these little gods. Send them out here now. Okay, now say something.

Do something. Tell us something that's going to happen. And yet people worship them.

Yet people pray to them. Yet people give to them. Yet people sacrifice for them.

And so God says, okay, let's sit in court and let's see you do something. Do good or do evil. That we may be dismayed and behold it together.

But then God says, look, you are nothing. You are the work of nothing. And it's an abomination for any man to choose you.

Those that choose you have become an abomination. Those that choose to serve these gods, you become an abomination. Serving false gods is an abominable thing.

Because you're nothing. You're the work of nothing. Now the Lord again, speaking of Cyrus, said, I've raised up one from the north.

He shall come from the rising of the sun, that is the east, and he shall call upon my name. He will come upon the princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treads the clay. He'll tread down the nations like a potter in mixing the clay.

He would put it on the ground and step on it all to work it and to knead the clay. Who hath declared from the beginning that we may know? Where is the God that has told you in advance things that were going to happen? And beforehand that we may say that he is righteous. Yea, there is none that shows you anything.

None that declares. There's none that hears your words. These gods can't hear you.

They can't speak to you. They can't tell you what's going to happen. The first shall say to Zion, Behold them, and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.

For behold, for I beheld, and there was no man even among them, and there was no counselor that when I asked them could answer a word. So God is saying, Look, there's not one that could answer. Behold, they are all vanity.

Their works are nothing. Their molten images are wind and confusion. The false gods that men hold on to.

Jeremiah was called of God to prophesy to the nation. And God said, Go out and tell the people that they've committed two evils. The first is they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water.

And they have carved out cisterns that can hold no water because they're broken cisterns. Every man has a God. Every man has an object of master passion that he worships in his life.

With some it is pleasure, the Old Testament God of Molech. With some it is power, the Old Testament God of Mammon. With some it is intellect, the Old Testament God of Baal.

With some it is sex, the Old Testament God, Goddess Ashtoreth. But every man has that master passion that governs and controls his life, his God. And when a person forsakes the true and the living God, then that doesn't mean that you don't have a God.

That means that you have some other God, some other idol to which you bow, that governs your life. And if you will carefully examine your life and look at that which is all absorbing for you, that which really is your impulse and impetus to get out of bed, that which keeps you going, that's your God. But as the Lord said concerning these other gods, they are broken cisterns, they can't hold water.

They are nothing, they are less than nothing and it's an abomination for those who serve them. David points out a rather awesome truth. He said the gods of the heathen are many.

They carve these idols out and they carve eyes in the idols but they can't see. They carve ears on them but they can't hear. They carve feet on them but they can't walk.

And mouths they have but they can't speak. So he talks about man making his gods and he makes his gods like himself. I carve ears on my God because I have ears.

I carve eyes because I have eyes. And so a man makes a God like himself. But he makes his God less than himself.

Because the psalmist said though they have feet they can't walk. Though they have ears they can't hear. And this is pretty much what God was saying.

Say something, do something, you know. But they can't speak. They can't hear.

And a man who worships insensate gods, a man who worships the intellect or pleasure, lives for pleasure, the man who lives for power and money and possessions, the man who is controlled by these things, becomes like his God. If your God is false you are becoming false. Because a man becomes like his God.

They that have made them have become like the gods they've made. And that's the clincher. You are becoming like your God.

If your God is a God that you have made, you've made him less than yourself, and thus you're on the way down. It's an abomination to you because you're becoming like your God, which is nothing. And you're being destroyed.

You're on the way down. But if you are worshiping the true and the living God, then you're on the way up. Beloved, now are we the sons of God.

It doesn't yet appear what we're going to be, but we know when he appears we're going to be like him. A man becomes like his God. We with open face beholding the glory of the Lord are changed from glory to glory into the same image by his Spirit that's working in us.

I'm becoming like my God. I'm glad that I serve the true and the living God. The God who is able from the beginning to tell things that are going to happen.

The God who has proved himself over and over again. And we'll be getting into some fascinating proofs as we go into the next few chapters. And God again challenges the false gods.

He said, okay, you know, guys haven't been able to tell you. Now I'm going to tell you some things. And he starts naming guys 150 years before they're born and talking and giving details about what they're going to be doing and how they're going to do it and all.

So 150 years later, here it happens. You say, wow, he knew what he was talking about. Face to face, Lord let me know.

Face to face, Lord let me see you. Chuck Smith will return with a few closing comments. But first I'd like to remind you that today's message is available in its unedited form on cassette or CD.

Simply write or call and ask for ordering details on tape or CD number C3260. Again, that's tape or CD number C3260. As we come to a close in today's program, we'd like to recommend a resource just for women.

Sometimes it's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of Christmas. Buying presents, decorating, cooking, the list grows longer every day. Without realizing it, we can easily forget the true meaning of why we celebrate our Lord's birth.

For this reason, the word for today presents A Season of Joy, an audio Bible study that reflects the true meaning of Christmas. Hosted by Kay Smith, wife of Pastor Chuck. Kay reminds us to spend time at the Lord's feet despite our busy schedules.

Guest speakers also include Elizabeth Elliott, Sheila Walsh, and Marge Caldwell, exhorting us to remember that it's through Jesus Christ that our season of joy can be peaceful and complete. Also ask about Pastor Chuck Smith's tract entitled, How Can a Man Be Born Again? Available in both Spanish and English, this would make the perfect addition to Christmas cards or gifts. To order your copy of A Season of Joy and How Can a Man Be Born Again, call the word for today at 1-800-272-WORD or write to us at P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California, 92628.

And remember, the word for today would like to assist you this Christmas in spreading the gospel of Jesus to your family, friends, and coworkers. Please call our customer service department to help you in finding that perfect gift that will reflect the true meaning of Christmas. And if you call right now and mention this radio ad, the word for today will give you a 20% discount on any resource carried by the word for today.

Once again, that number to call is 1-800-272-9673. And for those of you that would like to visit our website, you can do so at [www.twft.com](http://www.twft.com). Or if you would like to email us, you can do so at [info@twft.com](mailto:info@twft.com). Well, coming up next time on The Word for Today, Pastor Chuck will be continuing his fascinating study through the book of Isaiah. That's coming up next time on The Word for Today.

And now, with a few closing comments, here's Pastor Chuck. We thank you, Lord, that we can wait upon you tonight, that our strength will be renewed, that we might be able to mount up with wings as eagles, that we can run and not be weary, that we can walk and not faint, that the Lord, the creator of the heavens and the earth, who stretched out the heavens like a curtain, who measures the waters in the hollow of his hand, has said to us, Fear not, for I am with you. Thank you, Lord, for your help for us who are weak.

Thank you for your presence. Thank you for your love. Thank you for your goodness, your eternal goodness.

And thank you, Lord, for your word, your sure word. You said it, and you have done it. We thank you, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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