

Isaiah Chapter 41 – Part 2

Where do we get the text of the Old Testament? One of the most influential sources is from the Masoretes.

From Wikipedia:

“The Masoretes (Hebrew: בְּעָלֵי הַמְסֹרֶת, romanized: Ba‘ālēy Hammāsōrā, lit. 'Masters of the Tradition') were groups of Jewish scribe-scholars who worked from around the end of the 5th through 10th centuries CE, based primarily in medieval Palestine (Jund Filastin) in the cities of Tiberias and Jerusalem, as well as in Iraq (Babylonia). Each group compiled a system of pronunciation and grammatical guides in the form of diacritical notes (niqqud) on the external form of the biblical text in an attempt to standardize the pronunciation, paragraph and verse divisions, and cantillation of the Hebrew Bible (the Tanakh) for the worldwide Jewish community.”

They produced the Masoretic text:

“The Masoretic Text[a] (MT or **מ**; Hebrew: נְטִיחַ הַמְסֹרֶת, romanized: Nūssāḥ Hammāsōrā, lit. 'Text of the Tradition') is the authoritative Hebrew and Aramaic text of the 24 books of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh) in Rabbinic Judaism. The Masoretic Text defines the Jewish canon and its precise letter-text, with its vocalization and accentuation known as the mas'sora. Referring to the Masoretic Text, masorah specifically means the diacritic markings of the text of the Hebrew scriptures and the concise marginal notes in manuscripts (and later printings) of the Tanakh which note textual details, usually about the precise spelling of words. It was primarily copied, edited and distributed by a group of Jews known as the Masoretes between the 7th and 10th centuries of the Common Era (CE). The oldest known complete copy, the Leningrad Codex, dates from the early 11th century CE.”

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But the discoveries in the Qumran caves gave us manuscripts that were older than the copies we have from the Masoretes. These include the “Isaiah Scroll.”

“The Isaiah Scroll, designated 1QIsaa and also known as the Great Isaiah Scroll, is one of the seven Dead Sea Scrolls that were first discovered by Bedouin shepherds in 1946 from Qumran Cave 1. The scroll is written in Hebrew and contains the entire Book of Isaiah from beginning to end, apart from a few small damaged portions. It is the oldest complete copy of the Book of Isaiah, being approximately 1000 years older than the oldest Hebrew manuscripts known before the scrolls' discovery. 1QIsaa is also notable in being the only scroll from the Qumran Caves to be preserved almost in its entirety.”

“The scroll is written on 17 sheets of parchment. It is particularly large, being about 734 cm (24 feet) long and ranges from 25.3 to 27 cm high (10 to 10.6 inches) with 54 columns of text.”

The point of this detour is provide some perspective on the text of the Old Testament. The oldest existing complete copy of the Old Testament before the discovery of the Qumran “Dead Sea Scrolls” was a manuscript called the “Aleppo Codex” which is dated to around 920 AD. The Isaiah Scroll from the Qumran caves has been dated no later than about 100 BC. According to Wikipedia “It is the oldest complete copy of the Book of Isaiah, being approximately 1000 years older than the oldest Hebrew manuscripts known before the scrolls' discovery.” It is remarkable in that the text of the Isaiah scroll and the Masoretic text is very close in spite of a separation of 1,000 years.

Now God, the Israel’s defense attorney assures Israel of the victorious support it will receive in Isaiah chapter 41.

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Isaiah 41:8 “But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend,

Israel/Jacob/Abraham. Remember that God chose Abraham and made a covenant with him. Subsequently, God renewed the covenant with Isaac and then Jacob who He renamed “Israel.”

Noah and Sons:

Genesis 9:8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying,

Genesis 9:9 “Now behold, I Myself do establish My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you;

Abram/Abraham:

Genesis 15:18 On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:...”

Isaac:

Genesis 26:2 The Lord appeared to him (Isaac) and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you.

Genesis 26:3 Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I

will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.

Genesis 26:4 I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;

Genesis 26:5 because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.”

Genesis 26:24 The Lord appeared to him the same night and said, “I am the God of your father Abraham; Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you, and multiply your descendants, For the sake of My servant Abraham.”

Jacob/Israel:

Genesis 28:3 (Isaac blessing Jacob) May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples.

Genesis 28:4 May He also give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your descendants with you, that you may possess

the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham.”

Genesis 28:13 And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, “I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants.

Genesis 28:14 Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 28:15 Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”

God chose the Israelites. Yes, they failed in many ways and suffered great persecutions and will suffer even more during the Tribulation. Yet, as a people God chose them and will not abandon them. They will be highly revered in the Millennium. Gentiles will look up to them as a people with special blessings from God.

Exodus 19:5 Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;

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Exodus 19:6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”

Exodus 24:7 Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!”

Exodus 24:8 So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

Another part of this detour is the fulfillment of the covenants with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the sons of Israel in the Millennial reign of Christ. We will get there in verse 21.

The point of this detour was to provide you with a perspective that Church Age people do not have. When we see that Israel was “chosen” by God, we understand position in Christ. But the Jews do not have position in Christ. They had a covenant with God. Those covenants were instigated by God. In essence, God chose them and as a result made covenants with them.

Isaiah 41:9 You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from its remotest parts And said to you, ‘You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you.

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Here is God’s documentation of Israel’s security.

Servant. In this context, I prefer the English word “subject” which highlights the legal covenant relationship God has with Israel.

Isaiah 41:10 ‘Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’

This promise is to the Jews. It is not to the Church since the Church is not revealed in the Old Testament. But, since we are in Christ and Christ is in us we might be able to reword this based upon doctrines in the New Testament to something like **“Do not fear (i.e. do not sin), for Christ the Son is in you and you are in Him. Do not anxiously look about you, for I am God your Father. Walk by faith and I will empower you with my Holy Spirit, surely He will guide you, surely My Spirit will produce righteous fruit in you.”**

Detour here! Again.

Although there are many principles in the Old Testament. Some apply to the Church Age and some do not. How do we know? Is that principle referred to in the New Testament? In this case, let us look at “do not fear.” Since the gospels are in the Jewish Age under the Mosaic Law, let us not go there first. Rather, let us look at the book of Hebrew chapter 13.

Hebrews 13:5 Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,”

Hebrews 13:6 so that we confidently say, “The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?”

In Hebrews 13:6 There is a quote from Psalm 118.

Psalm 118:5 From my distress I called upon the Lord; The Lord answered me and set me in a large place.

Psalm 118:6 The Lord is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me?

By pulling in the Old Testament text of Psalm 118 into a quote in the book of Hebrews, the author is applying a principle found in the Old Testament to the Church Age believers.

Fear is a sin. Fear not! This concept is all through the Old Testament. We see it in Isaiah chapter 41:10. It is also repeated in the New Testament whether implicitly or as in Hebrews 13, explicitly. So we go back to the Old Testament and use the illustrations and commands to enhance our understanding of “fear not.”

Revelation 2:10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Note this verse in the book of Revelation to the church in Smyrna. It starts with “do not fear,” and ends with “Be faithful...”

We find this is related to the Faith-Rest way of life.

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From Robby Dean:

“The Christian life is not based on ethics, it is based on walking by the Spirit. Now it has ethics. It has do's and don'ts, but the do's and don'ts are not the focal point. The focal point is understanding who we are in Jesus Christ, what Jesus Christ has provided for us, and how we walk by the Spirit because we can't do the do's and don'ts if we're not walking by the Spirit. The Christian life is not a pull-yourself-up-by-your-own-bootstraps religious life. It is not the life based on morality, it is a life based on a spiritual relationship with God the Holy Spirit who produces in us this changed mentality and changed life style.”

“It's not legalism. Legalism is just trying to do it by means of the flesh. That was the whole problem with the Galatian believers. The Judiazers had come in behind Paul and Barnabas and were saying if you really want to experience the spiritual life you have to obey the law. There was no discussion about the role of God the Holy Spirit at all. So once again it just reduces the Christian life to just morality.

“That is what passes in most churches and most denominations as the spiritual life. You just go out there and quit doing this and start doing that and you'll be spiritual. That is not what the Bible says. Anybody can morally reform their life. But to do it in the power of God the Holy Spirit takes a relationship with the Spirit that is based on all of these doctrinal sections within the Word of God understanding what Christ did for us on the cross, understanding who we are in Christ in terms of baptism of the Holy Spirit and our identification with Him and what that means in terms of being free from the power of the sin nature and the role of God the Holy Spirit and understanding all of that.”

“That is what Paul does in the first 8 chapters of Romans is to make sure you understand it. He does that in the first 3 chapters of Galatians. He does it in the first 3 chapters of Ephesians. He does it in the first 5

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chapters in Galatians. He does it in the first couple of chapters in Colossians. The writer of Hebrews does it for 12 chapters before he gets down to those nice, easy bullet principles: do this, don't do that that we find coming up in the chapter. So you can't understand the insignificance and the role of the prohibitions and mandates in chapter 13 if you don't lock it down in terms of the framework of grace and understanding the training apparatus of the spiritual life for our future destiny in the Millennial Kingdom that's described in these first 12 chapters.”

[<https://deanbible.org/new-testament-menuitem/hebrews-menuitem/message/213-preparation-for-the-bema/read>]

Isaiah 41:11 “Behold, all those who are angered at you will be shamed and dishonored; Those who contend with you will be as nothing and will perish.

This has not happened yet. This is in the future. This will happen in the Millennium.

Isaiah 41:12 “You will seek those who quarrel with you, but will not find them, Those who war with you will be as nothing and non-existent.

Isaiah 41:13 “For I am the Lord your God, who upholds your right hand, Who says to you, ‘Do not fear, I will help you.’

Again, “Do not fear...”

Isaiah 41:14 “Do not fear, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel; I will help you,” declares

the Lord, “and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.

And yet again... “Do not fear...” Somewhere in my teaching I quoted from a Dune movie, “I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer...” Fear is destructive of organized thought.

Isaiah 41:15 “Behold, I have made you a new, sharp threshing sledge with double edges; You will thresh the mountains and pulverize them, And will make the hills like chaff.

Isaiah 41:16 “You will winnow them, and the wind will carry them away, And the storm will scatter them; But you will rejoice in the Lord, You will glory in the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 41:17 “The afflicted and needy are seeking water, but there is none, And their tongue is parched with thirst; I, the Lord, will answer them Myself, As the God of Israel I will not forsake them.

Isaiah 41:18 “I will open rivers on the bare heights And springs in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water And the dry land fountains of water.

Isaiah 41:19 “I will put the cedar in the wilderness, The acacia and the myrtle and the olive tree; I will place the juniper in the desert Together with the box tree and the cypress,

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**Isaiah 41:20 That they may see and recognize,
And consider and gain insight as well, That
the hand of the Lord has done this, And the
Holy One of Israel has created it.**

Another detour. God will bless Israel mightily during the Millennium/Kingdom. But there is one aspect I want to emphasize. That is the high position of honor and respect that Jews will have in the Kingdom.

**Zephaniah 3:19 “Behold, I am going to deal at
that time With all your oppressors, I will save
the lame And gather the outcast, And I will
turn their shame into praise and renown In all
the earth.**

And this was not something new.

**Deuteronomy 28:1 “Now it shall be, if you
diligently obey the Lord your God, being
careful to do all His commandments which I
command you today, the Lord your God will
set you high above all the nations of the earth.**

**Deuteronomy 28:9 The Lord will establish you
as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to
you, if you keep the commandments of the
Lord your God and walk in His ways.**

**Deuteronomy 28:10 So all the peoples of the
earth will see that you are called by the name
of the Lord, and they will be afraid of you.**

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Now the argument switches from God supporting His client to provoking the adversary.

Isaiah 41:21 “Present your case,” the Lord says. “Bring forward your strong arguments,” The King of Jacob says.

Present your case. Legal terminology.

Isaiah 41:22 Let them bring forth and declare to us what is going to take place; As for the former events, declare what they were, That we may consider them and know their outcome. Or announce to us what is coming;

Isaiah 41:23 Declare the things that are going to come afterward, That we may know that you are gods; Indeed, do good or evil, that we may anxiously look about us and fear together.

Isaiah 41:24 Behold, you are of no account, And your work amounts to nothing; He who chooses you is an abomination.

Isaiah 41:25 “I have aroused one from the north, and he has come; From the rising of the sun he will call on My name; And he will come upon rulers as upon mortar, Even as the potter treads clay.”

Isaiah 41:26 Who has declared this from the beginning, that we might know? Or from

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former times, that we may say, “He is right!”? Surely there was no one who declared, Surely there was no one who proclaimed, Surely there was no one who heard your words.

Isaiah 41:27 “Formerly I said to Zion, ‘Behold, here they are.’ And to Jerusalem, ‘I will give a messenger of good news.’

Isaiah 41:28 “But when I look, there is no one, And there is no counselor among them Who, if I ask, can give an answer.

Isaiah 41:29 “Behold, all of them are false; Their works are worthless, Their molten images are wind and emptiness.