

Commentary on Isaiah 44:21-26
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The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Series*) for **January 1, 2011**, is from **Isaiah 44:21-26**. Five **Questions for Discussion** follow the *Bible Lesson Commentary*. The **[International Bible Lessons](http://internationalbiblelessons.org)** can be read at: <http://internationalbiblelessons.org>; new *International Bible Lessons* are also published each Saturday in [The Oklahoman](#).

Isaiah 44:21-26

21 Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant; I formed you, you are my servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me.

Whether they were being defeated by their enemies or languishing in exile as God's discipline for their rebellion against God and disregard of their law, God wanted to assure His people through His prophets that He had not forgotten them. In addition, in spite of their need to suffer punishment for their sins, God still considered them His servants. He created them for a purpose and would fulfill His plans.

22 I have swept away your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you.

These are definitely words of good news for the one who trusts in God. Our true moral guilt and even our guilt feelings can make us feel too ashamed to pray, worship, or seek the presence of God in our lives. But, God can cleanse us from all sin; when He does so, He also commands us to return to Him. To redeem can mean to “buy back.” Sometimes a person can “buy back” something that they have given as surety for a loan. God did what was necessary to be just when He redeemed Jacob and when He redeemed us through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus the Messiah.

23 Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done it; shout, O depths of the earth; break forth into singing, O mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and will be glorified in Israel.

All heaven and earth, all creation, is summoned by God to rejoice and sing praises because He has redeemed Jacob. Once again, God would be glorified and served by His people. The ultimate cost of redemption, sufficient for all who would come to faith in the true God and His word was the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son.

24 Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the Lord, who

made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who by myself spread out the earth;

Job declared, "I know that my Redeemer lives." The LORD is our Redeemer. He created us and gave us value beginning in the womb. The One who made all things actually formed us to serve Him. Probably, we can receive no greater honor on earth than God calling us His servant. And when we rebelled against God and sinned, He is the One who redeemed, forgave and saved us at a great personal cost to Himself.

25 who frustrates the omens of liars, and makes fools of diviners; who turns back the wise, and makes their knowledge foolish;

Omens can be predictions of the future, often given by the priests of false gods. Those who claim to be able to predict the future (other than the prophets of the true God) are sometimes called diviners. Sometimes diviners claim to have consulted the souls of the departed. Saul went to a diviner to consult Samuel, who had died. God makes fools of diviners, and fools consult and follow diviners. God will also show that those who claim to be wise in order to misuse others are truly foolish.

26 who confirms the word of his servant, and fulfills the prediction of his messengers; who says of Jerusalem, "It shall be inhabited," and

of the cities of Judah, "They shall be rebuilt, and I will raise up their ruins."

On the other hand, God will confirm the prophecies, predictions, and preaching of His true prophets; such as Isaiah and Jeremiah who predicted the return of the Jews from exile in Babylon. God will fulfill the predictions of His prophets, while making the predictions of liars look foolish. God did bring His people back from exile as He promised and at the time He promised through Jeremiah (that is why Daniel prayed as he did). God did rebuild Jerusalem and the surrounding cities just as Isaiah predicted.

Five Questions for Discussion

1. Read Isaiah 44:21 again. Do you think all who believe in the God of the Bible have been formed by God to be His servants? How does it make you feel to think that God might have created you to be His servant?
2. If you consider yourself a servant of God, how does it make you feel to remember that God does not forget His servants? Why do you feel this way? Why is this important?
3. What does the Bible say about the sins and transgressions of God's servants? How has God handled the sins and transgressions of His servants?

4. What “omens of liars” can you think of that God has possibly frustrated in your lifetime? In what ways might God frustrate liars? Give some reasons why the Bible says diviners are fools.

5. What prophetic predictions in the Bible has God already fulfilled? What are some predictions in the Bible that you are looking for God to fulfill? Daniel prayed for the prediction of Jeremiah to be fulfilled, pray for God to fulfill the predictions you are still waiting to see fulfilled.

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