

When Does God Turn Wisdom to Foolishness?

International Bible Lessons

Isaiah 44:21-26

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“Causing the omens of boasters to fail, Making fools out of diviners, Causing wise men to draw back And turning their knowledge into foolishness” (Isaiah 44:25—NASB-U).

“Who [the LORD, your Redeemer] frustrates the omens of liars, and makes fools of diviners; who turns back the wise, and makes their knowledge foolish” (Isaiah 44:25—NRSV).

“That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish” (Isaiah 44:25—KJV).

Throughout the centuries, people have seen God fulfill His words given through the prophet Isaiah. Think of the dire predictions made by some scholars and scientists during the past ten years that failed to happen. Later, we learned from news reports that for financial, professional, or political considerations some of their warnings were “the omens of liars.” God frustrates liars when He arranges for the truth to be revealed according to His perfect timing.

God also exposes the foolishness of diviners [those who claim to consult the dead or the spirits of their gods for a glimpse into the future]. He reveals the true motives of those who claim special knowledge, expertise, or wisdom; who then use their scholarly authority and prestige to manipulate others for selfish gain, awards, or adoration. For whatever reasons, some renowned scientists warned of drought for many years to come in specific areas; they also predicted some places across the globe would never see snow again. Today, many of them look foolish, because God has recently sent record rainfall, record freezing temperatures, and record snowfall to these places.

By contrast, God “confirms the word of his servant, and fulfills the prediction of his messengers” (Isaiah 44:26). When Israel’s future seemed hopeless, God declared through the prophet Isaiah that He would rebuild the nation, saying, “of Jerusalem, ‘It shall be inhabited,’ and of the cities of Judah, ‘They shall be rebuilt, and I will raise up their ruins’” (Isaiah 44:26). God did so in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, and again in 1948, when Israel became a nation once again.

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Thinking Further

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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