

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has sent him, and on that authority the Israelites are to follow him and the Pharaoh is to let them go. But what if he is not believed? Exodus 4:1-17 provides Yahweh's response to Moses's concern, but before taking it up, look with me briefly at a general principle in Isaiah that gives a demarcation between genuine deity and bogus deity. The principle is epistemological in character (i.e., *how to tell* real deity from false), and what I hope to show is that the elements of Isaiah's Principle find application in Yahweh's response to Moses. On the other hand, on the supposition that Van Til's general position is correct, both Isaiah's Principle and Yahweh's response at the burning bush are epistemologically gratuitous—indeed, totally inappropriate! Consider, then, Isaiah 41:21-24:

Isaiah's Principle

*True deity is discernible by
the exhibition of time-transcending
knowledge and the public display of awesome power.*

"Present your case," says the LORD. "Set forth your arguments," says Jacob's King. "Bring in your idols to tell us what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come, tell us what the future holds, *so that we may know that you are gods*. Do something, whether good or bad, so that we will be dismayed and filled with fear. But you are less than nothing and your works are utterly worthless; he who chooses you is detestable. [Isaiah 41:21-24, NIV]

Because I have drawn the above principle from this passage in Isaiah, I will continue to call it Isaiah's Principle even though, strictly speaking, it is the LORD's Principle. (For what it is worth, the Old Testament "LORD" occurs in all capitals in most English versions of the Bible wherever the Hebrew Tetragrammaton occurs. That is to say, the four consonant Hebrew name for God ["yod", "he", "vav", and "he"] is regularly rendered by the English "LORD". Since, however, "LORD" is a proper name and does not *mean* "Lord", I will continue to use "Yahweh" to serve as the transliteration of the Hebrew.)

What Isaiah 41:21-24 tells us, it seems to me, is that any deity