

**An Introduction to the Servant
Just Who Is It That Isaiah is Writing About?
Isaiah 49:1 – 13**

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The chances are really good that you and I have heard, more than once, the New Testament read back into the Old Testament. I try hard not to do so as I teach but because of the light we have in the New Testament, and because we are on this side of the resurrection, it does color our reading of the Old Testament.

We forget that the Old Testament is the New Testament, concealed. The New Testament is the Old Testament, revealed.

This next section of Isaiah, through the end of the book, is all about the Servant who we know is Jesus. We can see it because of our post resurrection Holy Spirit enabled minds.

When Jesus announced he was going to die in Jerusalem, Peter didn't say, "I know—I read that in my Bible." He couldn't read it in his Bible because there was no single verse for the idea. Rather, the concept of a dying and rising messiah must be pieced together from a scattering of disparate fragments in the Old Testament that, each taken alone, don't seem to have anything like a messiah in mind. None of the fragments reveal the final assemblage. (Heiser 2015, 242)

Jesus was the first one to tie all the pieces together doing so as He was walking with two men post resurrection.

Luke 24:25–27 "And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." (ESV)

I am sure that a large chunk of His discussion included this section of Isaiah.

As we come to Isaiah 49, we are beginning the last major division of this book. You will notice that the theme of captivity and deliverance will still be heard, but there is no more mention of Cyrus or of Babylon. The dominant theme through the rest of Isaiah is one we were introduced to in Isaiah 42, the theme will be about the Servant, Christ, the one we heard speak in Isaiah 48:16, "Come near to Me, listen to this: From the beginning I have not spoken in secret, From the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord GOD has sent Me, and His Spirit." (NASB 2020) This is the one who is bringing redemption, not only to the nation of Israel, but to the entire planet. Isaiah 49 contains the second Servant Song.

We looked at the first Servant Song in Isaiah 42. "The first Song was a word from the Lord to the world about his Servant: 'Your plight is known, my Servant will deal with it'; but the second Song is the Servant's testimony how that world-wide task devolved upon one who was already commissioned to minister to Israel." (Motyer 1996, 384)

Now we are going to hear directly from the Servant. The Servant is Christ, we know that from our perspective on this side of the cross.

We are going to hear the Servant speak again. "There is nothing to correspond to this remarkable discourse of our Lord Jesus Christ in the religions of this world. Here is One who is looking at a world, and He is looking at it as the Servant of God, who has come as the Savior of the world. Every religion is confined to an ethnic group or to several ethnic groups. Generally they do not move beyond the borders of a tribe, a people, or a nation so that most deities are local deities. However, the Deity in the Word of God is the living God, the Creator of the universe and the Redeemer of mankind." (McGee 1997, 302)

Isaiah 49:1-4

"Listen to Me, you islands, And pay attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me. He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me a sharpened arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver. He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel, In whom I will show My glory." But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing and futility; Nevertheless, the justice due to Me is with the LORD, And My reward is with My God." (NASB 2020)

We begin Isaiah 49 with Christ commanding the nations of the world to listen to Him. Earlier we were in court and YAHWEH was addressing the nations in Isaiah 42 when He introduced His Servant, now His Servant is speaking to those very same nations who were unable to respond to YAHWEH about their silent no-gods.

His address begins with two imperatives in the Hebrew, listen and pay attention. What Christ is about to say to the nations is incredibly important. This is Messiah who is speaking, and He is speaking to all the nations about redemption which He will personally bring to the planet.

Isaiah 49:1

"Listen to Me, you islands, And pay attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me." (NASB 2020)

No, this is not something out of the New Testament, this is Isaiah writing around 700 BC. This is Christ talking about His calling. Yes, He is called from the womb but, He was called much sooner than that.

"And you, O Bethlehem, house of Ephrathah, you are very small to be in the thousands of Judah, from which for me one will come out to be for a ruler of Israel, and his goings out are from the beginning, **from the days of eternity.**" (Micah 5:2, LES2)

Why is Christ addressing the nations? By turning to the foreign nations the Servant asserts his Lord's claim that his sovereignty reaches to the ends of the earth. (Baltzer 2001, 306)

Earlier in Isaiah YAHWEH emphasized over and over that He is the Creator God and no one else is. As such, His sovereignty and that of His Servant is universal.

John 1:1–5

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. The Word was with God in the beginning. **All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind.** And the light shines on in the darkness, but the darkness has not mastered it.” (NET)

The incarnation is God’s plan and God’s work, it is not something man could do. God has not changed His eternal plan to be with His people. The redemption of man is a step to the goal of Eden being reestablished here in Earth.

Luke 1:26–33

“In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”” (ESV)

700 years before His incarnation as a man, Christ is already communicating with the nations about the plan of redemption. The command to listen means the one speaking is using a common prophetic summons, but only in Isaiah do we see “listen to Me” as we see here. Only the Lord can say that just as He already has in Isaiah 41:1, 46:3,12 and 48:12. Now it is Messiah speaking, the second power in heaven, from a Jewish perspective, for us the second person of the trinity.

We learn He is called from the beginning of time, and He is to be born. We learned earlier in Isaiah about the birth being one only God could engineer. “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and she will name Him Immanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14, NASB 2020)

There is no reference in Isaiah 49 to a human father, only a mother.

In verse 2, we learn something else about the Servant that He wants the nations to know about Him. As far as the nations in general will be concerned, He is a weapon of YAHWEH.

Isaiah 49:2

“He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me a sharpened arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver.” (NASB 2020)

YAHWEH, who is the one who has called the Servant, has made His mouth like a sharp sword. Immediately we think of His second coming in power. “A sharp sword comes out of his mouth to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod and tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.” (Revelation 19:15, ISV)

This is also descriptive of the power of His words in His first coming.

Matthew 7:28–29

“When Jesus had finished saying all these things, the crowds were utterly amazed at his teaching, because he was teaching them like a person who had authority, and not like their scribes.” (ISV)

John 7:43–46 “So there was a division in the crowd because of him. Some of them were wanting to seize him, but no one laid hands on him. Then the officers returned to the high priests and Pharisees, who asked them, “Why didn’t you bring him?” The officers answered, “No man ever spoke like that!” (ISV)

Those who accept His word see life, those who reject His words, will be judged by those same words.

John 12:47–50

“If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.” (ESV)

He is referred to as the Word of God in the Old Testament in 1 Kings 12:22 and 1 Chronicles 25:5, a term picked up by John .

1 John 1:1–3

“We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us. We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.” (NLT)

His words are the very words of God and have the same authority and power as the words used to create the entire universe (John 1:1 – 4). As we know from Revelation, His word can also be used as a weapon and here in Isaiah 49, we learn He is being prepared for that. A weapon to be used against the enemy. He is the Captain of the Army of the Lord after all (Joshua 5:14).

Christ will be uniquely protected by the Father as He grows up in preparation for His ministry on earth. “In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me” speaks to that protection. Immediately after being visited by the Magi, around 2 years or so after His birth, the Lord let Joseph know Herod was out to kill Jesus.

Matthew 2:13

“After they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to look for the child to kill him.” (NET)

Joseph was obedient. Jesus was protected by the Father as He grew up.

Not only is the Servant prepared for up close and personal combat, the sword analogy, but He is equipped for any engagement with the enemy as the Lord...“made me a sharpened arrow.”

“...the Servant is available for his master’s use at any moment; the weapons are protected from the elements so that they can be most useful; they are out of sight until the right moment for them to be displayed. All of this speaks about utility, preparedness, and effectiveness, the very opposite of a casual or haphazard use of the weapon.” (Oswalt 1998, 290)

When talking about the arrow, there is another possibility as well. The NASB translates תִּזְבַּרְבָּר (barur hes) as select or sharpened arrow. But when we look at barur, we learn that it can mean “to separate, to sever...to select, to choose...to separate and remove impure things, to cleanse...” (Gesenius and Tregelles 2003, 145)

This is speaking to Christ and the work He will do in the future as He does the work of the Father and His plan of redemption.

Recapping what we have learned from Christ so far as He speaks as the servant, we have learned about His incarnation, as well as His protection from the Father as He grows up as a human. We have also learned that He is a weapon. A weapon to be wielded against the enemy and to be used to destroy the work of the enemy in the hearts of those who he has deluded.

Isaiah 49:3

“He said to Me, “You are My Servant, Israel, In whom I will show My glory.”” (NASB 2020)

Christ is letting us know something else here with a simple statement. YAHWEH says He is His Servant and then calls Him Israel. This conveys first that the Servant will be human but will also be a Jew. It also points to Him being the King.

...the use of the name “Israel,” as the individuation of a generic name, reminds us of the fact that the kings of a nation are sometimes called by the name of the nation itself (e.g., Asshur, Isa. 10:5ff.). But Israel was from the very first the God-given name of an individual. Just as the name Israel was first of all given to a man, and then after that to a nation, so the name which sprang from a personal root has also a personal crown. The servant of Jehovah is Israel in person, inasmuch as the purpose of mercy, upon the basis of which and for the accomplishment of which Jehovah made Jacob the father of the twelve-tribed nation, is brought by him into full and final realization. We have already seen that Israel, as an entire nation, formed the basis of the idea contained in the term “servant of Jehovah;” Israel, regarded as a people faithful to its calling, the centre; and the personal servant of Jehovah its apex. In the present instance, where he is called distinctly “Israel,” the fact is clearly expressed, that the servant of Jehovah in these prophecies is regarded as the kernel of the kernel of Israel, as Israel’s inmost centre, as Israel’s highest head. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 470)

Wait a minute, isn’t Israel referred to as the nation. Yes, multiple times, but it was also the name of a man, who was first called Jacob. It also became the name of the northern kingdom.

What was the number one task that Israel as a nation was supposed to do? They were uniquely called and equipped to be the light to the nations. This was only seen briefly during the reign of Solomon, and for a short while, Hezekiah. But for most of the time, they failed. We have seen this referenced in Isaiah more than once. The Servant, Christ, will not fail in this task. He will be Israel to the nations, He will be the light they were not.

John 8:12

“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”” (ESV)

The Servant will not only complete the mission Israel failed, but He will reflect the glory of the Father to the nations. “Faced with Israel’s failure, God does not wipe out the nation; he simply devises another way in which Israel’s servanthood could be worked out: through the ideal Israel.” (Oswalt 1998, 291)

Isaiah 49:4

“But I said, “I have labored in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing and futility; Nevertheless, the justice due to Me is with the LORD, And My reward is with My God.”” (NASB 2020)

Here in verse 4, we find out that the Servant, will be rejected. To an outsider looking in, it may look like His ministry was a failure as it ended in His rejection by the nation as well as His death. The enemy was aware of this verse, but they missed the truth embedded in it.

By God’s design, the Scripture presents the messiah in terms of a mosaic profile that can only be discerned after the pieces are assembled. Paul tells us why in 1 Corinthians 2:6–8. If the plan of God for the messiah’s mission had been clear, the powers of darkness would never have killed Jesus—they would have known that his death and resurrection were the key to reclaiming the nations forever. (Heiser 2015, 241)

1 Corinthians 2:6–9

“Yet I do proclaim a message of wisdom to those who are spiritually mature. But it is not the wisdom that belongs to this world or to the powers that rule this world—powers that are losing their power. The wisdom I proclaim is God’s hidden wisdom, which he had already chosen for our glory even before the world was made. None of the rulers of this world knew this wisdom. If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as the scripture says: “What no one ever saw or heard, what no one ever thought could happen, is the very thing God prepared for those who love him.”” (GNB)

Even the death of the Lord Jesus Christ was a victory; in fact, it is the greatest victory the world has seen up to the present time. The emphasis in this section, therefore, is on the suffering Servant.

At His first coming He did not gather Israel, as they rejected Him. At His first coming He did something far more wonderful—He wrought salvation for the world. (McGee 1997, 303)

The enemy thought they had defeated Him on the cross, they misjudged and through their overreach, were defeated.

Because we are on this side of the cross, we read Isaiah 49:4 and get it, but the disciples did not get it.

They had the same Old Testament we have, and they did not understand what it was Jesus was doing. The full profile was veiled and only revealed fully afterward.

For many today, the veil is only removed when the individual becomes a believer, and the Holy Spirit moves in. It is the holy Spirit who illuminates the word.

This takes us back to our prior discussion of the Luke 24 Bible study that Jesus conducted while walking.

The bottom line is in verse 4 we see, “More clearly even than the New Testament Gospels the disappointing aspect of Christ’s earthly ministry is here indicated at least for his three years ministry on earth. The fruits of this ministry were startlingly meager. The servant would put his best efforts into his labors, toiling and spending his strength. Visible results would not be in evidence. But still he knows that his efforts will not be totally fruitless, to state the case mildly.” (Leupold 1971, 178)

His reward is with God. As we saw in Isaiah 40:10, that reward is us and when He returns, well “Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.” (Isaiah 40:10, ESV)

Christ knew, by faith, that despite what He physically saw and experienced, the Lord had it all in control. He carries on with that thought in verse 5.

Isaiah 49:5–7

“And now says the LORD, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of the LORD, And My God is My strength), He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the protected ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” This is what the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One, Says to the despised One, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers: “Kings will see and arise, Princes will also bow down, Because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You.”” (NASB 2020)

The Servant is reminded that God has fashioned him for this very thing. Even his conception (in the womb) was timed and aimed in relation to the work he would do. Or, if we translate ‘from the womb’, every single experience of life from its inception has been a sharpening of the sword and a polishing of the arrow for this service. He has been fashioned for effectiveness. Evidence to the contrary is transient appearance not ultimate reality. The task which seems to have defeated him is in fact the very thing the

Lord has prepared him for: to bring Jacob back to him, the spiritual restoration of the people. Well then, what can hinder its accomplishment! (Motyer 1996, 387)

We see that the Servant, is fully human and subject to the emotions that humans encounter, to include being disappointed bordering on despondency. But the faith of the Servant prevents Him from going there as the Lord reminds Him of His purpose and where His real strength comes from.

Hebrews 4:14–15 “Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. **For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.**” (ESV)

Isaiah 49:6

“He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the protected ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”” (NASB 2020)

There is more to the mission of the Servant than just the rescue and regathering of Israel. Bringing Israel back is too small a task for the Servant, YAHWEH is tasking Him to be a light for the gentiles. He is to be the one who undoes the effects of Babel. He is the one who will undo the effects of Genesis 6 and 3. He will be a light to the nations and bring God’s salvation across the planet.

Isaiah 9:1–2

“But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish. In earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He will make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them.” (NASB 2020)

The Servant is the fulfillment of this prophecy. He is the one who will raise up and restore the remnant, the protected ones of Israel. He is also the one to do the same for the gentiles.

The mission of Israel, originally, was to be a light to the world. They failed, the Servant though will not fail, and He will be that light. Because of the rejection by His own people, the Servant was tasked to go to the nations. This began on Pentecost and is currently being fulfilled during the church age to ultimately be fulfilled in the Millennium.

As Paul engaged in his various missionary activities, he was fully aware of Isaiah 49 which is why his modus operandi was to go to the Jews first whenever he hit a new location.

Acts 13:46–48

“Then Paul and Barnabas boldly declared, “We had to speak God’s word to you first, but since you reject it and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, we are now going to turn to the gentiles. For that is what the Lord ordered us to do: ‘I have made you a light to the gentiles to be the means of salvation to the very ends of the earth.’” When the gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord. Meanwhile, all who had been destined to eternal life believed,” (ISV)

Paul also referred to this in Romans 11 and there drew it out to the end times.

Romans 11:11–12

“Did God’s people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves. Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the people of Israel turned down God’s offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when they finally accept it.” (NLT)

Isaiah 49:7

“This is what the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One, Says to the despised One, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers: “Kings will see and arise, Princes will also bow down, Because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You.” (NASB 2020)

YAHWEH is speaking once again to His Servant; we know that from all of His titles. YAHWEH,

Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One. Who is the despised One? That would be His Servant who we would know as Jesus Christ.

So that there is no doubt who He is talking to, YAHWEH tells us again that His Servant will be despised and loathed by the nation. That was the case when He came the first time and is the case with many of His own people currently. But everything will change in the future as He becomes the Servant of rulers. “On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.” (Revelation 19:16, ESV)

Upon the return of Jesus Christ at the end of the Tribulation, He takes over. He is the deliverer of those who would be rulers under His rule.

This verse distinguishes two aspects of the Servant’s ministry: the first characterized by rejection and humiliation (cf. v. 4; 52:13–53:12), and the second marked by acceptance and glorification. The first advent of Christ fulfilled the first aspect and His second advent will fulfill the second aspect. All that Israel had experienced—being despised, abhorred, and used—the Servant would experience (cf. vv. 25–26). And all that God intended Israel to be—admired, respected, and served—the Servant will become. (Constable 2003, Is 49:7)

How confident can we be about this taking place? “Because of the Lord who is faithful...” “His purpose shall assuredly be brought to pass. For this He pledges the veracity of His word. The universality of Christ’s reign shall be traced entirely to the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God.” (Bertram and Tucker 1892, 328)

Now we fast forward to the Millennium. We know this from verse 8

Isaiah 49:8–13

“This is what the LORD says: “At a **favorable time** I answered You, And on a **day of salvation** I helped You; And I will watch over You and **make You a covenant of the people**, To restore the land, to give as inheritances the deserted hereditary lands; Saying to those who are bound, ‘Go free,’ To those who are in darkness, ‘Show yourselves.’ They will feed along the roads, And their pasture will be on all bare heights. They will not hunger or thirst, Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; For He who has compassion on them will lead them, And He will guide them to springs of water. I will make all My mountains a road, And My highways will be raised up. Behold, these will come from afar; And behold, these will come from the north and from the west, And these from the land of Aswan.” Shout for joy, you heavens! And rejoice, you earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people And will have compassion on His afflicted.” (NASB 2020)

The Millennium, the favorable time and the day of salvation is day of God’s covenant promises to Israel all being fulfilled. The Servant will be Himself a covenant for the people. Jeremiah also picked up on that theme and tells us what that new covenant with Israel will be.

Jeremiah 31:31–34

““Indeed, a time is coming,” says the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. It will not be like the old covenant that I made with their ancestors when I delivered them from Egypt. For they violated that covenant, even though I was like a faithful husband to them,” says the LORD. “But I will make a new covenant with the whole nation of Israel after I plant them back in the land,”

says the LORD. "I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts and minds. I will be their God and they will be my people. People will no longer need to teach their neighbors and relatives to know me.

For all of them, from the least important to the most important, will know me," says the LORD. "For I will forgive their sin and will no longer call to mind the wrong they have done." (NET)

This new covenant not only involves restoration of the land and restoration of the inheritances, but also provides Israel the capacity to finally and fully obey God's laws. This will only become possible as the Holy Spirit is poured out on the remnant of Israel (Ezekiel 36:24-32) that remains after the Great Tribulation.

The Servant Himself is the one who has secured their salvation through His own blood shed on the cross.

Zechariah 12:10

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn." (ESV)

"The sins of the people resulted in the curses of the Old Covenant. However, as part of the New Covenant God will forgive Israel's wickedness and remember their sins no more. But how could a holy God overlook sin? The answer is that God did not "overlook" sin-its penalty was paid for by a Substitute (cf. Isa. 53:4-6). In the Upper Room Christ announced that the New Covenant was to be inaugurated through the shedding of His blood (cf. Matt. 26:27-28; Luke 22:20). Forgiveness of sin would be part of the New Covenant only because God provided a Substitute to pay the penalty required of man." (Dyer 1985, 1171)

Or as it says in verse 8, "...I will watch over You and make You a covenant of the people."

Even though this is pointing to the Millennium where it will be fully fulfilled for His people Israel, this has already begun with the Church. Paul tied that one together for us in his second letter to the church in Corinth.

2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2 "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (ESV)

This is consistent with the message earlier in chapter 49 where the Servant turns to the gentiles as a result of the rejection of His own people, but at the end of the age, the rejection is gone and as one, the remnant turns to their Messiah for deliverance from the Beast and his armies.

At the same time, He is restoring the land to an Eden like state, all in preparation for the establishment of His Kingdom and the Father, YAHWEH, coming to the Millennial Temple to live with His people. (Ezekiel 43:1 - 5).

Isaiah 49:9

"Saying to those who are bound, 'Go free,' To those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.' They will feed along the roads, And their pasture will be on all bare heights." (NASB 2020)

Entering the Kingdom, one of the actions of the Servant will be to set free all His people worldwide. THE reign of the Beast is over and those who were being hunted are now being set free and returned to their home. Hiding is no longer necessary as evidenced by the ability to feed along the roads and enjoy pasture out in the open.

The idea is abundance. A huge change has taken place going from the devastation prior to Armageddon to the abundance of the Kingdom.

What will it look like on that day? The picture is drawn for us as we see the return of the remnant, of the redeemed at the end of the age.

They have been set free, free from sin and free from captivity. "So if the son sets you free, you will be really free." (John 8:36, NET)

They are no longer in hiding they are now out in the open and returning to the land which the Servant has secured for them (Zechariah 14:1 – 11). This is a very different place and a very different planet than before.

The camera draws back, and we see them coming home.

Isaiah 49:10–13

“They will not hunger or thirst, Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; For He who has compassion on them will lead them, And He will guide them to springs of water. I will make all My mountains a road, And My highways will be raised up. Behold, these will come from afar; And behold, these will come from the north and from the west, And these from the land of Aswan.” Shout for joy, you heavens! And rejoice, you earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people And will have compassion on His afflicted.” (NASB 2020)

Here is what Christ does for His people as they return home, which is a repeat of what He did when they left Egypt.

- Provision
- Protection
- Leadership
- Guidance
- Transportation

The Lord sovereignly manages everything, even to the extent that mountains which might seem insurmountable to the pilgrims can be approached with confidence. After all, they are my mountains, not an alien barrier but part of the Creator’s world, there to do his bidding and subserve his will. (Motyer 1996, 392)

What is the result universally of seeing the Servant? This is Jesus Christ, who met all the requirements during His first coming and who will meet all the ones connected with His second coming. The result is praise.

Isaiah 49:13 “Shout for joy, you heavens! And rejoice, you earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people And will have compassion on His afflicted.” (NASB 2020)

This is just the beginning of Isaiah’s prophecies regarding the Servant of YAHWEH. It is already clear to us that we are talking about fulfillment in the work and person of Jesus Christ. 700 years in advance we are learning some things about Him.

We know that He has already achieved, through His death and resurrection, the redemption of not only His people the Jews, who rejected Him, but all of us. He is the light to the nations.

As Jesus approached His crucifixion, He was fully aware of who He is and what He must do. He was also aware of the impacts His death and resurrection was going to have on the unseen realm as well as on those who followed Him. Jesus is the Servant referred to by YAHWEH here in Isaiah.

John 12:31–36

“Now is the time for the judgment of this world to begin. Now will the ruler of this world be thrown out. As for me, if I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself.” He said this to indicate the kind of death he was about to die. Then the crowd answered him, “We have learned from the Law that the Messiah remains forever. So how can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” Jesus replied to the crowd, “The light is among you only for a short time. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. The person who walks in the darkness is in the darkness and does not know where he is going. As long as you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.” After Jesus had said this, he went away and hid from them.” (ISV)

John 14:6 “Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (ISV)

The question for all of us is simple. What have we done with the offer the Servant has made to us? His offer is salvation, the opportunity to be made right with God. We have been studying the great lengths He has gone to to even make this offer. His salvation has indeed reached most of the earth. How do we deal with it?

Romans 10:8–10

“But what does it say? “The message is near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart.” This is the message about faith that we are proclaiming: If you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with his heart and is justified, and declares with his mouth and is saved.” (ISV)

His salvation is indeed near and available to all who accept it.

Salvation is a Gift

- Admit you are a sinner.
- Believe in your heart that Jesus died for your sins, was buried and He rose from the dead three days later.
- Call on the name of the Lord.

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