

# Book of Isaiah



## Chapter 49

*Theme: Discourse of Christ to the world;  
discussion of Jehovah with Israel;*

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## Chapter 49

**THEME:** Discourse of Christ to the world; discussion of Jehovah with Israel; digression -- judgment of Israel's oppressors

In this third and final division of the Book of Isaiah there is a threefold division which is marked off with the words, "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." We have seen in the first division the comfort of Jehovah which comes through the servant. Now chapter 49 begins the second division, which I call salvation of Jehovah which comes through the suffering Servant.

We are now beginning to move toward a definite revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ as the suffering Servant of God. We have been moving toward that revelation from the very beginning, but at first we saw Him more as a silhouette in the background as the Servant who brings comfort to God's people. The closer we get to chapter 53, where we have that wonderful revelation of the Cross of Christ, the more clear He will become to us.

Israel was the servant of Jehovah, but as such Israel had failed. Now God speaks of another Servant, and that Servant is the Lord Jesus Christ. The prophetic Scriptures spoke primarily of Israel as God's servant; yet the final meaning is found in the Person of Christ. A classic illustration is in Hosea 11:1, where it is recorded: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." This was fulfilled in Christ (see Matt. 2:15). The nation failed, but the One who came out of the nation will succeed.

As we open this chapter, we are listening in on a discourse by Christ as truly as the twelve apostles listened to Him in Galilee. In this chapter we see Christ moving out to become the Savior of the world. In this movement Israel is not forsaken, for her assured restoration to the land is reaffirmed.

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. This fact makes the discourse before us remarkable indeed.<sup>1</sup>

Isaiah is starting to build toward what is called the "Holy of Holies" of the Old Testament, Isaiah 53, the suffering servant.

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<sup>1</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

The previous nine-chapter section (chaps. 40-48) dealt mainly with Cyrus and his mission in the Jews' restoration. These nine chapters (49-57) deal primarily with the Servant-Messiah fulfilling His ministry of restoring the covenant people to the land just before the Millennium will begin. Neither person would fail in his mission. Because of the similarity of their missions, several of the same expressions and figures of speech are used in the two nine-chapter sections. 49-57 may be divided into four parts: (1) The Servant, being rejected by His people, will take salvation to the Gentiles (chaps. 49-50). (2) The believing remnant will be exalted (51:1-52:12). (3) The Servant, however, will be abased and then exalted (52:13-53:12). (4) Salvation through the Servant will come to Jews and Gentiles in the Millennium (chaps. 54-57).<sup>2</sup>

The emphasis of prophecy now leaves the Babylonian period behind. The impending visit of the Messiah is spoken of in greater detail in verses 1-13 and the paradoxes to accompany his visit are very apparent in this chapter. He is called by YHWH from his mother's womb and is to be greatly rewarded by Him. But in spite of his life appearing fruitless (vs. 4) he is to restore Israel-Jacob to God. The "Nazarene" word is used 2 times in this chapter (there are 4 occurrences in the section beginning with chapter 42:6, 48:6, 49:6 and 49:8) and all of them are connected with the Messiah and his mission. In this chapter the word is connected with restoration of Israel and the call of the Gentiles into Zion and "Salvation" which in Hebrew is the name "Jesus." The chapter divides into two sections: (1.) 1-13 describes the main characteristics and goals of the Messiah. His mission to restore the tribes of Israel extends to the call of the Gentiles. (2.) The second section describes the call of the Gentiles into the restored Zion after many hard trials. The nation is exhorted to faithfulness because their faith will not be in vain. But because of the many events to transpire it will appear that their faith is in vain. Even the Messiah will have moments of depression. These hard trials were unnecessary for the nation but the hardness of their hearts meant that the "furnace of affliction" would bring them to the place of usefulness. See notes under 48:10 and 48:18-19 above. The last part of the chapter describes the future age of the restored Zion and the admonition that the glory of Zion, although deferred, will make its appearance and that looking forward to that time will be justified while the ultimate end of the wicked will be no peace for them.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout our study of Isaiah, we have had numerous opportunities to discuss the deity of Jesus Christ, because He keeps popping up in the book. But now, He becomes the main focus for the next several chapters. I'm pretty sure we're going to take this section slowly, because there will be lots of great stuff about Jesus, brand new things to learn, and other stuff to be reminded of.<sup>4</sup>

The servant of the Lord will restore Israel and save the nations. This is the second of four Servant Songs, describing the Messiah.

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<sup>2</sup> The Bible Knowledge Commentary:

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa49.htm>

<sup>4</sup> <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah4901.php>

**<sup>1</sup>Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.**

Christ is calling upon the nations of the world to hear. He was given the name of Jesus before He was born, and this name is to be proclaimed throughout the world because it is the name of the Savior, and the world needs a Savior.<sup>5</sup>

Listen to me. The servant of the Lord demands a worldwide hearing. O coastlands . . . you peoples from afar. Compared with “comfort, comfort my people” (40:1), the prophetic horizon is broadening to reveal more and more nations claimed by God's grace—an empire far greater than that of Cyrus. He named my name shows God's personal care for his servant (cf. 43:1; 45:3–4).<sup>6</sup>

**1-7** Before the Servant, the Messiah, was born, God had chosen him to bring the light of the gospel (the message of salvation) to the world (see Acts 13:47). Christ offered salvation to all nations, and his apostles began the missionary movement to take this gospel to the ends of the earth. Missionary work today continues Jesus' great commission (Matthew 28:18-20), taking the light of the gospel to all nations. Do you support evangelism and missionary efforts with your money? Do you have talent or other resources to help spread the message of Christ? God wants you to be involved. How can you help?<sup>7</sup>

**Listen, O coastlands, to Me:** As the context will show, these words come prophetically from the Messiah, the Servant of the LORD revealed in previous chapters. Here, He commands the coastlands - the distant lands of the Gentiles -to listen to Him.

**The LORD has called Me from the womb:** The Messiah, later revealed as Jesus Christ, was called from the womb. Actually, as shown in Micah 5:2, Jesus was called even before He was in Mary's womb, yet here He starts at the point which any man could most readily relate to.

**From the matrix of My mother He has made mention of My name:** This was fulfilled in Luke 1:31, where the LORD, through the angel Gabriel, declared the name of Jesus before the conception in Mary's womb.<sup>8</sup>

Jesus is speaking, and calling the nations of the world to listen and pay attention. He prophetically makes reference to His human birth, being called from the womb, and being named by God while still inside the body of His mother.

Of course, we are well familiar with this history, not only because of Christmas, but because Isaiah has already written of this back in chapter seven:

**Is. 7:14** “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

<sup>6</sup> ESV Study Bible

<sup>7</sup> Life Application Study Bible.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>9</sup> <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah4901.php>

**<sup>2</sup>And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;**

“Mouth like a sharp sword” - the sword of the Spirit. Cf. Heb 4:12, Hosea 6:5; Rev 1:16; 2:16; 19:15.

“Shadow of His hand He hath hidden me” - John 10 (two hands involved!)<sup>10</sup>

**[like a sharp sword]** Rev. 1:16; 2:12,16; 19:15,21.

**[hid me]** Protected and preserved Me.

**[a polished shaft]** A pointed arrow hid in the quiver to be brought out for use in the appointed time and place to bring Israel to God -- to defend and protect them, and deliver them from their enemies forever (Isa. 49:2,6; Mt. 1:21; Zech. 12:1-14; Mt. 25:31-46; Rom. 11:25-29; Rev. 19:11-21).<sup>11</sup>

The sharp sword that went out of His mouth is the Word of God, and the explanation of His enemies when He walked on this earth was, "...Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). And the revelation of this One concludes with these words: "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations..." (Rev. 19:15). It is the judgment of the nations by the Word of God.<sup>12</sup>

God alone prepared and equipped the servant. my mouth like a sharp sword. Unlike Cyrus, the servant conquers by the truth of his word (cf. 11:4; Rev. 1:16; 19:15, 21). The servant is a match for enemies both near and far ("sword," arrow).<sup>13</sup>

**<sup>3</sup>And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.**

**[Thou art my servant]** The Messiah is called the servant of God in Isa. 49:3,5,6,7; 42:1; 50:10; 52:13; 53:11.

**[O Israel]** The Messiah is not only declared to be the servant of God to fulfill the predictions of Isa. 49:1-12, but He is called Israel, meaning simply that He will prevail with God and man in an even deeper and more complete sense than Jacob did in Gen. 32:28.

**[in whom I will be glorified]** God was glorified in Christ and will always be thus honored (Isa. 61:3; Mt. 9:8; 15:31; Mk. 2:12; Lk. 5:26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 23:47; Jn. 13:31-32; 14:13; 15:8; 17:4; Acts 4:21; 11:18; 21:20; Gal. 1:24; 1Pet. 4:11-14).<sup>14</sup>

**You are My servant, O Israel:** Since the rest of the context of this chapter indicates that this passage speaks of the Messiah, it is best to regard Israel as a reference to the Messiah. How can the LORD speak of the Messiah as Israel? First, because the Messiah comes from Israel, and is a

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<sup>10</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

<sup>11</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

<sup>12</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

<sup>13</sup> ESV Study Bible

<sup>14</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

representative of the nation. Second, because the Messiah fulfills the name Israel, which means, "governed by God."<sup>15</sup>

My servant Israel: The divine mission of the whole nation of Israel was delivered to Abraham, that is: "In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The mission of the nation is epitomized in the Messiah. This mission was partially fulfilled by the nation in the course of its development and trials. This was particularly true in the days of David and Solomon when the message about the one true God was going out from Jerusalem to all the nations. The Messiah is called "Israel" here because he completes the task to the uttermost which has been assigned to the children of Jacob. According to the rest of the chapter he is to restore Jacob, that is, the tribes of Israel, to faithfulness which is a light thing when compared to being a covenant of the Gentiles and bringing them, the Gentiles, into a restored Zion. Since he is to restore Israel-Jacob as per verse 6, he is called Israel here because both Israel and Messiah have the same mission and Messiah is said here to finish the mission.<sup>16</sup>

my servant, Israel. Comparing vv. 5–6, this servant Israel restores the nation Israel. The servant is the true embodiment of what the nation failed to be, namely, the one in whom I will be glorified.<sup>17</sup>

**<sup>4</sup>Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God.**

Though the Messiah's work seemed of little success -- being so hated by men and despised by His own people (Isa. 49:7; 53:1-12; Mt. 21:33-45; 23:34-39; Jn. 1:11; Acts 2:23) -- yet He had perfect confidence in God as to the final outcome of His work; He never became discouraged or despondent. Committing Himself to God, He did not attempt to avenge wrongs. He left His name, reputation, plans, and work with God. Isa. 49:4 teaches that the most faithful self-denial and holy living may, for a time, seem unfruitful -- through no fault of the worker, but because of conditions on earth. Those who labor must learn to do as Christ did -- commit themselves and their work to God, and toil on in faith.<sup>18</sup>

**Twelvefold Work of the Messiah:**

1. To be the servant of God (Isa. 49:3,5)
2. To bring Israel back to God (Isa. 49:5)
3. To raise up the tribes of Israel (Isa. 49:6)
4. To restore the preserved of Israel
5. To be for a light to the Gentiles
6. To be salvation to all the earth
7. To be for a covenant of people (Isa. 49:8)
8. To establish the earth
9. To restore the waste places of the earth and cause their habitation
10. To loose prisoners (Isa. 49:9)

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<sup>15</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa49.htm>

<sup>17</sup> ESV Study Bible

<sup>18</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

11. To free men from darkness
12. To guide men (Isa. 49:10)

Though the Lord was rejected, and it may look as if He labored in vain, His confidence is in God. 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. Therefore, God's purposes were not thwarted by man's little machinations.<sup>19</sup>

When we consider what - and who -the Lord Jesus had to work with on this earth, we certainly must believe that one of the great temptations He faced was discouragement. This passage shows that even though He ministered in difficult and discouraging circumstances, He never gave into discouragement, but always put His trust in the LORD.<sup>20</sup>

The servant confesses his sense of failure due to Israel's poor response (cf. v. 7; 53:1). yet. The servant does not turn from God in cynical unbelief; he accepts emotional suffering and frustrating toil with confidence that God will reward him.<sup>21</sup>

**<sup>5</sup>And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength.**

Literal Israel? Or “servant”?

**[formed me from the womb to be his servant]** Three predictions concerning His birth:

1. He called Me from the womb (Isa. 49:1)
2. He named Me from birth
3. He formed Me from the womb (Isa. 49:5)

**[again to him]** How could Jacob be brought again to God if he had never been to Him or had never left Him?

**[Though Israel be not gathered]** Though Israel is not yet gathered is the true idea, for there is no doubt about the final gathering (Isa. 11:10-12; Jer. 30-31; Ezek. 37; Mt. 24:29-31).

**[yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD]** It did not, nor will it, take the gathering of Jacob for the Messiah to be glorious in God's eyes. He is glorious and always will be, regardless of what happens to Israel. An only beloved Son would naturally be more important than the work He could perform. The same is true of God's other workers. He is more interested in their welfare and future than in any work they do for Him. God knows that if He can get the worker's heart and life the work will be as it should be.

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<sup>19</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>21</sup> ESV Study Bible

**[glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength]** He would be rejected by Israel, but accepted and honored by God, with strength for all He would be called upon to suffer.<sup>22</sup>

I submit this to you as being one of the most remarkable passages in the Word of God.<sup>23</sup>

Restore Jacob and Israel to YHWH: This verse introduces a thought that is finished in verse 6. The Messiah was formed from the womb to be the one to restore Jacob and Israel to faithfulness. The contrast noted in the KJV (Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious) is a rare mistake in simple translation by the KJV scholars that is corrected in all other versions. The text does not imply the possibility that Israel may not be gathered. On the contrary the gathering of Jacob-Israel into Zion is the assured purpose of the Messiah's visit and the next verse makes a contrast between this predetermined design of the Messiah's ministry and what is a greater accomplishment. The next verse shows that returning Jacob-Israel is a "light thing" when compared to bringing the multitudes of the Nations into Zion as well.<sup>24</sup>

**6And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.**

Verses 1 and 6 were very influential for some parents, he was called from the womb with a destiny, given as a light to the nations. So they named him, "Christ bearer," Christopher Columbus (Cf. The Light and the Glory by Peter Marshall and David Manuel, published by Fleming H. Revell Company in Old Tappan, New Jersey, copyright 1990).

#### **Gentile Women as "Types":**

- 1) Syro-phoenician woman (Mk 7:25-30)
- 2) One with issue of blood (Mt 9:18-26; Mk 5:21-43; Lk 8:40-50).<sup>25</sup>

**[light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel]** The Chaldee makes this a question -- Is it a small thing? The Septuagint reads: "It is a great thing for thee to be called My servant, to re-establish the tribes of Jacob." It could read: I will appoint You the Higher office of bringing salvation to the Gentile world, to be for salvation to the ends of the earth.

**[I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth]** Quoted in Lk. 2:32; Acts 13:47.<sup>26</sup>

**Salvation (Heb. yeshu'ah)** (49:6; Job 30:15; Ps. 67:2) H3444: This word describes deliverance from distress and the resultant victory and well-being. The term occurs most often in Psalms and Isaiah where it is frequently used along with the word righteousness, indicating a connection between God's righteousness and His saving acts (45:8; 51:6, 8; 56:1; 62:1; Ps. 98:2). This word

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<sup>22</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

<sup>23</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa49.htm>

<sup>25</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

<sup>26</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

can be used for a military victory (1 Sam. 14:45), but it is normally used of God's deliverance (Ex. 15:2; Ps. 13:5, 6). The expressions "the salvation of the Lord" and "the salvation of our God" speak of God's work on behalf of His people. The expression "the God of my salvation" is more private in nature, referring to the deliverance of an individual (12:2; 52:10; Ex. 14:13; 2 Chr. 20:17; Ps. 88:1; 98:3).<sup>27</sup>

It is too light a thing. It is too small a task to redeem only the tribes of Jacob (ethnic Israel). It is clear here that the servant, though he embodies Israel (v. 3), is nevertheless distinct from Israel, and has a calling to serve Israel and beyond. Far from failing, the servant is declared by God to be the only hope of the world, a light for the nations. See note on 42:6–7. that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth. A clear statement of salvation's worldwide scope, a theme that Acts develops by quoting this text (see Acts 1:8; 13:47).<sup>28</sup>

**<sup>7</sup>Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.**

Three involved.

**[and his Holy One]** Another clear reference to two separate, distinct persons who are called God (Jn. 1:1-2; Heb. 1:8). See The Trinity.

**[man despiseth]** Three predictions of men despising the Messiah: Isa. 49:7; 53:3; Ps. 22:6.

**[abhorreth]** Despised by men and abhorred by His own nation -- the Jews. They hated Him without cause (Jn. 15:18-25).

**[servant of rulers]** This means that although He was God, He was also man and submitted to human laws and earthly rulers (Ps. 2:2; Mt. 27:41).

**[Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship]** Kings and princes will worship Him, which proves Him to be Divine and not Isaiah or some other ordinary man, and certainly not the church or Israel, as some think.<sup>29</sup>

Paul said it like this: "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" (Rom. 11:12). The rejection of Christ by Israel meant that the gospel went to the ends of the earth. Just think how great it will be some day in the future when God regathers Israel!<sup>30</sup>

Unlike the kings of this world, the servant of the Lord conquers by his sufferings (cf. 50:6; 52:14–15). because of the Lord. The triumph of the servant's mission is not due to any facile human idealism but to the purpose of God alone (cf. 9:7).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Nelson's Study Bible

<sup>28</sup> ESV Study Bible

<sup>29</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

<sup>30</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

<sup>31</sup> ESV Study Bible

**<sup>8</sup>Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;**

Quoted in 2Cor. 6:2. As used here of the Messiah it does not mean personal salvation from sin, for He knew no sin; it refers to hearing and helping Him in the day that God would be gracious and provide salvation for all men. God would not only hear and help Him, but preserve and give Him to be the maker of a new covenant to the people, to establish the earth, and to restore and cause the waste places of earth to be inhabited.

**[covenant of the people]** Christ did make a new covenant when He abolished the old Mosaic contract (Isa. 42:6-7; Mt. 26:28; Heb. 8:6; 9:15), but it will not be made with Israel as a nation until His second coming (Isa. 61:8; Jer. 31:27-39; 32:37-44; Ezek. 37:11-28; Rom. 11:25-29; Heb. 10:16).

**[to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages]** To restore the earth and cause desolate places to be inhabited (Isa. 35:1-10).<sup>32</sup>

God heard the prayer of Christ, and He whom the nation crucified will be the One before whom kings will bow, and every knee must bow and acknowledge His Lordship.<sup>33</sup>

**<sup>9</sup>That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that *are* in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures *shall be* in all high places.**

[That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves] The second time the loosing of prisoners is mentioned in Isaiah. It refers to the liberation of the righteous souls from Sheol when Christ was resurrected and ascended to heaven (see notes, Isa. 42:7). This seems confirmed by the fact that the reference to loosing prisoners is followed by statements referring to life after death, both here and where the passage is quoted (cp. Isa. 49:9-10 with Rev. 7:15-17).

[They shall feed in the ways] These prisoners are spoken of as having the Messiah as their shepherd.

1. He will feed them in the ways -- along the paths in which He leads them.
2. He will give them pastures in high places.
3. He will satisfy them so that they will never hunger or thirst (Isa. 49:10).
4. He will protect them from the heat of the sun.
5. He will lead them all their days.
6. He will guide them to springs of living water (Isa. 49:10; Rev. 7:15-17).

**[all high places]** The hills and mountains of Arabian deserts, Horeb, Sinai, and some other places in Palestine are utterly destitute of vegetation; so if the Messiah will lead His people like a shepherd to such places to feed in green pastures, it is proof that this refers to the Millennium when the desolate places will blossom like a rose (Isa. 35:1-10).<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

<sup>33</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

<sup>34</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

That You may say to the prisoners, "Go forth": Jesus' ministry set people free from bondage and imprisonment.

Jesus set the demon possessed free from the bondage of chains and demonic torture (Mark 5:1-15).

Jesus set the sick and diseased free from the bondage of their infirmities (Luke 13:16).

Jesus set the righteous dead captive in Hades free from their place (Ephesians 4:8).

Jesus sets those in bondage to sin and the law free (John 8:33-36, Galatians 3:22-23).<sup>35</sup>

**<sup>10</sup>They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.**

“Hunger and thirst” might refer to Rev 7 where 144,000 Jews are uniquely sealed for His ministry.<sup>36</sup>

[not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them] Quoted in Rev. 7:16, proving a future fulfillment under the Messiah.

[he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them] The Messiah that will have mercy on them will also shepherd them and guide them to living fountains of water (Rev. 7:15-17).<sup>37</sup>

**<sup>11</sup>And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.**

“A way” - Christianity was called “the way” in Acts.<sup>38</sup>

[I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted] This no doubt also refers to the Millennium when highways will be made from Egypt to Assyria through Palestine, and these countries will be blessed together (Isa. 11:16; 19:23-25).<sup>39</sup>

**<sup>12</sup>Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.**

“Sinim” - China, Far East.

[These shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim] This pictures the regathering of Israel from all parts of the earth -- from far, from north and west, and from Sinim (Isa. 11:10-12; 66:19-21; Jer. 30-31; Ezek. 37; Mt. 24:31).

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<sup>35</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>36</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

<sup>37</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

<sup>38</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

<sup>39</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

[Sinim] Sinim cannot be definitely identified, but it seems to be contrasted with the west and may refer to the country of the extreme east, showing that the Jews will be gathered from all directions (Isa. 11:10-12; Mt. 24:31). Many think it refers to China. It is said that the Arabians and other Asians called China Sin or Tchin. The Septuagint renders it "the Persians"; Moffatt, "Syene"; Berkeley, "Syrene."<sup>40</sup>

"Sinim' is probably Aswan, near the southern border of Egypt ... This assumes that 'Sinim' is derived from sewenim ... If the Masoretic Text is correct, a long standing interpretation connects Sinim with China." (Wolf)<sup>41</sup>

**<sup>13</sup>Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.**

### **Heaven and Earth Sing**

The heavens, earth, and mountains were commanded to sing and rejoice because the Lord had returned to His people, gathered them, comforted them, and would have mercy on them (Isa. 49:13). This could not refer to the past, but to the days of the Messiah when Palestine will be blessed with fertility and be overcrowded with generations to come (Isa. 49:14-26). Zion, not the ten tribes, complained that God had forsaken and forgotten them, but they were assured by Him that such was as impossible as a normal woman forsaking her nursing child. Even if it were possible, He would not forget Zion (Isa. 49:14-15), for as He said, "I have graven you upon the palms of My hands: your walls are continually before Me" (Isa. 49:16). After giving this assurance God predicted final and eternal restoration (Isa. 49:17-26).<sup>42</sup>

God's purposes in the earth center in the nation Israel. When they are back in the land, then both the heavens and the earth can rejoice. Today, however, everything is more or less out of place as far as the world is concerned. Israel should be in their land, in the place of blessing, serving God. They are not. The church should be in heaven with Christ, but the church is still in the world. The Devil should be in hell, but he is walking around the earth seeking whom he may devour. The Lord Jesus Christ should be sitting upon the throne of the earth, ruling the earth, but He is at the right hand of God. There are many things that have to be shifted around and put in the right socket. Then the lines of Robert Browning as written in "Pippa Passes" will be true: "God's in His heaven: All's right with the world." At the moment, these words just do not fit the world in which you and I live.<sup>43</sup>

**<sup>14</sup>But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.**

But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me." In the midst of this great praise for the Messiah and His saving work, Zion - speaking of the highest hill in Jerusalem, and the place of God's

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<sup>40</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

<sup>41</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>42</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

<sup>43</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

people by association - Zion objects. Zion believes, "The LORD has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me."

The rest of Isaiah 49 and Isaiah 50 will answer this question. Because of their captivity in Babylon, Zion wonders "Does God really care about us?" God will answer, with strength and insight, this question that many have asked since.<sup>44</sup>

YHWH has forsaken the nation: Isaiah says here: The deferred fruition of the hope of Zion which is to be extended over a long period of time will be accompanied by hardship which will test the endurance of the faithful resulting in near despair. Chapters 46 to 48 just preceding this have shown that the Babylonian captivity and the restoration of the nation from that captivity into a second commonwealth are in a small way, a mirror of the future appearance of the restored messianic Zion. Thus there has been a need to urge the nation to abandon the comforts of Babylon and return to build a desolate Zion which will ultimately grow to immense proportions. See under verse 19 below. Also see Zechariah 10:10 which speaks of the growth of the returned remnant to Zion after the Babylonian captivity that had already begun in the days of Zechariah. He says there that Galilee in particular would eventually overflow with population so that "I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them."<sup>45</sup>

**<sup>15</sup>Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.**

God has not forgotten Israel! God has a destiny for Israel.<sup>46</sup>

The people of Israel felt that God had forgotten them in Babylon; but Isaiah pointed out that God would never forget them, as a loving mother would not forget her little child. When we feel that God has forsaken us, we must ask if we have forsaken and forgotten God (see Deuteronomy 31:6).<sup>47</sup>

**<sup>16</sup>Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls *are* continually before me.**

Refer to nail prints? Probably not, as nails were in the wrists not the hands (however, on Emmaus Road it appears that they recognized him by the nail prints. Also, Thomas...)<sup>48</sup>

[I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me] This is a figurative way of saying that God would never forget Zion and that her people would be in everlasting remembrance before Him (Isa. 49:16). It is said that there was a custom among

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<sup>44</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa49.htm>

<sup>46</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

<sup>47</sup> Life Application Study Bible.

<sup>48</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

pilgrims to Jerusalem to have representations of the city or temple tattooed on their hands and arms to remind them of the sacred places. They were called ensigns of Jerusalem.<sup>49</sup>

What beautiful assurance God gives them that they are not forsaken of Him! Israel may forsake Him -- as they are doing yet today -- but God will never forsake them.

My friend, if you still have doubts that God will restore Israel, I submit this section to you for your careful study.<sup>50</sup>

See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands: This has obvious and beautiful fulfillment in the nail-scarred hands of Jesus. As Jesus told Thomas in a post-resurrection appearance, look at My hands (John 20:27). When we see the nail-scarred hands of Jesus, we see how He has inscribed us on the palms of His hands. With such love, how could God ever forget His people?<sup>51</sup>

Your walls are continually before Me: The walls refer to the walls of the city of Jerusalem, which figuratively speak of the health, the strength, the prosperity, and the security of God's people. God is always mindful of the condition of His people, despite the objections of a doubting Zion.<sup>52</sup>

**<sup>17</sup>Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.**

### **Return of Israel**

The prediction here is that of the children of Zion making haste to come back to their homeland and the enemies who spoiled them, leaving their land (Isa. 49:17-18). Zion was to be clothed with these returning exiles; she would bind them upon her, as a bride does an ornament. After this return of Israel to their own country the land will be too small for them (Isa. 49:19-20) and the wonder of Israel will be where so many come from (Isa. 49:21). God will put it into the hearts of the Gentiles to help regather Israel (Isa. 49:22), and then they will worship Jehovah who will reign in Israel (Isa. 49:23).<sup>53</sup>

Children. This could also be translated "builders," following the reading of the Dead Sea Scrolls and some ancient versions.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

<sup>50</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

<sup>51</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>52</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>53</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

<sup>54</sup> NIV First Century Study Bible Notes

**18Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth.**

Isaiah sees the restoration of Zion as a mother welcoming her children and as a bride putting on her wedding gown. The prophet's vision extends to the worldwide growth of the people of God (cf. 54:1–3; Col. 1:3–6).<sup>55</sup>

**19For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.**

“Too narrow by reason of the inhabitants” - Gen 15:18. Land given to Abraham, promised land should go to the West Bank of the River Euphrates (not Jordan)!<sup>56</sup>

**20The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.**

Messianic Zion needs more room than Palestine can provide: This shows that the growth of messianic Zion will mirror the events of the return of the Babylonian captives to the second commonwealth. It is the first return that has been spoken of thus far but now Isaiah turns to the restored Zion of the Messiah when the same sequence of events will be experienced. That is: from a small remnant a teeming population will at last be realized. Most of them will come from among the Gentiles as the next few verses make clear. They also make it clear that this growth is in messianic Zion after the first return. These prophecies in this section are truly wonderful. Isaiah has outlined from chapter 40 that the nation's obsession with idolatry will be purged and suffering is necessary to make the purging possible. That God is to raise up the Babylonians who will oppress the nation and take it captive. Cyrus will then be called as a messianic figure who will restore the nation and its temple and bring Babylon down to destruction and it will eventually disappear. The return to the land will result ultimately in a large expanding population after which the paradoxical Messiah will appear who will restore the true purpose of Israel and Jacob and will call out of the Gentiles a people to inhabit Zion. From this point on in the book the nature of the Messiah and his kingdom with all the paradoxes involved in his appearance, some of which have already been introduced, will be the main subject of the rest of the chapters to the end of the book. This outline of Isaiah of the coming events for the nations of Judah and Israel is extensive, covering over 500 years and is accurate in every detail and the sequence of events accurately following the revelations granted to Isaiah. What a great man he must have been.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> ESV Study Bible

<sup>56</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa49.htm>

**21**Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where *had they been?*

There I was, left alone; but these, where were they? The great blessing of the returning sons of Zion - in both near and far fulfillment - will come as an astounding surprise. God's blessing will seem to come from nowhere. Though the promise seems too good to be true, God confirms it with an oath to the nations. God will rescue Israel from both their immediate and ultimate captivity.<sup>58</sup>

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Who has begotten these:... the Gentiles: In the 2,700 years since Isaiah penned these words one might seek, but in vain, for anyone who has restored large numbers of people from all nations, from all classes of society, from kings to the lowest nanny and manservant, male and female alike, to the worship of the God of Israel and to the acceptance of the heritage of Jacob, in place of their own history. You would search in vain for such a one if you omit the name of Jesus of Nazareth from the search. When his name is added it can be seen that no one has yet appeared nor is there any hope that anyone in the future will appear who will do more than Jesus the Nazarene, nor remotely approach the success he has had in bringing multitudes to the heritage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.<sup>60</sup>

**22**Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in *their* arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon *their* shoulders.

God assures Israel that the Gentiles will assist Him in the final restoration of the nation to the land. Heretofore, the Gentiles have scattered them, which makes this a rather remarkable prophecy even for today. Great Britain did open the land for the Jews; yet Great Britain was the country that issued the mandate which forbade them to enter the land -- so they came by ship without permission, and they have been hindered in one way or another since that time. It has taken persecution to push them out of other countries, and at the time I am writing this they are being blocked from leaving Russia, which probably has the third largest Jewish population in the world. Russia doesn't want to get rid of them, yet it subjects them to a great deal of anti-Semitic oppression. However, in that day, that is, in the end times, God will bring them back into their land, and He will use Gentiles to move them back!<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>59</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa49.htm>

<sup>61</sup> Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

**[and they shall bring thy sons in their arms]** Gentiles will fully cooperate with the Messiah's order to help regather Israel from all lands to be under Him in the Millennium and ages to come (Isa. 49:22-23; 11:10-12; 60:8-12; 66:16-21).

**[carried upon their shoulders]** Five ways to carry children:

1. In the arms
2. Upon the shoulders -- astride the neck or one shoulder
3. In the bosom, in the fold of the garment (Num. 11:12)
4. Between the shoulders on the back in a basket (Dt. 33:12)
5. On the hip (Isa. 60:4)<sup>62</sup>

When Israel returns to the land in the future the Gentiles will worship before the Lord and will be friendly toward Israel. In fact the Gentiles will even help transport Israelites to Palestine. Gentile leaders will be subservient to Israel, which will cause her to realize that the Lord really is in control of the world (v. 23). It is unusual for captives to be rescued, but God will see that it is done for Israel. Israel's enemies will be destroyed, which will cause the whole world to acknowledge that the Lord is Israel's God and her Savior (cf. comments on 42:11), Redeemer (cf. comments on 41:14), and the Mighty One of Jacob (cf. 60:16).<sup>63</sup>

**<sup>23</sup>And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with *their* face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.**

[lick up the dust of thy feet] To lick the dust is an expression of complete submission (Gen. 3:14; Ps. 72:9; Mic. 7:17).<sup>64</sup>

Clarke on They shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet: "These expressions therefore of the prophet are only general poetical images, taken from the manners of the country, to denote great respect and reverence: and such splendid poetical images, which frequently occur in the prophetic writings, were intended only as general amplifications of the subject, not as predictions to be understood and fulfilled precisely according to the letter."

"Lick up the dust of thy feet refers to the great honor which the great ones of the world will give Israel. It is mainly on the basis of this phrase that there is the practice of kissing the pope's feet." (Bultema)<sup>65</sup>

**<sup>24</sup>Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?**

The people's skeptical question in v. 24 is answered by the Lord's strong assertion in vv. 25–26. eat their own flesh . . . be drunk with their own blood (as if under siege conditions). Defying God's purpose of grace is self-destructive (cf. Phil. 1:27–28). Then all flesh shall know that I am

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<sup>62</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

<sup>63</sup> The Bible Knowledge Commentary

<sup>64</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

<sup>65</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-49.cfm?a=728001)

the Lord. This is God's ultimate purpose. This “recognition formula” (“all flesh shall know”), deriving from Ex. 6:7 and 14:18, occurs elsewhere in Isaiah (e.g., Isa. 7:20; 45:3, 6; 49:23; 60:16).<sup>66</sup>

**<sup>25</sup>But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.**

Ps 121: “He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

**[I will save thy children]** The reference here is to the battle of Armageddon when God will deliver the captives taken by Antichrist (Zech. 14:1-5) and destroy the oppressors of Israel (Isa. 49:26). This event is associated with the time when all flesh shall know that God is the mighty Savior and Redeemer of Israel (Isa. 49:23,26). As yet, this has not been fulfilled, so it must be future.<sup>67</sup>

God would prove to the world that he is God by doing the impossible—causing warriors to set their captives free; and these warriors would even return the plunder they had taken from the captives! God had done this before at the Exodus and would do it again when the exiles returned to Israel. Never should we doubt that God will fulfill his promises. He will even do the impossible to make them come true.<sup>68</sup>

**<sup>26</sup>And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.**

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<sup>66</sup> ESV Study Bible

<sup>67</sup> Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

<sup>68</sup> Life Application Study Bible.