

## Isaiah 50-52

- Chapter 49 was the call of the Messiah to serve God
  - Now in chapter we see the sufferings of that Servant

[Is. 50:1](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD,  
“Where is the certificate of divorce  
By which I have sent your mother away?  
Or to whom of My creditors did I sell you?  
Behold, you were sold for your iniquities,  
And for your transgressions your mother was sent away.

[Is. 50:2](#) “Why was there no man when I came?  
When I called, why was there none to answer?  
Is My hand so short that it cannot ransom?  
Or have I no power to deliver?  
Behold, I dry up the sea with My rebuke,  
I make the rivers a wilderness;  
Their fish stink for lack of water  
And die of thirst.

[Is. 50:3](#) “I clothe the heavens with blackness  
And make sackcloth their covering.”

[Is. 50:4](#) ¶ The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of disciples,  
That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word.  
He awakens Me morning by morning,  
He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple.

[Is. 50:5](#) The Lord GOD has opened My ear;  
And I was not disobedient  
Nor did I turn back.

[Is. 50:6](#) I gave My back to those who strike Me,  
And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard;  
I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.

[Is. 50:7](#) For the Lord GOD helps Me,  
Therefore, I am not disgraced;  
Therefore, I have set My face like flint,  
And I know that I will not be ashamed.

[Is. 50:8](#) He who vindicates Me is near;  
Who will contend with Me?  
Let us stand up to each other;  
Who has a case against Me?  
Let him draw near to Me.

[Is. 50:9](#) Behold, the Lord GOD helps Me;  
Who is he who condemns Me?  
Behold, they will all wear out like a garment;  
The moth will eat them.

[Is. 50:10](#) Who is among you that fears the LORD,  
 That obeys the voice of His servant,  
 That walks in darkness and has no light?  
 Let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.

[Is. 50:11](#) Behold, all you who kindle a fire,  
 Who encircle yourselves with firebrands,  
 Walk in the light of your fire  
 And among the brands you have set ablaze.  
 This you will have from My hand:  
 You will lie down in torment.

- As we look at this chapter, remember the complicated historic timeline of Second Isaiah
  - Isaiah writes these words to a future generation of Jews
    - Ones who will live 150 years in the future from his day
    - And they will be living in the captivity of Babylon when they read his words here
  - And Isaiah speaks in the present tense as if he is there with them
    - And so we must read these words as they would be seen and understood from their vantage point
- The Lord opens this chapter answering a cry from the Jews in captivity
  - They have cried out to God that He “divorced” them
    - He has forsaken them in captivity
  - In response, God answered in v.1 that He didn’t divorce them
    - If He had, He would have issued a bill of divorcement
      - In a future day through another prophet, God discussing having divorced Northern Israel
      - The writ of divorce is discussed in the book of Jeremiah
    - But here He hasn’t done that to Judah
  - Secondly, God says in v.2 that He was not in debt to any man so as to need to ransom or sell His children
    - A man in too much debt might sell his children to get out from under the debt

- But God wasn't in that situation
  - So Judah wasn't ransomed or divorced
  - Furthermore, in verses 2-3, He adds that it's not that He lacks the power to save them
- So what placed Judah in bondage?
  - God doesn't answer that directly here
    - But He begins to allude to it by transition to a discussion of the Suffering Servant
    - Who must come to pay the price of this sin and free Judah and all Israel from their bondage
  - In v.4 the early life of the Messiah is discussed
    - It's interesting that not much is known of Jesus' early Life
    - Luke gives us what little we have, and it only begins at age 12
      - By then, Jesus is teaching the Pharisees in the temple
      - How did He acquire so much knowledge as a young child?
  - Maybe you assumed Jesus simply had it all in His head from birth since He was God incarnate
    - To assume that is to make the mistake of placing too much emphasis on His divinity at the expense of His humanity
      - Jesus was fully man, and required training to learn all that He knew
      - Being without sin undoubtedly made the learning process easier in many ways, but He still needed to learn
    - I wonder how He gained His awareness that He was God Himself
- Isaiah tells us how that happened here in this verse
  - The Father gave Jesus the tongue of disciples - meaning the Father spoke to Him as a student
    - The Father awoke the Son every morning to teach Jesus and Jesus listened

- Taught directly by the Father on all things pertaining to godliness
  - And in v.5 Jesus says his ears were opened and He didn't turn back or disobey
    - A subtle jab at Adam, who was taught by the Father yet did turn back and disobey
    - That reference to obeying is critical, because it ties two thoughts in the text
      - Above it we found Israel complaining for their bondage, a bondage due to sin
      - And below this point, we're going to see a description of the Messiah's willingness to serve the Father in suffering
    - And the connection between the two events is the Messiah's perfect sinlessness
      - Because Christ was taught of the Father and was sinless, He could serve in Israel's place to remove her sin
- Now the sufferings come to the foreground
  - Notice the sense of the description throughout
    - It doesn't merely describe the tortures He endured
    - It also emphasizes how Jesus allowed it, and submitted to it
  - In v.6 He "gave" His back to the blows
    - He didn't cover His face from spit
    - He didn't stop them from pulling out His beard (by the way, Jesus was bearded as were all Law-abiding Jewish men)
    - So Jesus is despised by men, but He find His strength in the Lord
- Father is Christ's help
  - Eternally, the Father rescues Christ though He decided He must suffer for a time
    - But Christ's vindication is near

- The Father helps Him while those who persecute Him will wear out
      - The eternal God contrasted with the mortal flesh of men
- And the chapter ends beautifully with a clear contrast
  - In v.10 Jesus extends an appeal to the reader to follow His lead
    - Obey the Father as a servant
    - If you are in darkness, then trust in the name of the Lord and rely on His (Christ's) God
  - In v.11 the other group is called out
    - Those who kindle a fire
      - The idea is that our sin is the fuel stoking our own judgment fires
      - Sinner encircle themselves with this fire so that there is no escape
    - And they will lie down in their own torment in Hell
- Moving to chapter 51, we are still looking at the Messiah suffering not to include the death itself
  - The death of the Messiah awaits chapter 52
  - Now if you are a Jew following this discussion closely, you may begin to worry a lot
    - First, you hear that the call of the Messiah in chapter 49 was a call to discouragement in His day
      - He would triumph ultimately, but not before He was rejected by His own people
      - As a Jew, especially one in the remnant of Israel, that doesn't sound like a good thing
    - Then in chapter 50 you've read that He is suffering greatly, including humiliation and shame
      - That's even worse

- Then in chapter 53, the reader will encounter the most unexpected thing of all
  - The Messiah will die
  - Without an understanding of propitiation for sin, the reader would have no reason for hope
- So in chapters 51-52, God speaks through Isaiah to the remnant of Israel to encourage them in the face of the Messiah's trials and death

[Is. 51:1](#) ¶ " Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,  
Who seek the LORD:  
Look to the rock from which you were hewn  
And to the quarry from which you were dug.

[Is. 51:2](#) "Look to Abraham your father  
And to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain;  
When he was but one I called him,  
Then I blessed him and multiplied him."

[Is. 51:3](#) Indeed, the LORD will comfort Zion;  
He will comfort all her waste places.  
And her wilderness He will make like Eden,  
And her desert like the garden of the LORD;  
Joy and gladness will be found in her,  
Thanksgiving and sound of a melody.

- To those who pursue righteousness are the remnant of Israel
  - Think how few in number and weak Abraham and Sarah were
    - Yet God blessed them and multiplied them
  - The application for the remnant of Israel is easy to make
    - He can do the same for us
  - And today if you are feeling like the "real" Christians are fewer and fewer, remember this promise as well
    - Small numbers doesn't mean God is defeated or weak
  - In v.3 the promises are repeated for Israel to rise in strength and peace again

[Is. 51:4](#) ¶ “ Pay attention to Me, O My people,  
 And give ear to Me, O My nation;  
 For a law will go forth from Me,  
 And I will set My justice for a light of the peoples.

[Is. 51:5](#) “My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth,  
 And My arms will judge the peoples;  
 The coastlands will wait for Me,  
 And for My arm they will wait expectantly.

[Is. 51:6](#) “ Lift up your eyes to the sky,  
 Then look to the earth beneath;  
 For the sky will vanish like smoke,  
 And the earth will wear out like a garment  
 And its inhabitants will die in like manner;  
 But My salvation will be forever,  
 And My righteousness will not wane.

[Is. 51:7](#) “ Listen to Me, you who know righteousness,  
 A people in whose heart is My law;  
 Do not fear the reproach of man,  
 Nor be dismayed at their revilings.

[Is. 51:8](#) “For the moth will eat them like a garment,  
 And the grub will eat them like wool.  
 But My righteousness will be forever,  
 And My salvation to all generations.”

- Speaking to Israel, the Lord describes His plan to redeem them as a Law and Justice that goes forth
  - It means both the embodiment of Law and Justice in Christ Himself
    - But it also refers to the nature of His reign on Earth, a time of Law and justice
  - This coming righteousness is Christ judging the world and the nations
    - And bringing a salvation from that judgment that endures forever
  - You could sum these words up by saying have eyes for eternity
    - Look beyond your circumstances
- Now the text shifts back to talking to the Messiah again

[Is. 51:9](#) ¶ Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD;  
 Awake as in the days of old, the generations of long ago.  
 Was it not You who cut Rahab in pieces,  
 Who pierced the dragon?

[Is. 51:10](#) Was it not You who dried up the sea,  
 The waters of the great deep;  
 Who made the depths of the sea a pathway  
 For the redeemed to cross over?

[Is. 51:11](#) So the ransomed of the LORD will return  
 And come with joyful shouting to Zion,  
 And everlasting joy will be on their heads.  
 They will obtain gladness and joy,  
 And sorrow and sighing will flee away.

[Is. 51:12](#) ¶ "I, even I, am He who comforts you.  
 Who are you that you are afraid of man who dies  
 And of the son of man who is made like grass,

[Is. 51:13](#) That you have forgotten the LORD your Maker,  
 Who stretched out the heavens  
 And laid the foundations of the earth,  
 That you fear continually all day long because of the fury of the oppressor,  
 As he makes ready to destroy?  
 But where is the fury of the oppressor?

[Is. 51:14](#) "The exile will soon be set free, and will not die in the dungeon, nor will his bread be lacking.

[Is. 51:15](#) "For I am the LORD your God, who stirs up the sea and its waves roar (the LORD of hosts is His name).

[Is. 51:16](#) "I have put My words in your mouth and have covered you with the shadow of My hand, to establish the heavens, to found the earth, and to say to Zion, 'You are My people.'"

- The "arm of the Lord" is a reference to Jesus
  - He is called to "awake"
    - This is a subtle reference to His coming back to earth
  - Where once before He did works
    - He cut Rahab into pieces, pierced the dragon and dried up the sea, making a pathway in the sea for the redeemed to cross over
      - We know the sea and pathway refer to Exodus, but what about Rahab and the dragon
      - It's all the same really

- Rahab is another name for Egypt in scripture
  - You can see it used that way in Psalm 87:4
- And the dragon is a reference to Pharaoh
  - You can see that reference in Ezekiel 29:3
- So Christ we learn was the One in the Godhead Who actually performed those miracles as they occurred
  - And He did them in a time when Israel was under great distress and felt helpless
- So the call to awake indicates the Messiah's return at a future time to perform another rescue (In Tribulation)
- In v.12-13 God sets up a decision for the reader
  - On the one hand you have threats from men
    - But men die and have no power
      - In fact the Hebrew word here for man is enosh, which means a weak, feeble man
  - On the other hand, if you fear these weak men, it's only because you have forgotten the Lord
    - If the power and sovereignty of God is always on our mind, we can fear men
      - Just as Christ didn't fear His oppressors
  - Finally, in vs.14-16 God draws the point to conclusion
    - This verse could reference the return of exiles from Babylon
    - It probably also references the regathering of Israel in the last days (today)

[Is. 51:17](#) ¶ Rouse yourself! Rouse yourself! Arise, O Jerusalem,  
 You who have drunk from the LORD'S hand the cup of His anger;  
 The chalice of reeling you have drained to the dregs.

[Is. 51:18](#) There is none to guide her among all the sons she has borne,  
 Nor is there one to take her by the hand among all the sons she has reared.

[Is. 51:19](#) These two things have befallen you;  
 Who will mourn for you?  
 The devastation and destruction, famine and sword;  
 How shall I comfort you?

[Is. 51:20](#) Your sons have fainted,  
 They lie helpless at the head of every street,  
 Like an antelope in a net,  
 Full of the wrath of the LORD,  
 The rebuke of your God.

[Is. 51:21](#) ¶ Therefore, please hear this, you afflicted,  
 Who are drunk, but not with wine:

[Is. 51:22](#) Thus says your Lord, the LORD, even your God  
 Who contends for His people,  
 "Behold, I have taken out of your hand the cup of reeling,  
 The chalice of My anger;  
 You will never drink it again.

[Is. 51:23](#) "I will put it into the hand of your tormentors,  
 Who have said to you, 'Lie down that we may walk over you.'  
 You have even made your back like the ground  
 And like the street for those who walk over it."

- In this passage, God walks Israel through about 2,000+ years of her history
  - In vs.17-21 Isaiah describes the coming judgment against Israel for their sins in rejecting the Covenant
    - Culminating in AD 70 with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem
  - God has a chalice or cup of judgment and they have drained it
    - The people can't be found in the city any longer (v.18)
    - And two things have come upon the them
      - The city is devastated and destroyed
      - And in v.20 the people are killed and taken like animals into slavery
  - Then the history lesson jumps forward to a point where God removes the cup
    - And after God removes this cup, they will never drink again
    - Instead, it will be a drink for her oppressors
    - Israel redeemed and in her land again after Tribulation

- Continuing the calls to “awake,” the third call is for Zion
  - Zion is a word that means Jerusalem but it is uniquely associated with the New Jerusalem, the redeemed Jerusalem that every Jew hopes to see
    - Today we see “Zionists” who seek to produce a triumphant Jewish nation, but they usually try to obtain it in manmade ways
    - Only God can establish the true Zion

[Is. 52:1](#) ¶ Awake, awake,  
 Clothe yourself in your strength, O Zion;  
 Clothe yourself in your beautiful garments,  
 O Jerusalem, the holy city;  
 For the uncircumcised and the unclean  
 Will no longer come into you.

[Is. 52:2](#) Shake yourself from the dust, rise up,  
 O captive Jerusalem;  
 Loose yourself from the chains around your neck,  
 O captive daughter of Zion.

[Is. 52:3](#) ¶ For thus says the LORD, “You were sold for nothing and you will be redeemed without money.”

[Is. 52:4](#) For thus says the Lord GOD, “My people went down at the first into Egypt to reside there; then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

[Is. 52:5](#) “Now therefore, what do I have here,” declares the LORD, “seeing that My people have been taken away without cause?” Again the LORD declares, “Those who rule over them howl, and My name is continually blasphemed all day long.

[Is. 52:6](#) “Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, ‘Here I am.’”

- We are looking at New Jerusalem and the question is how does Israel arrive at this point?
  - We know the answer...Christ!
    - They were sold for nothing
      - God placed them in bondage but not because He owed anyone
    - They will be redeemed without money
      - They are not bought with money, but with Christ’s blood

- Just as their oppressors came upon them not for their own reasons but because God brought them
- Likewise, salvation will come because of God and no other reason

[Is. 52:7](#) ¶ How lovely on the mountains  
 Are the feet of him who brings good news,  
 Who announces peace  
 And brings good news of happiness,  
 Who announces salvation,  
 And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

[Is. 52:8](#) Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices,  
 They shout joyfully together;  
 For they will see with their own eyes  
 When the LORD restores Zion.

[Is. 52:9](#) Break forth, shout joyfully together,  
 You waste places of Jerusalem;  
 For the LORD has comforted His people,  
 He has redeemed Jerusalem.

[Is. 52:10](#) The LORD has bared His holy arm  
 In the sight of all the nations,  
 That all the ends of the earth may see  
 The salvation of our God.

- Perhaps some of the most poetic and beautiful verses in all Isaiah in Hebrew
  - Isaiah's Hamlet
    - In v.7 we have the Hebrew word for gospel
    - How lovely are the feet of Him who brings the gospel
      - Who announces salvation
  - We know this is Jesus, but why the mention of "feet"
    - Well, remember Jesus return is associated with His feet on the Mount of Olives
  - And looking at v.10 the word play in Hebrew is unmistakable
    - The Lord has bared His holy arm, Who we know is Jesus
      - Bared as in make visible - Jesus is made known

- All the ends of the earth see Him
  - Sounds like the Second Coming doesn't it?
- What do they see?
  - The salvation of the our God
  - Remember, salvation is Yeshuah and Jesus' name is Yeshua
- The word play is intentional, of course
  - The world will see Jesus, their salvation

[Is. 52:11](#) ¶ Depart, depart, go out from there,  
 Touch nothing unclean;  
 Go out of the midst of her, purify yourselves,  
 You who carry the vessels of the LORD.

[Is. 52:12](#) But you will not go out in haste,  
 Nor will you go as fugitives;  
 For the LORD will go before you,  
 And the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

- At Jesus' return, the nation of Israel is called to "go out"
  - Meaning they are called to come out of hiding and out from under of oppression
    - They enter the New Jerusalem and they enter to serve God in the Millennial temple (v.11)
  - Interestingly, they don't go out in haste
    - The point is to compare this going out to the one in Exodus
    - Before they left so quickly they didn't have time to let the bread rise
    - Now they can follow their Lord into the gates without worry
- Now Isaiah returns to the main subject, the Suffering Servant again
  - We've moved from the call of the Servant, to His suffering
    - But now Isaiah picks up the theme again by providing the answer to why must He suffer

[Is. 52:13](#) ¶ Behold, My servant will prosper,  
He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted.

[Is. 52:14](#) Just as many were astonished at you, My people,  
So His appearance was marred more than any man  
And His form more than the sons of men.

[Is. 52:15](#) Thus He will sprinkle many nations,  
Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him;  
For what had not been told them they will see,  
And what they had not heard they will understand.

- I've read this section, but I'm not going to discuss it this week
  - It begins a new section that extends through 53
    - It describes the death of the Messiah and His resurrection
    - So it covers both the crucifixion and the redemption of Israel at the time of the national confession in Zech 12
  - We'll look at it then, moving about 4-5 chapters forward next week
  -