

Isaiah 49 v 1 to 50 v 3

The Servant of the LORD

49 ¹ Listen to me, O coastlands,
and give attention, you peoples from afar.
The LORD called me from the womb,
from the body of my mother he named my name.
² He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.
³ And he said to me, “You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”
⁴ But I said, “I have laboured in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my right is with the LORD,
and my recompense with my God.”

⁵ And now the LORD says,
he who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him;
and that Israel might be gathered to him—
for I am honoured in the eyes of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—
⁶ he says:
“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

⁷ Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation,
the servant of rulers:
“Kings shall see and arise;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

⁸ Thus says the LORD:
“In a time of favour I have answered you;
in a day of salvation I have helped you;
I will keep you and give you
as a covenant to the people,
to establish the land,
to apportion the desolate heritages,
⁹ saying to the prisoners, ‘Come out,’
to those who are in darkness, ‘Appear.’”

They shall feed along the ways;
on all bare heights shall be their pasture;
¹⁰ they shall not hunger or thirst,
neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them,
for he who has pity on them will lead them,
and by springs of water will guide them.
¹¹ And I will make all my mountains a road,
and my highways shall be raised up.
¹² Behold, these shall come from afar,
and behold, these from the north and from the west,
and these from the land of Syene.”

¹³ Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;
break forth, O mountains, into singing!
For the LORD has comforted his people
and will have compassion on his afflicted.

The restoration of Israel

¹⁴ But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me;
my Lord has forgotten me.”

¹⁵ “Can a woman forget her nursing child,
that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.

¹⁶ Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;
your walls are continually before me.

¹⁷ Your builders make haste;
your destroyers and those who laid you waste go out from you.

¹⁸ Lift up your eyes around and see;
they all gather, they come to you.

As I live, declares the LORD,
you shall put them all on as an ornament;
you shall bind them on as a bride does.

¹⁹ “Surely your waste and your desolate places
and your devastated land—
surely now you will be too narrow for your inhabitants,
and those who swallowed you up will be far away.

²⁰ The children of your bereavement
will yet say in your ears:

‘The place is too narrow for me;
make room for me to dwell in.’

²¹ Then you will say in your heart:
‘Who has borne me these?’

I was bereaved and barren,
exiled and put away,
but who has brought up these?

Behold, I was left alone;
from where have these come?"

²² Thus says the Lord GOD:

"Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations,
and raise my signal to the peoples;
and they shall bring your sons in their arms,
and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders.

²³ Kings shall be your foster fathers,
and their queens your nursing mothers.
With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you,
and lick the dust of your feet.
Then you will know that I am the LORD;
those who wait for me shall not be put to shame."

²⁴ Can the prey be taken from the mighty,
or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?

²⁵ For thus says the LORD:

"Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken,
and the prey of the tyrant be rescued,
for I will contend with those who contend with you,
and I will save your children.

²⁶ I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh,
and they shall be drunk with their own blood as with wine.
Then all flesh shall know
that I am the LORD your Saviour,
and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

Israel's sin and its consequences

50 ¹ Thus says the LORD:

"Where is your mother's certificate of divorce,
with which I sent her away?
Or which of my creditors is it
to whom I have sold you?
Behold, for your iniquities you were sold,
and for your transgressions your mother was sent away.

² Why, when I came, was there no man;
why, when I called, was there no one to answer?

Is my hand shortened, that it cannot redeem?
Or have I no power to deliver?

Behold, by my rebuke I dry up the sea,
I make the rivers a desert;
their fish stink for lack of water
and die of thirst.

³ I clothe the heavens with blackness
and make sackcloth their covering."

Cross References (selected)

Micah 5 v 2:

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.

Luke 1 v 30, 31: ³⁰ And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

Revelation 1 v 16: In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

Revelation 2 v 12: And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.

Acts 13 v 47: For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,

‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.

Psalm 22 v 6; 27 to 29a:

But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.

All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the Lord,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.
For kingship belongs to the Lord,
and he rules over the nations.
All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship...

Luke 19 v 41 to 44: ⁴¹ And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴² saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side ⁴⁴ and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

Romans 11 v 26a: And in this way all Israel will be saved...

Luke 13 v 16: And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?”

John 8 v 34 to 36: Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.