

WEEK #22

Isaiah 49-53 The Servant



Isaiah by Mail

A Bible Study Born in the Midst of Covid

Tuesday, November 3, 2020

Hi Everyone!

I'm writing this on Wednesday, October 28th.
The week leading up to the US 2020 election.



By the time you receive it, election day will probably be over, and we may or may not know who the next president of the United States is.

The passion and fervor that has come with this election has shocked most of us. Or at least it has me. I have had moments of fear, moments of disgust, moments of faith, times of grieving for our country, and times when I knew I had to stop thinking about it.

No matter what the outcome of this election, I have gotten to today knowing without a doubt that my happiness or even my safety do not depend on Presidents, Vice-Presidents, or political parties, opinions, or positions.

You see – Isaiah prophesied through the reigns of several Kings of Israel...some of them were desperately wicked...some of them were Godly. He saw the downward path of sin the Jewish people were taking. He saw the Assyrian army nearly destroy the whole country. And he saw that army fall away when the hand of God stretched out to say: "This far and no farther!". What a relief that must have been!



And then he saw, off in the future, a new enemy poised on their north – ready to take down the little that remained of Israel – he saw Babylon and all the evil it would do to God's chosen.

He must have realized at some point in his ministry that one enemy always gave way to the next – there would be no final freedom from sin by the efforts of even Godly Kings or Godly people. Only the LORD Himself could rescue His people from the sin which so powerfully controlled the world.

That is why all through Isaiah we have seen prophecies of **the Messiah that was to come** – the One Who would rescue Israel forever from their sin and their suffering. This, and this alone, was the hope Isaiah saw for the future.

Peace, safety, happiness, fulfillment...none of these are ever going to come through earthly Kings, earthly government, earthly laws, earthly judges.

They can only be ours through a lamb.



Whatever this 2020 election brings to pass, the only truly important questions for any of us to ask ourselves, or ask another, are: Have you thanked the Lamb for dying for you? Have you told Him He can do whatever He wants with your life?

Are you His?

Kathleen

Isaiah Chapters 49-53 The Servant Questions

Memory Verse – Isaiah 53:6 “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

1. Read through Isaiah chapters 49-53. Make a list of the verses which are prophecies of the Messiah who would come and save people from their sins. When you look at that list, ask yourself: How can there be any doubt that Jesus was and is the Promised Messiah?
2. What is your personal reaction to seeing all Jesus did to save you?

3. Jesus is called “The Servant” by Isaiah. Why do you think he calls Him that?
4. What should that mean for our lives?

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Isaiah Chapters 49-53 The Servant

Kathleen's Answers and Comments

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That is why all through Isaiah we have seen prophecies of **the Messiah that was to come** – the One Who would rescue Israel forever from their sin and their suffering. This, and this alone, was the hope Isaiah saw for the future – and this, and this alone, was the hope Isaiah offered to his Jewish audience.

Isaiah was shown **The Servant**....and that was enough to give him the courage to go on with his ministry of prophesying to a stubborn, deaf, and blind people. Tradition tells us that Isaiah was sawn in two by the evil king who reigned after good king Hezekiah. (*Hebrews 11:37*). Doesn't seem like a very fitting ending for such a man of God, does it? But it was OK – because Isaiah knew **The Servant** would take care of him and the people to whom he passionately prophesied.

The Servant is our only hope, too. So let's look at these prophecies and breathe a sigh of relief. I'm sure I'm not getting all of them – but here are a few that we've seen already:

6:10	He would be rejected
6:9-10	He would teach in parables

7:14	He would be born of a virgin
9:1-2	He would be from Galilee
9:6-7	He would be a son He would be called God
11:2	The Spirit of God would rest on Him
35:4-6	He would perform miracles
40:1-5,9	He would be preceded by a messenger
40:11	He would be tender and compassionate
42:2	He would be meek and humble

But now, as we approach Isaiah 49 through Isaiah 52, Isaiah's pace picks up :

Prophecies of Messiah in Isaiah 49-52	What was the prophecy?	Where was it fulfilled in the New Testament?
49:8	He would restore the earth	<i>Rev. 21:1</i>
49:9	He would set prisoners free so they could serve Him	<i>Acts 5:17-20</i>
49:10a	He would someday make sure His people would never again hunger or thirst or be too hot	<i>Rev. 7:16</i>
49:10b	He would be like a tender shepherd	<i>John 10:11</i>
49:11	God would clear the way so that people could find Him	<i>John the Baptist</i>
50:4-5	He would know what to say	<i>John 8:26</i>
50:6	He would submit Himself willingly to beatings	<i>Matt 27:27-31</i>
50:9	No one would be able to condemn Him for any sin	<i>John 8:45-47</i>
51:6	He would offer eternal salvation	<i>John 3:36</i>
52:6	His people would one day again know Him and know His name	<i>John 8:48-59</i>
52:13	He would be prudent (honest and wise) in His dealings with people	<i>John 7: 45&46</i>
52:14	His body and features would be horribly marred	<i>Mark 15</i>
52:15	His coming would be verified by kings and many nations	<i>Matthew 2:1-12</i>

And then, in Isaiah 53, the prophet simply explodes with descriptions of the Man Who Would Come – the One Who Would Suffer and Save His People From Their Sins....Every single verse of this chapter is a trumpet blast in our ears –

**HE IS COMING!!!!
HOLD ON!!!!
YOU WILL KNOW HIM WHEN YOU SEE HIM!!!!**

Isaiah 53

¹ Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.
He has no form or comeliness;
And when we see Him,

There is no beauty that we should desire Him.

³ He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him;
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;

Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But He *was* wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.

⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For He was cut off from the land of the living;
For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

⁹ And they^[a] made His grave with the wicked—

But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor *was any* deceit in His mouth.
¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;
He has put *Him* to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,
He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.
¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul,^[b] *and* be satisfied.
By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.
¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,
And He shall divide the spoil with the strong,
Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.

What do the majority of Jewish people believe about these passages?

Early Jewish sages expected a personal Messiah to fulfill these prophecies. It was not until the Middle Ages that another idea was put forth: the Isaiah 53 passage especially was referring to the sufferings of the Jews, not to the Messiah. Today, Isaiah 53 is not even included in the year-long weekly readings in Jewish synagogues.

Because of their rejection of these prophecies clearly pointing to Jesus, and their rejection of Jesus Himself, has the Lord “cut off” Israel from His promises?

No. *“Only if these decrees (the sun to shine by day, the moon and stars to shine by night, etc.) vanish from my sight,” declares the Lord, “will the descendants of Israel ever cease to be a nation before me.” Jeremiah 31:36*

In the chapters coming up in Isaiah....just wait and see what’s next for the Jewish people!