

A Trek Through Isaiah 63: 49 - 55 Overview

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For this week: 49 - 55 Overview

The Greater Deliverance: The Work of the Servant 49 – 55

Context

- This section is the climax to the Book of the Servant.
- In ch 39 Isaiah predicted Judah's captivity in Babylon.
- Q: How will the LORD redeem His people?
- The LORD's plan had two parts
 - Liberation from Babylon
 - Redemption from sin
- 44:24 - 48 described the great deliverance (liberation from Babylon) accomplished through Cyrus.
- 49 - 55 describes the greater deliverance (redemption from sin) accomplished through the Servant.

The section 49 - 55

- The Servant's mission 49:1-13
 - Calling and trust
 - Divine confirmation and successful outcome
- Nation and Servant Contrasted 49:14 - 50:11
 - Contrast
 - Call to Trust
- To the Faithful Remnant 51 – 52:12
- The Servant's Triumph 52:13 - 55:13
 - Successful Work 52:13 – 53
 - Worldwide Salvation 54 - 55
 - Zion Restored
 - The whole world invited

The Servant's mission 49:1-13

Calling and trust 49:1-6

- The second servant song
- V1a Call to listen.
 - The Servant speaks to all peoples.
- V1b-3 The Servant's qualifications.
 - V1b Calling. Appointment to a position.
 - V2 Preparation. Sword, arrow: prepared for all manner of fighting.
 - V3: Person. The true Israel; the One in whom the LORD will be glorified.
- V4 The Servant's trust
 - V4a Apparent failure
 - V4b Trust in God. The LORD will determine the outcome of His work.
- The Servant's Tasks 49:5-6
 - V5 To redeem Israel
 - V6 To redeem the nations

Divine confirmation and successful outcome 49:7-13

- Divine Confirmation 49:7-13
 - V7 Gentile submission. Kings and princes will bow down before His Servant.
 - V8-9a A new covenant for Israel.
 - In view is the nation Israel
 - The Servant will be answered, helped, kept.
 - He will be a covenant for God's people
 - To restore their inheritance
 - To bring them into the light
 - V9b-10 Israel's journey home.
 - An exodus journey.
 - Provision: no hunger or thirst
 - Protection from wind and sun.
 - Leading in the way they should go
 - V11 -12 Worldwide ingathering.
 - A highway raised up.
 - The LORD's people gathered from the whole earth.
 - V13 Universal celebration.
 - All heaven and earth will rejoice.
 - Because God will have comforted and had compassion on His people.

Nation and Servant Contrasted 49:14 – 50:9

Contrast 49:14 - 50:9

- Here is the contrast between the nation and the Servant.
 - The nation complains in self-pity; they are given multiple inducements to faith but will not trust.
 - The Servant is warned of suffering to come, and responds with commitment.
 - Even so, the LORD does not give up on His people.
- The nation's complaint 49:14
 - Zion (the nation) does not believe in the deliverance just promised. Instead she complains that God has forsaken her.
- God's promises 49:15 – 50:3
 - V15-16 The promise that God's people are not forgotten.
 - Even a nursing mother may forget her child, but the Lord will not forget His people.
 - They are inscribed on the palms of His hand.
 - He remembers their walls (either the walls that were destroyed, or the walls to come)
 - V17-23 The promise of increase
 - The nation's builders (sons) will come to her. Her destroyers will depart.
 - What was an empty waste will be crowded with her children.
 - The nation will say, "I was left alone; from where have these come?"
 - God replies, "The nations will bring them." Refers to Gentile believers.
 - Then they will know that the LORD is God; those who wait for Him will not be ashamed.
 - V24-26 The promise of deliverance
 - Those captive will be rescued.
 - With power
 - According to law. Contend: arguing a case of law
 - Zion's children will be saved.
 - The oppressors will be destroyed.
 - Eat their own flesh: as in a siege.
 - Then all flesh will know that the LORD is Israel's Savior, Redeemer, Mighty One of Israel

- The nation's lack of trust 50:1-3
 - V1 The issue of legality.
 - There was no certificate of divorce, or unpaid debt.
 - Israel was in captivity because of her sin.
 - The LORD has the right to redeem her.
 - V2a The nation's response
 - The LORD came and called; no one answered,.
 - V2b-3 The LORD's qualifications
 - He is able to redeem and to deliver.
 - Pictures from the Exodus: sea dried up, fish dying, black darkness.
- The willing Servant 50:4-9
 - V4 The Servant's competence
 - An effective tongue
 - A disciple's ear
 - V5 The Servant's willingness
 - V6 The Servant's trials
 - V7-9 The Servant's victory
 - The LORD God helps Him.
 - He is not ashamed.
 - His enemies will wear out and be eaten up.

Call to Trust 50:10-11

- V10 Those who trust
 - They encounter darkness.
 - They trust in God.
 - Structure
 - Fears the LORD = trusts in the name of the LORD.
 - Obeys the voice of His Servant = relies on his God.
- V11 Those who do not trust
 - They encounter darkness
 - They build a fire, equip themselves with torches, walk by the light of the torches.
 - Here is self-reliance, saying, "There is no God." Contrast the believer in v10: relies on his God.
 - Result is torment from God's hand.

To the faithful remnant 51:1 – 52:12

- Theme
 - 50:10-11 differentiates those who trust in God from those who don't
 - Obeying the voice of the Servant is the distinguishing factor.
 - 51:1 - 52:12 addresses the believing remnant.
- Structure
 - Three calls to listen
 - Appeal to the LORD to act
 - Three calls to alertness and action
- Three calls to listen 51:1-8
 - First Call to Listen: comfort to Zion 51:1-3
 - V1-2 Abraham and Sarah made into a nation
 - V3 Wilderness made like the Garden of Eden with joy and gladness
 - Second Call to Listen: Salvation for the nations 51:4-6
 - V4-5 Coming judgment
 - A law will go forth.
 - His righteousness draws near.
 - The righteousness that comes through faith in Christ.
 - Perfect justice is satisfied.
 - Salvation goes out to all who trust in Christ.
 - The coastlands (nations) hope for the LORD.
 - V6 Eternal life
 - Heavens and earth will pass away.
 - All people will die.
 - God's righteousness and salvation stand forever.
 - Third Call to Listen: No fear 51:7-8
 - V7 Coming trials
 - Men will reproach and revile.
 - Do not fear them
 - V8 Contrasting ends
 - Men are transient.
 - God's righteousness and salvation are eternal.

- Appeal to God 51:9-11
 - V9-10 Past deliverance
 - Pictures from the Exodus
 - Rahab = Egypt
 - Dried up the sea. Red Sea crossing.
 - V11 Coming deliverance
 - Pictures from the end times.
 - The LORD's people return to Zion.
 - Everlasting joy.
 - Sorrows pass away.
- Assurance To All 51:12-16
 - Structure
 - Tenses of "you" reveal the structure
 - V12a masculine plural: spoken to all
 - V12b feminine singular: spoken to the city Zion
 - V13 masculine singular: spoken to a captive
 - V15-16 masculine singular: spoken to the Servant
 - V12a Word of comfort
 - to all (city, captives, Servant)
 - V12b To the city
 - Question: "Who are you?"
 - Diagnosis: Afraid of man who dies
 - V13a To the captives
 - Diagnosis
 - Have forgotten the LORD.
 - Fear the oppressor
 - V13b-14 The coming deliverance
 - The oppressor disappears.
 - The captives are released and provided for.
 - V15-16 To the Servant
 - Equipped with God's word.
 - Sheltered by God's hand.
 - Given work: (1) creating heaven and earth (2) redeeming God's people.
 - V16b Answer: "You are My people."

- Three calls to respond 51:17 – 52:12
 - Corresponding to the three calls to listen in 51:1-8.
 - Indicates that the promises have been fulfilled; now Israel is to enter into them.
 - The first call: wrath removed 51:17-23
 - V17-20 The cup drunk
 - Picture of one rendered helpless by drink, now called to stand up.
 - Zion given the cup of the LORD's wrath
 - Results of the cup:
 - Sons useless
 - Devastation and destruction, famine and sword
 - Sons fainted; overcome by God's wrath
 - V21-23 The cup removed
 - Removed from Zion's hand.
 - Given to her tormentors.
 - The second call: holiness enjoyed 52:1-10
 - V1-2 Holiness and royalty
 - Call to put on strength.
 - Jerusalem now a holy city, in beautiful garments.
 - No more uncircumcised and unclean.
 - Lifted up from the dust, bonds removed
 - Seated as royalty.
 - V3-6 The LORD explains
 - God speaks of the redemption of His people.
 - V3, 4 He looks to the past and promises salvation
 - V5 He looks to the present and sees His people oppressed and His name dishonored.
 - V6 He looks to the future when His people will know His name.
 - V7-10 Zion is Redeemed.
 - The watchmen announce the good news.
 - Jerusalem is redeemed.
 - All nations see the salvation of the LORD.
 - The third call: a greater exodus 52:11-12
 - Call to depart.
 - Go out from uncleanness
 - Go out to service to God
 - No haste or flight since the LORD goes before and behind.

The Servant's triumph 52:13 – 55:13

- Structure

- The climax to the book of the Servant.
- The fourth Servant Song 52:13 - 53
- Two-part "tailpiece": (1) Zion called to peace 54 (2) the invitation to all nations. 55

Successful work 52:13 – 53:12

- V13 Servant exalted
 - He will act wisely
 - He will be high and lifted up.
- V14-15 Mission accomplished
 - He will be disfigured beyond recognition
 - He will redeem many nations.
 - The nations will then see and understand what had been hidden: God's salvation.
- V1-3 His nature
 - the arm of the LORD. God Himself in action.
 - Before Him. Separate from the LORD.
 - Grow up...like a young plant. Born and grows up: a man.
 - Like a root out of dry ground. From the barren nation Israel.
 - No form or majesty...no beauty. No outward indication that this is the Messiah.
 - despised and rejected by men. Because He is not attractive; not what they expect.
- V4-6 His mission
 - Men will see Him as afflicted of God.
 - He will bear the punishment for their sins.
 - All men have gone astray, but by His sacrifice they will be reconciled to God.
- V7-9 His unjust death
 - He will be unjustly oppressed and afflicted.
 - He will be silent in the face of the judgment.
 - He will be killed for the sins of His people.
 - He will be buried in the grave of a rich man
 - He will be innocent of any wrongdoing.
- V10-12 His victory
 - It was the LORD's will to crush Him.
 - He will offer Himself as a guilt offering.
 - Thus He will see His offspring and prolong His days.
 - He will accomplish the will of the LORD.
 - He will bear men's iniquities and make many to be accounted as righteous.
 - He will share in the spoils of victory.
 - He bore the sins of many and died for them.
 - He makes intercession for their sins.

Worldwide salvation 54:1 - 55:13

- Zion Restored 54:1-17
 - Here are four pictures of restoration for Zion.
 - V1-3 Children for a barren woman.
 - She who was barren will have many children.
 - She will enlarge the area of her domain.
 - Her offspring will possess the nations.
 - V4-8 Everlasting love for a rejected woman
 - No more shame, disgrace, reproach.
 - The LORD is her husband.
 - Everlasting love and compassion are hers.
 - V9-10 The end of wrath for a guilty woman
 - As in the days of Noah: no more judgment.
 - Steadfast love and covenant of peace forever.
 - V11-17a Untouchable security for a storm-tossed woman
 - Foundations, pinnacles, walls laid and set with precious stones.
 - Children taught by the LORD and at peace.
 - No more oppression, fear, terror, strife.
 - No weapons or words will be effective against her.
 - V17b Summary
 - Refers to all of 54.
 - This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD.
- The Whole World Invited 55:1-13
 - V1-2 Free provision
 - To all who hunger and thirst.
 - Buy and eat without money and without cost.
 - Do not purchase and labor for what does not satisfy.
 - Listen diligently to Me and eat what is good.
 - V3-5 Co-equal citizenship
 - Included in the everlasting Davidic covenant.
 - The nations will come to Zion to seek the LORD.
 - V6-9 The way of salvation
 - Seek the LORD while He may be found.
 - Forsake wickedness.
 - Return to the LORD who will pardon abundantly.
 - His ways are higher than the ways of men.
 - V10-11 The sure word
 - Picture of rain and snow watering the earth and bringing forth a crop.
 - God's word will go forth and will accomplish its purpose.
 - V12-13 Promise of a new world
 - They shall go out in joy and peace.
 - All nature will rejoice.
 - Eden will be restored.
 - The name of the LORD will be displayed forever.

For next week

- The Servant's mission 49:1-13

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