

EXPOSITION OF ISAIAH

Message #71

Isaiah 49:1-13

You cannot expect or receive any salvation from God as a Jew or a Gentile unless you are willing to look squarely at Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ you have a God/Savior who willingly descends to the lowest form of humiliation and then to the highest form of exaltation.

This section in Isaiah is designed to reveal amazing truth about Jesus Christ. F. C. Jennings said when you come to the 49th chapter of Isaiah you come to “the very heart of this book” (*Studies in Isaiah*, p. 568).

In the last nine chapters (40-48), we saw how God predicted that He would raise up Cyrus who would permit Israel to go back to her land to worship God. In the next nine chapters (49-57), God predicts He will send His Servant, Son, Messiah and Savior specifically to Israel to ultimately restore Israel to the land just before the 1000 year Millennium.

In the next two chapters (Isaiah 49-50), God reveals incredible prophecy. God lays out His entire plan and program concerning His Son. The main point to see here is this:

GOD’S SERVANT, MESSIAH, SON AND SAVIOR WILL FIRST COME IN HUMAN FORM TO ISRAEL BUT WILL BE REJECTED, AND SO GOD WILL TAKE HIS SALVATION PROGRAM TO GENTILES AND THEN HE WILL SAVE ISRAEL.

When you carefully analyze these verses, the prophecies are very clear. Israel should have never missed what God revealed here and neither should we. You cannot help but see the fact that when God’s Servant/Savior would come into this world He would initially experienced great humiliation, but eventually He would experience great exaltation.

In the end, both Jews and Gentiles will end up in the Millennium. God’s salvation program for both will come through a suffering Servant/Savior, Jesus Christ.

In this chapter, there are three main prophetic messages:

MESSAGE #1 – God calls the nations of the world to understand His Servant’s First Coming.
49:1-4

In this text, the Lord Jesus Christ calls on nations outside of Israel to listen to Him. When God says in **verse 1** that He wants all people everywhere in the world to “listen” to Him and to “pay attention” to Him, He wants people not just hearing sound; He wants people all over the world to carefully understand His program.

The word “listen” (shamah) means to listen in the sense of carefully understanding what you are hearing and learning (Gesenius, p. 836). The word “pay attention” (qashav) means to perk up your ears as an animal would and zero in on what you are learning (*Ibid.*, p. 746). God is announcing His program that would include Gentiles to the world and He is announcing that program here.

Both verbs are in the imperfect tense, which means God wants people from all over the world continually knowing His program in the present and on into the future . It is the responsibility of God’s people all over the world to not just read words in the Bible, but to understand what those words mean as they connect to the program of God.

Now the specific thing that God calls people from all over the world to see and understand here is information about the Person and Work of Jesus Christ as it relates to Israel and the Gentile world. There are some amazing facts we learn here about Jesus Christ:

Fact #1 - God’s Servant/Savior is God . **49:1**

C. I. Scofield said of Isaiah 48:16 and this section is that this section is one of the clearest of the O.T. passages concerning the Trinity because the speaker is not a prophet, but the LORD, Himself (C. I. Scofield, NASV, p. 984).

The pronoun “Me” is God speaking and this pronoun will be used in regard to the same Person who will be involved in a remarkable connection to this world. Some member of the Godhead would physically come into this world.

Fact #2 - God’s Servant/Savior would be formed and called from the womb. **49:1b**

This text is very clear to point out that a God/Person would actually come to this world in fleshly, human form. This Divine Servant/Savior would be a real human. This clearly implies that God would do something very special through a woman to bring His Son into this world. He would actually form this baby in the womb of a virgin.

It was said by Luke that a baby would be formed in Mary who would be called the Son of the Most High God and would be holy even from the moment of conception (Luke 1:32, 35). What Isaiah clearly reveals here is that God’s program with Israel and with the nations would mean that One from the Godhead would come in human form.

Fact #3 - God’s Servant/Savior would come from and be named while in His mother’s body. **49:1c**

This child was actually named by God while in His mother’s womb. Most parents name their own babies. Not this one. He would be specifically named by God. Again, we know from Luke’s account that Gabriel specifically told Mary that her Son would be named “Jesus” and would be conceived in her womb (Luke 1:31).

Fact #4 - God's Servant/Savior would speak the Word of God through His lips. **49:2a**

Jesus Christ was the Word of God and spoke the living Word of God to the point that people said "never did a man speak the way this man speaks" (John 7:46). We know that this sharp sword has direct connection to the nations and will be used in judgment (Revelation 19:15). According to Hebrews 4:12, the Word of God is so sharp that it cuts open souls and that is precisely what Jesus Christ did.

Fact #5 - God's Servant/Savior would be concealed . **49:2b**

God the Father was actually involved in a process of protecting Jesus Christ and His identity especially from religious Pharisees.

There are two different Hebrew words used in this verse which stress this point. The first word "concealed" means that His identity would be hidden (Gesenius, p. 256). The second word "hidden" means that His identity would be covered or veiled (*Ibid.*, p. 596). Both verbs are in the Hiphil stem which means God would cause His Servant's identity to be somewhat concealed and hidden.

It is intriguing to see that when Jesus Christ was actually here on earth, He praised God that He had hidden His identity from many people and revealed it to weary, heavy-laden sinners (Matthew 11:25-30).

Fact #6 - God's Servant/Savior would be like a sharp arrow . **49:2c**

This Servant would have a ministry that did not look like it was accomplishing much of anything, but it would be quiet and cutting like a sharp arrow.

An arrow shoots one individual. This Savior would aim His work at individuals. He would have a cutting ministry that rips into the hearts of people. It would be penetrating and piercing and it would cut open people and could not be stopped.

Fact #7 - God's Servant/Savior is identified as Israel . **49:3a**

Why would Jesus Christ be identified as Israel? Because God's program first is about Israel and Jesus Christ is the only One who can bring Israel into a proper relationship with God. Many passages stress this very point: Matthew 10:5-6; 15:24; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 3:25-26; 13:46-47; Romans 1:16. God's program was first for Israel and Jesus Christ demonstrated that. We must always remember that "salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22).

Fact #8 - God's Servant/Savior would glorify God in everything He would do. **49:3b**

This Servant/Savior would glorify God in every way. God would glorify Himself through this Servant as no other because no sinful person can glorify God at this level.

Fact #9 - God's Servant/Savior would not see many visible results or receive many rewards. **49:4**

It would almost appear that His work for Israel was futile. He would bring the power of God into the world and it was almost like it was in vain. He was due honor and glory. He was due Divine respect and worship. But He would not get it from the people from His own Jewish family.

Think of the humiliation He suffered: 1) He left heaven; 2) He was born a human; 3) He was put in a manger; 4) He had to submit to sinful human parents; 5) He was run out of His hometown; 6) He had no place on this earth He could call home; 7) His teaching was rejected; 8) His miracles were rejected; 8) He was betrayed; 9) He was bound; 10) He was beaten; 11) He was derided; 12) He was crucified; 13) He was buried. He did all of this with hardly any results.

MESSAGE #2 – God calls the nations of the world to understand His servants Second .
Coming. **49:5-7**

I agree with Dr. McGee in that here is one of the most “remarkable passages in the Word of God” (Vol. 3, p. 303). There are three main facts brought out about this Second Coming:

Fact #1 - God's Servant/Savior will eventually gather up Israel and restore her to God.
49:5-6a

Even though at Christ's First Coming it would appear as though He accomplished nothing in regard to Israel, that will not always be true. Eventually He will display the glory and power of God and He will gather Israel, He will preserve Israel, and He will raise up the twelve tribes of Israel, and He will restore her to her national glory in her land.

That word “preserve” means that God will preserve a remnant from Israel from calamity . Even though Israel will be on the verge of annihilation, God will preserve and protect her. This is amazing Grace, for even though Israel has rejected Jesus Christ He preserves her.

Fact #2 - God's Servant/Savior will take God's salvation to all the earth. **49:6b**

What Israel needs and what all people need is God's salvation. Salvation was first offered to the Jews and then it went to the rest of the world.

When Israel rejected Jesus Christ, it meant that God's program would swing to the Gentiles. God is revealing this some 700 years before Jesus Christ was even born. Paul would pick up on this very point in Romans 11. God broke off His program with Israel to permit His program to swing to the Gentiles.

Fact #3 - God's Servant/Savior will be honored by Israel and all the nations . **49:7**

God will regather Israel, a nation that rejected His Son, and all the rulers of the world will bow down to Him and recognize how important Israel is to God.

MESSAGE #3 – God calls the nation to understand His Servant/Savior’s final program with Israel. **49:8-13**

We really get to look in on a conversation between God the Father and God the Son prior to His incarnation. There are nine amazing facts that God reveals here concerning His final program with Israel.

Fact #1 - God’s Servant/Savior’s prayer will be answered . **49:8a**

Notice something very important here, God’s answers to prayer are in the time and the day of His choosing.

Fact #2 - God’s Servant/Savior’s suffering will be helped . **49:8b**

Fact #3 - God’s Servant/Savior will be kept . **49:8c**

Fact #4 - God’s Servant/Savior is Israel’s covenant . **49:8d**

All of God’s covenantal promises with Israel hinge upon Jesus Christ.

Fact #5 - God’s Servant/Savior will restore Israel’s land . **49:8e**

Fact #6 - God’s Servant/Savior will return Israeli captives to her land. **49:9**

Fact #7 - God’s Servant/Savior will transform Israel’s land into a glorious land. **49:9-11**

There will be real changes in geography and topography of the Promised Land. God will bless the land and the people.

Fact #8 - God’s Servant/Savior will bring people from all over the world . **49:12**

People will come from the north and the west. The reference to Sinim may be a reference to China.

Fact #9 - God’s Servant/Savior will transform the heavens and the earth . **49:13**

The curse will be lifted.

God will comfort His people and He will have compassion on His afflicted people.