

Study 90: Isaiah, Part 46

Isaiah 49 (cont.)

Listen to me, you islands;

hear this, you distant nations:

Before I was born the Lord called me;

from my mother's womb he has spoken my name.

² He made my **mouth like a sharpened sword**,

in the shadow of his hand he hid me;

he made me into a polished arrow

and concealed me in his quiver.

³ He said to me, "**You are my servant**,

Israel, in whom I will display my splendor."

⁴ But I said, "I have labored in vain;

I have spent my strength for nothing at all.

Yet what is due me is in the Lord's hand,

and my reward is with my God."

⁵ And now the Lord says—

he who formed me in the womb to be his servant

to bring Jacob back to him

and gather Israel to himself,

for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord [or: *but Israel would not be gathered*; / *yet I will be*]

and my God has been my strength—

⁶ he says:

"It is too small a thing for you to be my servant

to restore the tribes of Jacob

and bring back those of Israel I have kept.

I will also make you a light for the Gentiles,

that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth."

⁷ This is what the Lord says—

the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel—

to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation,

to the servant of rulers:

"Kings will see you and stand up,

princes will see and bow down [Hebrew: *worship*],

because of the Lord, who is faithful,

the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

⁸ This is what the Lord says:

"In the time of my favor I will answer you,

and in the day of salvation I will help you;

I will keep you and will make you

to be **a covenant for the people**, [cf. **Dan. 9:27**; **Mal. 3:1** calls Him "the messenger of the covenant"]

to restore the land

and to reassign its **desolate** inheritances,

⁹ to say to the captives, 'Come out,'

and to those in darkness, 'Be free!' [symbol of prisoners; cp. **Zech. 9:11**; **Jer. 51:45** and **Rev. 18:4**]

"They will feed beside the roads

and find pasture on every barren hill. [symbol of sheep]

¹⁰ They will neither hunger nor thirst,

nor will the desert heat or the sun beat down on them.

He who has compassion on them will guide them

and lead **them beside springs of water**. [**Ps. 23**]

¹¹ I will turn all my mountains into roads,

and my highways will be raised up. [symbolic leveling of low and high ground]

¹² See, they will come from afar—

some from the north, some from the west,
some from the region of Aswan [location uncertain; Masoretic Text: *Sinim*].”

¹³ Shout for joy, you **heavens**;
rejoice, you **earth**; [Cp. **Deut. 4:26; 30:19, 28; 32:1; 1 Chron. 16:31; 2 Pet. 3:7, 10, 13; Rev. 20:11; 21:1**]
burst into song, you mountains!

For the Lord comforts his people
and will have compassion on his afflicted ones.

¹⁴ But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me,
the Lord has forgotten me.”

¹⁵ “Can a mother forget the baby at her breast
and have no compassion on the child she has borne?
Though she may forget,
I will not forget you!

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

¹⁷ Your children hasten back,
and those who laid you waste depart from you.

¹⁸ Lift up your eyes and look around;
all your children gather and come to you.
As surely as I live,” declares the Lord,
“you will wear them all as ornaments;
you will put them on, like a **bride**. [the symbol of the bride is used for God’s people throughout the prophets]

¹⁹ “Though **you were ruined and made desolate
and your land laid waste**, [the “abomination of desolation”]
now you will be too small for your people,
and those who devoured you will be far away.

²⁰ The children born during your bereavement
will yet say in your hearing,
‘This place is too small for us;
give us more space to live in.’

²¹ Then you will say in your heart,
‘Who bore me these?
I was bereaved and barren;
I was exiled and rejected.
Who brought these up?
I was left all alone,
but these—where have they come from?’”

²² This is what the Sovereign Lord says:
“See, I will beckon to the **nations** [Hebrew: *Gentiles*],
I will lift up my banner to the peoples;
they will bring your sons in their arms
and carry your daughters on their hips.

²³ Kings will be your foster fathers,
and their queens your nursing mothers.
They will bow down before you with their faces to the ground;
they will lick the dust at your feet.
Then you will know that I am the Lord;
those who hope in me will not be disappointed.”

²⁴ Can plunder [Hebrew: *prey*] be taken from warriors [Hebrew: *the mighty*],
or captives be rescued from the fierce [Hebrew: *lawful*]?
²⁵ But this is what the Lord says:
“Yes, captives will be taken from warriors,
and plunder retrieved from the fierce [Hebrew: *terrible*];
I will contend with those who contend with you, [cp. **2 Thess. 1:6**]
and your children I will save.

²⁶ **I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh;**

they will be drunk on their own blood, as with wine. [Cp. Deut. 28:53-57; Rev. 17:6]

Then all mankind will know

that I, the Lord, am your **Savior**,

your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”