

## Isaiah 48B-49

- Tonight we transition from the Father to the Son in the three part division of Second Isaiah
  - Remember that chapter 48 as a whole is a summary of chapters 40-47
  - The remainder of this chapter forms a transition to our next section on the Son
    - And as part of that transition, we find the clearest statement of the Trinity in the Old Testament

[Is. 48:12](#) ¶ "Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called;  
I am He, I am the first, I am also the last.

[Is. 48:13](#) "Surely My hand founded the earth,  
And My right hand spread out the heavens;  
When I call to them, they stand together.

[Is. 48:14](#) " Assemble, all of you, and listen!  
Who among them has declared these things?  
The LORD loves him; he will carry out His good pleasure on Babylon,  
And His arm will be against the Chaldeans.

[Is. 48:15](#) "I, even I, have spoken; indeed I have called him,  
I have brought him, and He will make his ways successful.

[Is. 48:16](#) " Come near to Me, listen to this:  
From the first I have not spoken in secret,  
From the time it took place, I was there.  
And now the Lord GOD has sent Me, and His Spirit."

- Some of these opening verses are familiar, since they are a summary of God's sovereignty
  - God, the One speaking in these verses, is the first and the last
    - He is the One Who called Israel
    - He is the One Who created the universe
    - He is one (v.14) Who has spoken the future to the nations, meaning He is the one Who knows and controls the future
      - God "loves" him, meaning Cyrus
      - He uses Cyrus to accomplish His purpose
      - He makes Cyrus successful because God has that control

- So in these descriptions, we see a single voice throughout
  - Speaking in the first person about all He has done
  - Who exactly is speaking?
    - To the Hebrew, it was God, the Lord, Yhwh
  - But in v.16 the Speaker is revealed to be Someone other than God the Father
- V.16 says that now the Lord God (Yhwh in Hebrew) sent Me and His Spirit
  - The reference to “now” points us forward to the future day of the Messiah’s arrival
    - Clearly there are three persons mentioned in that verse
    - And the One speaking has been the one accomplishing everything through the earlier verses
    - It’s been the One sent Who has been the Author of creation and the One speaking to the nations
  - Who was that?
  - Consider these NT teachings

[Col. 1:15](#) ¶ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

[Col. 1:16](#) For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him.

[John 1:1](#) ¶ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

[John 1:2](#) He was in the beginning with God.

[John 1:3](#) All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

- Scripture tells us that the Son is the One Who performed the act of Creation
  - And we remember it took place through a spoken word (“Let there be light.”)
    - And the Son is the Word, the expression of the Father into the creation

- Here Isaiah is confirming that truth hundreds of years before Christ was incarnate
- So clearly now Isaiah is transition our focus away from the Father and toward His suffering Son

[Is. 48:17](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel,  
 “I am the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit,  
 Who leads you in the way you should go.

[Is. 48:18](#) “If only you had paid attention to My commandments!  
 Then your well-being would have been like a river,  
 And your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

[Is. 48:19](#) “Your descendants would have been like the sand,  
 And your offspring like its grains;  
 Their name would never be cut off or destroyed from My presence.”

[Is. 48:20](#) ¶ Go forth from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans!  
 Declare with the sound of joyful shouting, proclaim this,  
 Send it out to the end of the earth;  
 Say, “The LORD has redeemed His servant Jacob.”

[Is. 48:21](#) They did not thirst when He led them through the deserts.  
 He made the water flow out of the rock for them;  
 He split the rock and the water gushed forth.

[Is. 48:22](#) “There is no peace for the wicked,” says the LORD.

- Now the Lord ends the chapter by summoning up the problem
  - God has lead them into the proper way, the way of righteousness
    - But they didn’t follow
      - Notice that God doesn’t address why they didn’t or couldn’t follow
      - There’s no discussion of the incurable sin nature of man
    - God simply states the fundamental truth
      - He gave them the Law which defined righteousness
      - And the Jewish nation didn’t follow it
- But if they had followed His commandments, then they would have been righteous
  - And righteousness would naturally bring certain results

- Their well-being would have been like a river, a never ending supply
    - Their righteousness would have been like waves, also unceasing
  - This is a fundamental truth of Scripture
    - To keep God's commandments in the full sense (i.e., in action, word and thought), would bring both righteousness and well-being
    - Again, God is not suggesting that such an outcome was ever possible
    - He's just affirm the basic truth of what would follow were the nation to follow God in perfection
- But the fact that Israel didn't follow in this way led to consequences, as sin always does
  - For example, the Jewish nation has been in existence as long or longer than any currently existing nation
    - Yet today there are only roughly 14 million Jews
    - Normal reproduction rates should have resulted in hundreds of millions of Jews
      - That's what God means in v.19
      - Instead, wars, disease, famine and other calamities have combined to keep the Jewish population under the threat of extinction for most of it's existence
      - Yet it has survived
    - God is indicating here that Israel's disobedience under the covenant of the Law is the reasons for its historical place of misery and weakness in the world
      - This same truth is pictured in the story of Ruth (see Ruth course)
- But now God is moving His plan for Israel forward, so Isaiah declares (in advance again) that it is time for Israel to leave Babylon
  - Declare that the Lord freed us from Babylon

- Interestingly, Isaiah declares that the fleeing Israelites would find water provided for them gushing out of rocks in the desert
  - This is the only reference to this event
  - It's not recorded in Ezra or Nehemiah
- The similarities to the Exodus story suggest to us a similar message
  - The exodus from Egypt was a picture of God setting His people free from bondage
  - Likewise, the return from Babylon was another release from bondage
    - God making clear that He protects His people and brings them out according to His plan and purpose
- But in contrast to God's care for His people, the wicked never find that peace
  - Remember we said each of the three sections ends with this single verse declaring the fate for the wicked
    - Just like the parables Jesus taught would sometimes end with a single verse contrasting the outcome for the righteous with that for the unrighteous
  - This is our clue that the first section has ended
- Now on to part 2 of Second Isaiah, the Suffering Servant
  - Since we know we're talking about the Messiah and His suffering on the cross, then we know this entire section is a far prophecy
    - Isaiah is looking into the distant future from his day
    - The point of this section is HOW the Lord will accomplish the pardoning He promised in the early section
      - He does it through a sacrifice of His Son
  - The organization of this section is fairly easy to see
    - Chapter 49 is the calling of the Servant (His mission)
    - Chapters 50-51 is the suffering of the Servant
    - Chapters 52-53 the death of the Servant

[Is. 49:1](#) ¶ Listen to Me, O islands,  
 And pay attention, you peoples from afar.  
 The LORD called Me from the womb;  
 From the body of My mother He named Me.

[Is. 49:2](#) He has made My mouth like a sharp sword,  
 In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me;  
 And He has also made Me a select arrow,  
 He has hidden Me in His quiver.

[Is. 49:3](#) He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel,  
 In Whom I will show My glory."

[Is. 49:4](#) But I said, "I have toiled in vain,  
 I have spent My strength for nothing and vanity;  
 Yet surely the justice due to Me is with the LORD,  
 And My reward with My God."

[Is. 49:5](#) ¶ And now says the LORD, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant,  
 To bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him  
 (For I am honored in the sight of the LORD,  
 And My God is My strength),

[Is. 49:6](#) He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant  
 To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel;  
 I will also make You a light of the nations  
 So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

[Is. 49:7](#) Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One,  
 To the despised One,  
 To the One abhorred by the nation,  
 To the Servant of rulers,  
 "Kings will see and arise,  
 Princes will also bow down,  
 Because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen  
 You."

- Notice as we begin part 2 that Someone is speaking in the first person
  - It's the same Person Who was speaking at the end of chapter 48
    - The Messiah speaking of His own situation
    - And the discussion is a discouraging one for Him
  - Notice the details
    - He will come from a womb, called by the Father (v.1)
    - He was named before He was born (v.1) in the mother's womb
    - Both Isaiah 7:14 and Matt 1:21 show this fulfilled

- By the way, though the OT often mentioned the coming Messiah's mother, it never mentions the father (because there will be no earthly father)
  - He has the power to deliver truth and judgment with His words
  - He receives special protection from the Father and His identity is concealed until the Father chooses to reveal it for a purpose (v.2)
- He is a Servant, but the Father calls Him Israel
  - What does it mean that Isaiah uses the name "Israel" to describe this Servant?
    - Could we look at this entire passage and conclude that perhaps the discussion is really about Israel the nation and not the Messiah?
      - For example, looking farther down the text we come to v. 14 where the Person speaking refers to Himself as "Zion"
      - Zion means Jerusalem, so we might assume that the one speaking here is actually Israel rather than the Messiah
    - We can dismiss this view easily by looking at the passage again
      - First, look at vs.5-6
      - This Person is also described as the One Who will bring Jacob back to God
      - And in v.6 He is the One Who will raise up Jacob and preserve Israel
    - Clearly, the One doing these things for Israel and Israel itself can't be the same Person or entity
  - So how do we explain God's naming of Jesus as "Israel" or "Zion" in this passage?
    - Two reasons and perhaps others
      - First, the Messiah is a Jew and embodies all that Israel should be to God
        - Law keeping, honoring to God and serving God

- In that sense, the Messiah will be the truest expression of an Israelite
- Secondly, the name Israel means a prince with God, which is an accurate description of the Messiah
- Through these verses, we begin to see a new picture
  - Israel the nation was a picture of sorts of the Messiah Himself
  - Only Israel is the failure to fulfill what only the Messiah Himself could fulfill
  - A perfect sinless servant of God ruling with Him
    - Israel was called to be this servant, but couldn't fulfill it in its own power
    - The Messiah fulfills it and then restore Israel so she can accomplish it in the Kingdom
- Going further, the Messiah's discouragement is evident in v.4a where He says He toiled or worked in vain
  - This references the inability to persuade Israel to receive their Messiah in His earthly ministry
    - And His strength was spent for "nothing"
  - But the second half of the verse clarifies that the reward for His work isn't found in the day His work was accomplished
    - The reward comes later "with God"
    - This prophecy fits perfectly with Christ's suffering on the cross followed by His ascension to the right hand of God
  - Finally, the passage ends with references to Christ's ultimate mission
    - To bring Israel back to God, to raise up Jacob
    - And in v.6 the Father says as if restoring Israel weren't honor enough, He will grant the Son the opportunity to be a light to the nations (Gentiles) as well
- Salvation reaches to the ends of the earth

- This is the basis for John 1 where Christ is described as the light of the world
  - John was likely referencing this passage
- Also, the Hebrew for salvation is only one letter different than the name of Jesus - yeshuah vs. Yeshua
- He is the Salvation that goes to the ends of the earth
  - So though He is despised in the eyes of the nation (Israel) in v.7
    - Nevertheless, all kings and princes will bow to this Lord of Lords, chosen by God to be the Holy One of Israel
    - In that one verse you have the entire career of the Messiah
      - He is despised in His first coming
      - But just as assuredly He will be recognized as King of kings in Second Coming
- Notice all the parallels to Jesus of Nazareth
  - It's almost amazing that the disciples didn't understand the need for the Messiah to die until He explained all these things in Luke 24
    - Perhaps it's a stretch, but consider that so much was available to them in their OT yet they were ignorant of it to a large degree
      - Are we in danger of similar mistakes today?
      - Remaining willfully ignorant of what God has purposely provided in His word?
    - What will we miss in the events of today because we didn't take time to understand scripture?
    - How will that ignorance impact our service to Christ?

[Is. 49:8](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD,  
 "In a favorable time I have answered You,  
 And in a day of salvation I have helped You;  
 And I will keep You and give You for a covenant of the people,  
 To restore the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritages;

[Is. 49:9](#) Saying to those who are bound, 'Go forth,'  
 To those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.'  
 Along the roads they will feed,  
 And their pasture will be on all bare heights.

[Is. 49:10](#) "They will not hunger or thirst,  
 Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down;  
 For He who has compassion on them will lead them  
 And will guide them to springs of water.

[Is. 49:11](#) "I will make all My mountains a road,  
 And My highways will be raised up.

[Is. 49:12](#) "Behold, these will come from afar;  
 And lo, these will come from the north and from the west,  
 And these from the land of Sinim."

[Is. 49:13](#) Shout for joy, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth!  
 Break forth into joyful shouting, O mountains!  
 For the LORD has comforted His people  
 And will have compassion on His afflicted.

- Now we see the mission or purpose of the call in full view
  - At an appointed time that the Father sets, the Messiah will become a salvation for Israel
    - He will become a covenant for His people
      - The people are Israel
      - The covenant is the New Covenant given in Jeremiah 31:31

[Jer. 31:31](#) ¶ "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

[Jer. 31:32](#) not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

[Jer. 31:33](#) "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

[Jer. 31:34](#) "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

- Notice this is a covenant with Israel
  - It will arrive at them living the Law perfectly (they are no longer sinful)

- They will all know the Lord
  - No Jew in that day will be left behind
  - All are “saved” and all are regenerated into a new body
- Isaiah says this is a day the Father appoints
  - Speaking of the moment of His return, Christ says:

[Matt. 24:36](#) ¶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

- How does the Father alone know this? Because the Father alone determines it
  - As Isaiah 49:8 the Father says it will be day and a favorable time that this will occur
  - Though we don’t know when it happens, we do see it described in Zech 12
  - When the Jews of Tribulation receive the Holy Spirit and call out upon the name of Christ
- At that moment, Jesus becomes a covenant to the people (to Israel)
  - The remaining verses describe the effects of that moment
    - The Messianic Kingdom and Israel’s glory
    - Things we’ve seen already

[Is. 49:14](#) ¶ But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me,  
And the Lord has forgotten me.”

[Is. 49:15](#) “Can a woman forget her nursing child  
And have no compassion on the son of her womb?  
Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.

[Is. 49:16](#) “Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands;  
Your walls are continually before Me.

[Is. 49:17](#) “Your builders hurry;  
Your destroyers and devastators  
Will depart from you.

[Is. 49:18](#) “Lift up your eyes and look around;  
All of them gather together, they come to you.  
As I live,” declares the LORD,  
“You will surely put on all of them as jewels and bind them on as a bride.

[Is. 49:19](#) "For your waste and desolate places and your destroyed land —  
Surely now you will be too cramped for the inhabitants,  
And those who swallowed you will be far away.

[Is. 49:20](#) "The children of whom you were bereaved will yet say in your ears,  
'The place is too cramped for me;  
Make room for me that I may live here.'

[Is. 49:21](#) "Then you will say in your heart,  
'Who has begotten these for me,  
Since I have been bereaved of my children  
And am barren, an exile and a wanderer?  
And who has reared these?  
Behold, I was left alone;  
From where did these come?'"

[Is. 49:22](#) ¶ Thus says the Lord GOD,  
"Behold, I will lift up My hand to the nations  
And set up My standard to the peoples;  
And they will bring your sons in their bosom,  
And your daughters will be carried on their shoulders.

[Is. 49:23](#) "Kings will be your guardians,  
And their princesses your nurses.  
They will bow down to you with their faces to the earth  
And lick the dust of your feet;  
And you will know that I am the LORD;  
Those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame.

[Is. 49:24](#) ¶ "Can the prey be taken from the mighty man,  
Or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?"

[Is. 49:25](#) Surely, thus says the LORD,  
"Even the captives of the mighty man will be taken away,  
And the prey of the tyrant will be rescued;  
For I will contend with the one who contends with you,  
And I will save your sons.

[Is. 49:26](#) "I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh,  
And they will become drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine;  
And all flesh will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior  
And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

- The first half of this chapter described the call of the Messiah from the Messiah's perspective
  - The second half turns to viewing that same calling and purpose from Israel's perspective
    - We will run through these verses quickly because they are largely a repetition of things we have already studied in Isaiah

- Verses 14-18 describe Israel's plight while they are outside their land and their city
  - And God answers them by saying a mother can't forget her own child
  - And God won't forget the child He birthed in Israel
- He has inscribed Israel's name on His palms
  - And Jerusalem's walls are always before God or constantly have God's attention
    - Later in Isaiah God says that these walls are so important to Him that He has permanently stationed angels upon them
    - Arnold Fruchtenbam tells this anecdote:

Around the walls of Jerusalem to this day there are angelic beings standing upon them. One of my favorite pastimes when I am in Jerusalem is to walk around the walls of [the city]. It is about a 2.5 mile walk...I am always conscious that on those walls are angelic messengers. They only have one ministry as angelic beings. They sit upon the walls of Jerusalem and they are God's remembrances. Their ministry is [to demonstrate that God is continually mindful] of Jerusalem [and His promises to Jerusalem.]

- Going on, God promises to restore the city and the people
  - At a future time, the city will feel cramped because so many Jews will return
    - We see that situation even beginning today
- In v.21 the Jews will even question how it was that they could suddenly find their way back into their land after so long an exile
  - The answer is in v.22...the Gentile nations will make it possible
    - This has also begun already
    - The Gentile nations made a way possible for political Israel to emerge in 1948
    - And nations like the US and others have made it possible for Jewish refugees to leave other countries and go to Israel from around the world

- Ultimately in v.23 the call of the Messiah arrives at Israel becoming the chief nation of the earth as promised
  - And the nation of Israel will rise victorious over all of their oppressors
- Consider this...these prophecies culminate in the arriving Messiah and the triumph of Israel in their Kingdom
  - And they begin with the nation regathering in their land (vs.19-22)
    - Well, since the regathering has already started, how far away do you think Christ's return will be from today?
    - Are we living with a full awareness that we may only have a few years or decades before this age comes to an end?