# The Suffering Servant

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday April 2nd, 2023

Text: Isaiah 42; 49; 50

## Intro

1. One of the ways God established His supreme Deity & that His word was truth was by prophecy.
2. In Acts 8 Philip runs up to the chariot of the Ethiopian Eunuch as directed by God, and finds him reading Isaiah 53 and from there began preaching to him Jesus (The Suffering Servant).
3. God, through Isaiah, gives us a clear picture of what was to happen, not only in the immediate future for Israel, but how God was going to bring the Messiah, His “Suffering Servant” into the world.
   1. Isaiah's immediate discussion in chapters 40 through 66 is the Babylonian captivity and the reasons for it, and finally the restoration from it.
   2. However, there was going to be a greater deliverance than that from Babylon, and there would be a greater “Messiah” (means “Anointed”) than Cyrus (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1: “Shepherd,” “Anointed”).
4. Let us look at 3 of the 4 “Servant Passages” pertaining to Jesus in Isaiah and see how God rolled out His plan for the salvation of mankind hundreds of years before it happened.
5. We will examine the first three “Servant of the Lord” passages in Isaiah!
   * 1. **The Servant Has A Mission (Isaiah 42:1-7)**

#### Who is it that God upholds, chooses, delights in and gives His spirit to?

1. A servant!
2. God rejects demagogues and overlords and chooses a servant!
3. Jesus applies these verses to Himself (Matthew 12:15-21).
   * + 1. The Servant was to be chosen by God (Isaiah 42:1).
4. Not just anyone could perform this task.
5. God would delight in this One (Matthew 3:17; 17:5).
6. A demonstration of the delight the Father would have on Him was the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Him *(John 1:29-34*; Luke 4:18).
   * + 1. He stands in sharp contrast with worldly conquerors (Isaiah 42:2).
7. The Servant's demeanor is different than that of ordinary men.
8. Jesus did not enter into violent disputes with false teachers.
9. Jesus used the power of words (Matthew 7:28-29).
10. “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks” *(Jn. 7:46).*
    * + 1. Jesus would have pity on their low estate (Isaiah 42:3; Matthew 9:36).
11. He would not crush men, nor quench their spirit.
12. He would not bind burdens hard to bear like the Pharisees *(Mt 23:4; Acts 15:5,10).*
13. The Beatitudes are a wonderful expression of this *(Matthew 5:1-12).*
14. His invitation states His burden is light *(Matthew 11:28-30:” Come unto Me all who are weary”).*
    * + 1. There is an implied difficulty—but the Servant will prevail (Isaiah 42:4).
15. His mission is to the “coastlands” or the “islands” (Matthew 12:17-21).
16. Though He would face opposition (difficulty) He would succeed!
17. In Christ, all nations have hope! *(Gal. 3:7-14: Christ fulfilled the promise to Abraham!)*
    * + 1. The “Servant” would establish justice, would be a “covenant” to the people, be a light to the nations, open blind eyes, and set captives free! (Isaiah 42:6-7)
           1. Matthew 11:2-6: Jesus tells John’s disciples to report what they heard! (Isaiah 61:1-2)
           2. Jesus is the “Light of the World!” (John 8:12) and sets the captive free (Luke 4:18; Rom. 6:16-18: Freed from sin; John 8:31-32).
        2. The “Servant of the Lord” had a mission and would accomplish it!
      1. **The Servant Has Great Difficulties In His Mission (Isaiah 49:1-9)**
         1. The “Servant” is the speaker in these verses.
18. He did not take this duty upon Himself.
19. The Lord called Him into this service.
20. Again, the “coastlands” are invited to listen *(Isaiah 49:1)*.
21. The Lord knew His Servant from His mother's womb—this rules out the possibility of the Servant being the nation of Israel *(Isaiah 49:1).*
    * + 1. The Servant was to “restore the preserved ones of Israel” (Isaiah 49:6).
22. Christ is the light to the Gentiles (Matthew 4:12-17; Luke 2:32: Simeon said Jesus was the fulfillment to Isaiah 49:6 as Light to the Gentiles; Isaiah 9:1-2; *Acts 13:46-48; 26:23).*
    1. Jesus reminded the Canaanite woman that He had been sent to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:22-24).
    2. When the disciples were sent out on the “limited commission” they were explicitly told not to go to the Gentiles (Matthew 10:5-6).
    3. In the “great commission” they were sent to all the nations (Matthew 28:19-20).
       * 1. The Servant would be “abhorred” by the Jews (Isaiah 49:7):
            1. Luke 23:18-23: The culmination of this hatred is seen by the Jews requesting Barabbas to be released, who was an insurrectionist (ironically what they charged Jesus with – Luke 23:14) and a murderer, and called out for Jesus to be crucified!
            2. Phil. 2:9-11: But one day…Every knee will bow & confess Jesus as Lord.
         2. The servant would set the captives free (Isaiah 49:8-9)
            1. This was the mission of Jesus and He said another prophecy from Isaiah (Isaiah 61:1-2) was fulfilled in their hearing in Luke 4:18-19.
            2. Paul quotes from Psalm 68:18 in Ephesians 4:8 where it also says Jesus would set the captives free.
            3. Jesus said He came to “seek and save the lost” in Luke 19:10, and in His blood we are made free! (Ephesians 1:7; Romans 6:16-18, 22-23)
         3. Despite the difficulties of the mission, the “Servant” would prevail!
       1. **The Servant Will Suffer (Isaiah 50:4-10)**
          1. Having shown the omnipotence of God and thus the sure fulfillment of His promises, Isaiah introduces the Suffering Servant to prepare us for what was coming in Isaiah 53.
          2. This passage was fulfilled by Jesus (Matthew 27:26; Luke 9:22; 17:25; 22:15, 63-65; 24:44-46: “The Christ would suffer” but fulfill all things in the Law, prophets and the Psalms; Acts 3:18).
             1. Servants of God have always had difficulty (Matthew 5:10-12).
             2. The Servant would not flee like Jonah (Isaiah 50:5; *Jonah 1:3) –* Your will be done! (Mt. 26:39)
             3. The nation that spurned YHWH in the OT spurned Jesus in the NT.
          3. The striking language of Isaiah 50:6 calls to mind the suffering of our Lord before His journey to the cross (Matthew 26:67-68; 27:26-31).
          4. No reason is given in this section of Scripture for His suffering—we are left to wonder why He had to suffer.
23. Others would desert Him as He continued His work, but the one who vindicates Him is always near (Isaiah 50:8; John 8:29; 16:32).
24. He would be vindicated by the Lord (Romans 1:1-7).
    * + 1. The Suffering Servant of the Lord had a mission and would suffer in fulfilling it!

## Conclusion

* 1. While Isaiah 50 tells us the Servant will suffer, it does not tell us the purpose, but that is revealed later and we will examine Isaiah 53 in part 2.
  2. We know that He suffered and died for our sins (I Peter 2:21-25), but it is made all the more amazing by the fact that we are told He would hundreds of years before His time (Isaiah 53:5-8)!
  3. By knowing these Scriptures we can, like Philip, preach Jesus and His mission! *(Acts 8:30-35)*
  4. He suffered for you and me, for His friends as well as His enemies!
  5. Have you obeyed His word?
  6. If not a Christian, need to be. He died for you and paid your debt. Repent & be baptized!
  7. If a Christian, examine your life and see whether you are living for Him daily or for yourself.
  8. Whatever your request, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!