

1. Intro

- a. The gap between last week and this week is large, about 70 years. By the time the exile has ended, Isaiah has died, and nearly all the people who entered into exile have died with him. All who remain are the generations of offspring that entered into exile, included Isaiah's prophetic disciples who opened his sealed documents, which proved him a true prophet. In this section, the LORD puts his people on trial for how they have disregarded him during the exile. In the LORD's defense, he again attempts to comfort his people on the basis of his own sovereignty. If they believed the LORD was truly sovereign, they would have experienced rest and peace in the midst of challenges. In the face of Israel's continued rejection, this section concludes with the LORD announcing he will declare a new plan that has never before been revealed. Since Isaiah is dead, it is important to note that who is speaking is sometimes confusing. In this section, we often will find the speaker to be as Dr. Mackie puts it, "a mysterious 'I.'" Unless the text specifically says who is speaking, it is a safe assumption to ascribe the speaker to this mysterious "I" who we will meet more descriptively in the next section.

2. Tracking the Servant

- a. 41:8
  - i. But you Israel, my servant who I took from the ends of the earth
  - ii. Contrast with how the nations react to Cyrus
  - iii. Servant is the Nation-Israel
- b. 41:10-20
  - i. The LORD speaks to Servant-Nation-Israel, invoking Abraham covenant and promising to be with them
- c. 42:1-4
  - i. The servant is anointed with the Spirit, silent to accusations
  - ii. Servant given distinction with the LORD's Spirit
  - iii. Notice the pronouns in vs.1-4 vs. 5-9
- d. 42:18-20
  - i. Servant-Nation-Israel still blind and deaf
- e. 42:6-7
  - i. Task for Servant-Nation-Israel:
    - 1. Light to the nations
    - 2. Open eyes of the blind
    - 3. Bring out prisoners from dungeon/prison/darkness
- f. 42:22-24
  - i. But this is a people [Israel] looted and hidden in prisons
  - ii. The LORD gave them up to be looted because they sinned, but they did not understand the judgment or take it to heart
- g. 43:8
  - i. The LORD tells Servant-Nation-Israel to bring out the blind/deaf
- h. 43:10-12
  - i. Servant-Nation-Israel is to be a Witness, contrasted with the call on the witnesses for the idols to make their case

- ii. The reason the LORD has chosen Servant-Witness-Nation-Israel is to prove there is no other God
  - i. 43:17-19
    - i. The LORD quenches wicks unlike the servant in 42:3
    - ii. The LORD is doing a new thing
  - j. 44:1
    - i. Nation-Israel is the LORD's Servant
  - k. 44:4-5
    - i. Abraham covenant continues through the Servant-Nation-Israel
  - l. 44:8
    - i. Servant-Nation-Israel affirmed as witnesses to the claim that the LORD truly is the LORD
  - m. 44:9-20
    - i. The witnesses for the idols are put to shame
  - n. 44:21-22
    - i. The LORD has blotted out Servant-Nation-Israel's sins
  - o. 44:26
    - i. LORD confirms the word of the servant and counsel of messengers regarding Jerusalem, Judah, the waters, Cyrus, and the temple
  - p. 45:1-7
    - i. Cyrus has been "anointed" for the sake of Servant-Nation-Israel
  - q. 48:1-11
    - i. The LORD is going to do a new thing in response to Servant-Nation-Israel's continued idolatry
    - ii. The LORD's glory will not be given to another, cf. 42:8
  - r. 48:12
    - i. Beginning of a New Servant takes over, affirmed in 48:16, 49:3-5
  - s. 49:3
    - i. New Servant is named Israel
  - t. 49:6
    - i. Servant-New-Israel's task of bringing back the remnant is not enough
    - ii. Servant-New-Israel's task involves going out to the nations
  - u. 50:4-5
    - i. Servant-New-Israel is obedient to the LORD
  - v. 50:10
    - i. Servant-New-Israel demands obedience
  - w. 52:13-53:12
    - i. "Us" speaker who claim the Servant-New-Israel as their own
    - ii. Descriptions of Servant-New-Israel taking on "our" sins, dying for them, yet living after being dead to see the result of his dying
  - x. 54:17
    - i. The heritage of the servantS of the LORD—the "us"
3. Read Isaiah 40:1-8
- a. Following this message of comfort flowing from an end to turmoil and forgiveness of sins, we have a voice from the wilderness announcing the

way of the LORD through a highway, which we have seen at various key points in Isaiah refer specifically to an act of great deliverance

- b. With this announcement, there will be a new creation or something is going to happen to significantly alter the geography of creation; in either case, this language is also consistent with key points in Isaiah that refer specifically to the aftermath of an act of great deliverance
  - c. Following this new or restored creation, the glory of the LORD is going to be revealed to all flesh. This point has not been emphasized as much as the previous two, but we have seen on at least two occasions that the place the nations will stream, Zion, is where the savior-king, the Holy One of Israel, sits—a throne of glory
  - d. We associate this with John the Baptist in Matt. 3, where Matthew says explicitly that John's preaching fulfilled this passage and what John was announcing was the coming of the Kingdom of God.
    - i. This is not fulfilled by John the Baptist simply because he came from the wilderness, but it was because of what he was preaching.
    - ii. The combination of three key elements in Isaiah—the highway that enables the nations to stream to Zion to receive the instruction of the LORD, the new or restored creation, and the sight of the Holy One of Israel sitting in glory—this is the Kingdom of God
  - e. Here also, the word of the LORD is contrasted with the withering and fading plants—the breath of the LORD causes the withering and fading.
    - i. This imagery of the word or breath of the LORD causing living things to wither in contrast to its own inability to wither – hold onto this concept for a few minutes
4. Read Isaiah 40:9-17
- a. This is not as harsh as it initially comes across to be
    - i. The chapter opens with instructions to speak tenderly—this is not to be spoken out of anger, this is the announcement of comfort!
    - ii. This is also supposed to be good news; the ESV has a footnote, which in my opinion is a better translation
    - iii. This is not a harsh condemnation, but a wakeup call; peace, rest, comfort all begin by rightly recognizing the sovereignty of the LORD
5. Read Isaiah 40:18-26
- a. Science-related claims that aim to further explain the LORD's sovereignty
    - i. The LORD sits above the *circle of the earth*
    - ii. The LORD *stretches out the heavens*
      1. The LORD does this to provide a place of dwelling for the grasshopper-like inhabitants of the earth
  - b. The LORD is sovereign in which rulers rule or are brought to nothing
  - c. Return to this thought—it is the breath of the LORD that causes the rulers who are planted to wither away
    - i. Not if he blows on them, but when... there is no coequal to God
6. Read Isaiah 40:27-31

- a. Verse 27 kicks off with Israel's complaint against the LORD—he has disregarded Israel. This will be the basis for the trial scene beginning in the next chapter.
  - b. The LORD's response to their complaint is a very popular passage
    - i. Following generations of exile, the message God sent to comfort his people ends by continuing this train of thought on the sovereignty of God
    - ii. Following the exile, where Israel became faint and weary, those who wait on the LORD—those who put their hope in the LORD's control of everything that is happening—will be renewed.
    - iii. When you rest and trust in the sovereignty of God, which is not what these Israelites have been doing during the exile, you will not become weary or faint; you won't need to turn to idols for comfort because the sovereignty of God is your comfort
    - iv. In my theology of spiritual disciplines class, the professor asked us to reflect on the usefulness of prayer in light of our position on the sovereignty of God. It is for some a troubling question, but let me reverse it for you: if God is not sovereign, what good is it to pray? If God is not sovereign, we could pray the most holy and righteous prayers, and he would have no control to answer them in any such way. Instead, we have a sovereign God who invites us to pray to him, and without opening a theological can of worms, there are several passages in Scripture that indicate that God changes his mind on things that have not been ordained or decreed such as a covenant. His sovereignty, the notion that he *is* in control and can actually answer us according to his plan, should be reason enough to prompt us to pray.
7. Read Isaiah 41:1-7
- a. In the opening scene of the trial, the LORD describes what he did to Israel—it was therefore not neglect but appointed judgment
  - b. All these nations are afraid of the outworking of the LORD, and they band together to attempt to prop each other up
  - c. We will learn more about Cyrus at the end of ch.44
8. Read Isaiah 41:8-20
- a. Hold this thought, which is a crucial starting point we will expand on every week for the next five weeks: the LORD's servant is Israel
  - b. But the LORD will prop up Israel with his right hand
  - c. Three "fear not" statements related to how the LORD is going to use Israel to carry out his anger toward those who mistreat Israel
  - d. The LORD is also going to take care of the poor and needy
  - e. According to verse 20, for what purpose does this all happen?
9. Read Isaiah 41:21-29
- a. According to this passage, why are idols useless?
10. Read Isaiah 42:1-9
- a. The LORD's servant has the Spirit rest on him and will execute justice
  - b. This servant will not grow faint or weary

- c. The LORD gives his glory to this servant??
  - d. Pronoun switch—ESV acknowledges this in the footnotes, in verse 6, the four “you’s” are all singular. We could make something of this, but we have seen Israel sometimes referred to in the singular as a single nation, but in light of what is to come, this is setting the stage for a transition
  - e. Servant Israel—light to the nations—is going to open the blind eyes—so there is a shift from before when they were intentionally separated from knowing the plan of the LORD to now when the LORD will declare new things to them before they happen. Israel as Servant is going to know what they previously were prevented from knowing.
11. Read Isaiah 42:10-17
- a. Following a song of praise over the LORD’s sovereignty, the mysterious “I” announces he or it will lead and guide the blind down an unknown path
  - b. Ends with brief return to idolatry, just in case they weren’t paying attention
12. \*Read Isaiah 42:18-25
- a. Servant Israel is still blind and still deaf to the LORD’s instruction even after the exile
    - i. The LORD said he would make them blind and deaf, and he did
    - ii. Now the blind, deaf servant is itself in need of the servant’s task
  - b. The exile has left them plundered and looted, hidden in prison
    - i. The LORD just instructed the servant in 42:7 to open the eyes of the blind and bring out the prisoners from the prison, or darkness, or dungeon
    - ii. This is confusing!
    - iii. Who is responsible for this? Vs.24
    - iv. Why? Vs.24-25
  - c. The LORD is about to announce a new thing—they need to get their act together or they risk missing another generation of prophecy
  - d. Vs.25 – Mackie: The initial proclamation of God to the heavenly council is announcing that the divine plan from 6:10-13 has now advanced to the last step. Israel experienced the first “chopping of the tree” with Assyria’s attack, leaving the tenth. The Babylonian exile brought the burning to that tenth, and the next step is for the holy seed to emerge and blossom into the escaped remnant promised in 37:30-32.”
13. Read Isaiah 43:1-13
- a. Beautiful imagery conveying the LORD’s presence with them in trials
  - b. The promise of a seed/offspring reiterates the hope of a righteous remnant from ch.1-39 is still in the program
  - c. The LORD is going to gather up his people
  - d. Vs. 8 gives them a mission or task to bring out the people who blind/deaf
  - e. Then all the nations will gather up and bring their own witnesses to make their case before the LORD
  - f. Servant-Nation-Israel is to be a witness for the LORD being the only God
    - i. Vs.10 directly contradicts Mormon theology
  - g. These worthless, strange gods did not exist when the universe was created by the sovereign LORD whose work cannot be undone by another

14. Read Isaiah 43:14-21
  - a. Isaiah uses Exodus imagery here to convey the LORD quenching the wick of Babylon
    - i. Not to throw into more confusion regarding ch.42:1-4, but it says explicitly the servant will not quench a wick
    - ii. Here it says explicitly that the LORD will quench the wick
  - b. LORD is also about to do a new thing to comfort those who are still in exile
15. Read Isaiah 43:22-28
  - a. Pattern
    - i. You have not brought...
      1. I have not burdened you...or wearied you...
    - ii. You have not brought...
      1. But you have burdened me...and wearied me...
    - iii. I have blotted out your sins...bring forth your case
16. Read Isaiah 44:1-8
  - a. The Abrahamic covenant family continues through the offspring of Israel
  - b. The Spirit will be poured out on the seed/offspring, cf. 42:1
  - c. These offspring are going to receive the water of the LORD and spring up and will confess their allegiance with the LORD in a variety of ways
  - d. *Vs.6 better translation "and the redeeming one" or "and Israel's redeemer"*
  - e. Servant-Nation-Israel again asked to be a witness to the LORD's oneness
17. Read Isaiah 44:9-20
  - a. Which description of the idols' uselessness strikes you the most?
18. Read Isaiah 44:21-28
  - a. The LORD has blotted out Servant-Nation-Israel's sins
  - b. Calls on them to therefore return to him—repent!
  - c. We almost get the sense that in this trial, the LORD is trying really hard to prove to Israel that he is worthy of their praise and they just won't budge
  - d. LORD confirms the word of the servant
    - i. Re: Jerusalem, Judah, the waters, Cyrus, and the temple
19. Read Isaiah 45:1-7
  - a. The word anointed here is the Hebrew word for Messiah, but no this is not claiming Cyrus to be the Messiah/Savior
  - b. JSB: "It is striking that this term is used of Cyrus, and not of the ideal Davidic king, but...in the Bible Messiah always refers to the present king, never to the future ideal one."
  - c. Cyrus though is on the verge of conquest, but it is the LORD who does it
  - d. The LORD even names Cyrus ahead of time to prove he is the true God, even though Cyrus does not know the LORD
  - e. Vs.7 the LORD's sovereignty in blunt terms
20. Read Isaiah 45:8-13
  - a. LORD reiterates his sovereignty and woe to any who question his plans
  - b. Cyrus is who will build the LORD's city and set the exiles free for free
  - c. Cyrus
    - i. If we go back to Isaiah 13, we see the first of Isaiah's oracles against the nations directed at Babylon, which at the time we noted

was entirely out of place due to Assyria's prominence. In this oracle, Isaiah prophesies that the Medes of Persia will be who overthrow Babylon similar to how Sodom and Gomorrah were overthrow—he calls the Medes the LORD's chosen ones.

- ii. In Daniel 5, we see the fulfillment of this prophecy. King Balshazzar saw a strange hand begin to write a message on a wall and he sought out Daniel to interpret it for him. Daniel's interpretation was that Balshazzar's days were numbered and that his kingdom would be given to the Medes of Persia. That very night King Darius overthrew Babylon. So 100+ years after Isaiah's prophecy that the Medes would be the chosen instrument of the LORD against Babylon, in one day it happens. Cyrus became king after Darius.
- iii. Ezra 1:1-4 → Fulfillment of Jeremiah 25. Cyrus recognizes the LORD's role in his victories and is charged by the LORD to build a temple in Jerusalem and to send the exiles home. Notice he says, "The God of Israel...is the God who is in Jerusalem." The rest of Ezra-Nehemiah chronicles the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, opposition they faced from some rulers, as well as support they received from other rulers.
- iv. The preeminent Jewish historian Josephus, wrote this in the first century AD: "This was known to Cyrus by his reading the book which Isaiah left behind him of his prophecies... This was foretold by Isaiah one hundred and forty years before the temple was demolished. Accordingly, when Cyrus read this, and admired the divine power, an earnest desire and ambition seized upon him to fulfill what was so written; so he called for the most eminent Jews that were in Babylon, and said to them, that he gave them leave to go back to their own country and rebuild their city Jerusalem, and the temple of God, for that he would be their assistant, and that he would write to the rulers and governors that were in the neighborhood of their country of Judea, that they should contribute to them gold and silver for the building of the temple, and beside that, beasts for their sacrifices."<sup>1</sup>
- v. In 1879, archaeologists discovered what is called the Cyrus Cylinder, a greatly preserved fired clay cylinder inscribed with writing all around it. On this cylinder we can read about Cyrus' decision to allow the Jews to return to their land from Cyrus' perspective. It reads, "From [Babylon] to Ashur and Susa, Akkad, the land of Eshnunna, the city of Zamban, the city of Meturnu, Der, as far as the border of the land of Qutu – the sanctuaries across the river Tigris – whose shrines had earlier become [abandoned], the gods who lived therein, and made permanent sanctuaries for them. I collected together all of their people and returned them to their settlements, and the gods of the land of Sumer and Akkad which

---

<sup>1</sup> "The Complete Works of Flavius Josephus" translated by William Whiston. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998, page 343.

Nabonidus – to the fury of the lord of the gods – had brought into Shuanna. At the command of Marduk, the great lord, I returned them unharmed to their cells, in the sanctuaries that make them happy. May all the gods that I returned to their sanctuaries, every day before Marduk and Nabu, ask for a long life for me, and mention my good deeds.”<sup>2</sup>

- vi. Reconciling the difference: Is. 45:4-5 *though you do not know me*
  - d. The LORD is going to equip Cyrus so that Israel would recognize the LORD as the true God, that Cyrus would recognize the LORD as the true God, and that the entire world would recognize the LORD as the true God.
21. Read Isaiah 45:14-17
- a. Nations acknowledge Israel’s God as the Only One
22. Read Isaiah 45:18-25
- a. The LORD is setting up a simple but significant argument here:
    - i. I am the creator
    - ii. These other gods cannot save you
    - iii. I am a savior
    - iv. Turn and be saved
    - v. What is it they are confessing to God? Cf. 45:1-6, that the LORD is the true God
    - vi. Israel is the chosen people, yet they need to continually be reminded to turn away from their idols and sins, and turn toward worshipping the true God. Why is repentance necessary?
23. Read Isaiah 46:1-13
- a. Babylon’s gods are burdens who cannot save, but who also go into exile
  - b. The LORD is the divine Planner who again issues a reminder to the remnant to stand firm and to trust in His sovereignty
24. Read Isaiah 47:1-15 → Babylon brought down for idolatry and arrogance
- a. In this rebuke of Babylon, which humiliation description strikes you most?
  - b. Vs.6 is a key verse
    - i. LORD was angry with Israel. The answer is not directly given here, but of all we have read, what was the LORD angry about? *idolatry*
    - ii. Why is the LORD taking vengeance against Babylon, the mistress of kingdoms? *They showed no mercy on Israel*
  - c. Reread 14:4-21 → what is the underlying sin problem Babylon faces?
    - i. Among the rebukes of Babylon’s pride, one of the taunts comes in the form of speech from other Sheol residents, asking *is this the man...who did not let his captives go home?* We saw today that Balshazzar, the king of Babylon was overthrown by the Medes, and then after King Darius, King Cyrus, the LORD’s anointed, *did* let the captives go home
    - ii. Just like there is a key difference between how Ahaz responded to the LORD and how Hezekiah responded to the LORD, there is also a key difference in how Balshazzar treated Israel and how Cyrus

---

<sup>2</sup> www.BritishMuseum.org

- iii. All these carefully nuanced, national dynamics prophesied 100+ years in advance

25. Read Isaiah 48:1-11 → Israel is still blind, rebellious, and obstinate

- a. LORD speaks to the remnant of Nation-Israel who have sworn their allegiance to the LORD but do not live accordingly; idolatry still a problem
- b. The LORD is announcing a new thing—a previously withheld thing—to prove that He alone is the sovereign ruler of the universe—nobody but Him has any claim to the announcement that is coming
- c. This new thing is the LORD exercising his slowness to anger
- d. He defers his anger for the sake of the His name
- e. Uses language similar to the golden calf narrative in Exodus 32:7-14; there is a people stiff-necked—neck-deep—in idolatry and the LORD plans to send His wrath against them but Moses intercedes for them and the LORD changed His mind about wiping them out. Here there is no mediator, but the LORD gives the same reason that Moses gave in Exodus, for His name’s sake He will not wipe them out
- f. Section ends on this note *My glory I will not give to another*, which is an important end to this large inclusio of this entire section
  - i. In ch.42, Servant-Nation-Israel is described as one who will the LORD has put His Spirit on, this Servant is one who is chosen specifically by the LORD, and that the LORD will not give His glory to any other.
  - ii. In. ch.48 and the beginning of ch.49, these same elements describe Servant-New-Israel: the LORD will not give His glory to any other, the Spirit of the LORD is sent with the Servant, and the Servant has been specifically chosen
- g. What is this New Thing?
  - i. Begins with the transfer from Servant-Nation-Israel to Servant-New-Israel
  - ii. Servant-New-Israel is given a mission to bring Nation Israel back to the LORD
  - iii. Servant is going to take on Nation-Israel’s mission:
    - 1. Light to the nations
    - 2. Open eyes of the blind
    - 3. Bring out prisoners from the dungeon/prison/darkness
    - 4. Bring out the blind/deaf from the nations
    - 5. Be a witness to the claim that the LORD is the true God
  - iv. Servant will become a guilt offering for our sins, yet after being dead will see his days prolonged and make intercession for sinners

26. Read Isaiah 48:12-16

- a. We finally get a semi-specific idea about who this mysterious “I” is and it is not the LORD, which is pretty radical considering vs.12-13

- b. Mackie: "All of a sudden, the reader is directly addressed by a first person voice, which is not Yahweh's. From 40:1 up to this point, the first person voice has consistently been Yahweh's."
- c. From our perspective, this is an illustration of the trinity in union of will
- d. The key is in vs.16, *the Lord God has sent me, and his Spirit*
- e. Those who reject the Servant will walk in judgment
- f. So this individual/speaker is not the LORD and is not the Spirit, yet claims to be an active participant in creation
  - i. John 1:3 *All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*

27. Read Isaiah 48:17-22

- a. You can sense the agony in the LORD's voice in vs.18
- b. Water from the split rock
  - i. Exodus 17:1-7
    - 1. Following the Exodus, as Israel was moving through the wilderness, according to the commandment of the LORD, yet the people did not trust the LORD to provide and they grumbled for water, even wishing they had never left Egypt. The LORD commanded Moses to strike the rock of Horeb, and when he did, in the presence of the elders, water came out of it for the people to drink.
  - ii. Numbers 20:11
    - 1. Following the death of Miriam, as Israel continued to travel through the wilderness, the LORD commanded Moses to bring the whole congregation before the rock and to tell the rock to yield water, but Moses did not follow this command; instead, he struck the rock again just as he did before, and so he was judged and condemned for not following the LORD's command.
  - iii. Psalm 78:15
    - 1. The psalmist is speaking about the great works that the LORD has done to prove Himself faithful to them, and a brief note is made about the provision of water from the rocks, *yet they sinned still more against him...in the desert*. It goes on to say the LORD was angry because they *did not trust in his saving power*.
  - iv. If we reread Is.48:17-22, we can see this concept of trusting in the LORD's commands front and center, but it has a different function when considering the context.
    - 1. First half of ch48, Servant-Nation-Israel still does not fully trust the LORD, rooted in their continued idolatry, and attached to a promise of a new thing to be announced
    - 2. Next section of ch48, beginning of the new announcement where a new, chosen speaker claims to be I AM, a participant in creation, and sent by the LORD with his Spirit

3. Final section of ch48, reminds Nation-Israel to trust in the LORD's commands. He is announcing a new thing, the new thing begins to materialize, and they are reminded to trust in the LORD's faithfulness toward His people.

28. Read Isaiah 49:1-7

- a. The LORD has called me from the womb, three times
  - i. Since we interpret this Servant-New-Israel to be Jesus, we have to reject a major false teaching from church history called Adoptionism in light of this passage. Most frequently noted at the baptism of Jesus, Adoptionism essentially teaches that at some point the Father adopted the man Jesus and gave him his divine nature.
  - ii. Not just did the LORD call Servant-New-Israel from the womb, and not just did the LORD name him from within his mother's body, but he was *formed from the womb to be his servant*. This Servant's entire existence was specifically at the doing of the LORD. Jesus did not become divine at some point in his earthly life, he was formed in Mary's womb to be the LORD's chosen servant.
  - iii. The unique specialness of what was formed in Mary's womb is evident in Luke 1:26-45
    1. He will be named and called holy
    2. Repetition of womb
  - iv. We can confidently and rightly affirm that Jesus was fully man and fully God for the entirety of his time here on earth
- b. Servant-New-Israel's mission is defined
  - i. Gather up and bring Nation-Israel back to the LORD
  - ii. But, this is apparently not enough
  - iii. He is also going to be a light to the nations so that the LORD's salvation can *reach to the ends of the earth*.
  - iv. Though we do not yet know what Servant-New-Israel will do, we read that he will manifest the LORD's faithfulness in such a way that the rulers will bow down and worship the LORD

29. Read Isaiah 49:8-26

- a. The LORD describes what he will do through Servant-New-Israel
- b. Servant-New-Israel will be given as a *covenant to the people to establish the land*, set prisoners free, give light to those in darkness, be a source of food and water, remove the wind and heat, etc. – in other words, the LORD is going to use this Servant-New-Israel as a means of comfort and promise to Nation-Israel
- c. We get this same complaint from vs.14 back at the beginning of the trial scene, in 40:27, *My way is hidden from the LORD and my right is disregarded by my God*.
- d. Just as quickly as they raise their complaint here about the LORD forgetting them, he rebukes them for their arrogance, yet also reiterates His promise to them, with the end goal of all flesh knowing that the LORD is the savior, redeemer, and mighty one of Israel.

30. Review:
- a. We finished last week with the LORD announcing His salvation of Zion
31. Read Isaiah 50:1-11
- a. Exodus style judgment in vs. 2 referencing the 1<sup>st</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> plagues
  - b. Servant-New-Israel speaks in vs.4
    - i. Tongue of those who are taught/disciples (cf. 8:16) in order to sustain (only time used in OT) others
    - ii. Obedience to the LORD how Nation-Israel was unable to do so
    - iii. Foreshadowing the suffering servant and the vindicated servant
    - iv. Servant-New-Israel expects obedience—equates obedience to the LORD and the Servant as walking in the light.
  - c. Motyer: “In 8:9-20 Isaiah made fear of the Lord, finding refuge in him, and loyalty to his testimony, law, and word the hallmarks of the remnant; but now that fear and obedience are centered on the Servant, who is the point of differentiation between believers and unbelievers. It is on this note that 51:1 launches the next section with its opening address to all who purchase righteousness and seek the LORD, i.e. the faithful remnant.”
32. Read Isaiah 51:1-8
- a. Three listen to me mini-speeches (vs. 1, 4, 7)
    - i. Remember the hope of Abraham
    - ii. Includes both key elements from 2:2-4: law will come from Zion, and the LORD’s justice among nations will bring about peace
    - iii. LORD’s instruction in your heart brings knowledge of righteousness
33. Read Isaiah 51:9-16
- a. Double imperative: awake, awake
  - b. Vs.11 identical to 35:10
  - c. Vs.15-16, the LORD is going to put His words in the mouths of the faithful
34. Read Isaiah 51:17-23
- a. Double imperative: Wake yourself, wake yourself
  - b. The LORD is going reverse the direction of Jerusalem from pouring out his judgment on her to contending for her and against her oppressors
  - c. We see a passing over by the tormenters to Israel; yet, the removal of the cup of wrath and giving to the oppressors uses much Exodus imagery
35. Read Isaiah 52:1-12
- a. Double imperative: awake, awake
  - b. Jerusalem is becoming holy
    - i. Does not say they will be redeemed for nothing
    - ii. Cf. 35:8, the highway of the LORD connecting the world to Zion will be holy and will belong to those who walk according to the LORD
    - iii. Cf. 1:21-31, 2:2-4, and 4:2-6 the city will become holy!
36. Read Isaiah 52:13-53:12
- a. Did you notice anything during this reading that you didn’t notice before?

37. Review

- a. We saw last week that there is a great build up to the suffering servant poem that we read for our closing.
- b. The Nation-Israel is disobedient, but the New-Israel is obedient to the Father and expects obedience from the people—those who fear the LORD and obey the voice of the servant are described as the righteous multiplication of Abraham.
- c. The LORD told them he would comfort them and he does yet again following his strong rebuke for their rejection of him he says he will take the cup of his wrath away from them—so he is taking away their sin even though they do not deserve it
- d. The LORD is going to redeem them not with money—so he is going to redeem them for something other than the usual process to redeem
- e. We also read that those bringing the good news—the watchmen—declare that the LORD has returned to Zion, which causes worship, and cleansing

38. Structure of the Suffering Servant poem, cf. Dr. Ron Bergey article on its rhetoric

- a. Speaker
  - i. 52:13-15 → “My servant’s” success and exaltation
  - ii. 53:1-3 → “we” considered him insignificant
  - iii. 53:4-6 → “Our” recognition of his sufferings for “us”
  - iv. 53:7-10 → “He” suffered and died, though innocent according to the LORD’s will
  - v. 53:11-12 → “My servant’s” accomplishments and reward
- b. Alliteration
  - i. Out of 202 Hebrew words in the poem, there are 72 instances of the letter *Mem* that makes the “m” sound
  - ii. English translations are unable to convey this but it is unavoidable in the Hebrew
- c. Inverted Repetition of Synonymous Parallels
  - i. Appearance-Form – Form-Appearance
  - ii. Sorrows-Grief – Griefs-Sorrows
  - iii. Bear-Carry – Carry-Bear
  - iv. Pierce-Crush – Crush-Pierce
  - v. Transgressions-Iniquities – Iniquities-Transgressions
- d. What these things do is unify the entirety of the poem together; we cannot read Isaiah 53 without 52:13-15. We also cannot just read one verse absent the others.
- e. That said, in an inclusio, the outer section and the most inner section are highlighted—the outer sections describe the success and exaltation of the servant; the most inner section vs. 4-6 describe the crux of what he does. The second and fourth sections revolve around how people react to him

39. Read Isaiah 52:13-15

- a. So far in Isaiah, “high and exalted” has been exclusively about the LORD
- b. Gives us the end of the story before it begins
- c. Despite his appearance being so marred, rulers still recognize him
- d. They understood what they had not heard

40. Read Isaiah 53:1-3
- a. Begins with the question, *who has believed what he has heard?*
    - i. John 12:35-43 quotes this question in response to the people's lack of belief after witnesses Jesus' performing miracles
  - b. Speaker shifts to a "we"
  - c. Plant imagery
    - i. Isaiah 11:1-5 → this servant is epitomizing all these images of the promised savior-king
41. Read Isaiah 53:4-6
- a. Mackie's simple distinction of the "sin" synonyms
    - i. Iniquity is crooked behavior
    - ii. Sin is moral failure
    - iii. Transgression is willful rebellion
  - b. Matt. 8:14-17
42. Read Isaiah 53:7-9
- a. Repetition of the "silence" concept
  - b. In Acts 8:26-40, Philip used this passage to lead the Eunuch to Christ
  - c. *As for his generation, who considered that he was cut out* refers to not having physical offspring
43. Read Isaiah 53:10-12
- a. By the servant's guilt offering, the many were justified—declared righteous
  - b. If the Servant has no offspring, then who are the offspring he will see?
  - c. Rabbis fervently deny that this suffering servant is a messiah figure; they hold that this suffering servant is nation-Israel, but we see a clear distinction beginning in ch48 between the servant and nation-Israel so this suffering servant cannot be nation-Israel
  - d. Motyer: "Isaiah does not use the word resurrection, but these verses display the Servant alive after his sufferings (Acts 1:3)."
  - e. The suffering-exaltation equation is alluded to repeatedly throughout the New Testament—some of these passages have shown it already; another passage is Philippians 2:5-11 is another example that shows allusions to this Isaianic formula of the Servant.
44. Before moving on
- a. 54:17, *this is the heritage of the servants of the LORD* – this has now shifted again; spoiler alert: this new shift in identifying the servants is the Church! This is what ch.56-66 will be about. Nation-Israel was called the servant, but they failed, and a New-Israel was made the servant who was successful. Those who fear the LORD and obey the voice of this servant, who declare the good news of the LORD's return to Zion and the LORD's salvation will be the servants of the Servant. This is the beginning of the heritage of the servants of the Servant.
45. Read Isaiah 54:1-8
- a. Image of a barren woman who has more seed than a married women who spread throughout all the land—similar language describes Zion in ch.49
  - b. How can she break forth into singing after such a grim description?
  - c. The LORD is her husband and will gather her following this brief judgment

46. Read Isaiah 54:9-10
  - a. We just read how the many will be declared righteous because of the suffering servant's act. Here the LORD promises that his love and peace will never be removed much like his promise to Noah regarding the flood.
47. Read Isaiah 54:11-17
  - a. Antimony is a type of metal
  - b. Stark contrast between the present state of the storm-tossed one and what the LORD is going to do
  - c. Children will be taught by the LORD! Whatever is happening here, the LORD is present cf. 52:8
    - i. For a brief moment the LORD deserted; for a moment, the LORD hid his face—this is exile—but now the LORD has returned to Zion
  - d. The servants of the Servant will be established in righteousness who will have a profound peace
  - e. The weapons of the world will utterly fail against the servants of the Servant because their vindication comes from the LORD
48. Read Isaiah 55:1-5
  - a. You cannot be someone who comes to the water out of thirst without recognizing that you thirst—the servants of the Servant recognize their need for the waters
  - b. Eating the rich food is listening diligently to the LORD
  - c. Incline your ear to hear that you may live cf. Is.6
49. Read Isaiah 55:6-9
  - a. The wicked need to repent; their ways and thoughts are not on the same level as the LORD and they need to be
50. Read Isaiah 55:10-13
  - a. As the LORD provides the foundation for growth—what does it mean to produce fruit?
    - i. It sprouts growth
    - ii. It produces more seeds to be planted
    - iii. It nourishes the eater
  - b. This is the LORD's intention for his word as well