

(Through the Bible) Isaiah 48-50

by Chuck Smith

God's restoration of Israel is a central theme in this passage, with a focus on Israel's disobedience, God's refining process, and Jesus Christ as the Redeemer.

Duration: 58:38

Scripture: Isaiah 48:17, Isaiah 50:1-5, Isaiah 50:10

Topics: "Trusting God", "Jesus Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah and the purposes of God in his being smitten. The preacher mentions how Jesus was smitten and buffeted, with his face covered, and how he was asked to prophesy who hit him. The preacher also talks about the coordination of the body and gives an example of stepping off a curb without knowing it, causing a jarring experience. The sermon also touches on the concept of slavery in the Old Testament and how after six years of service, a slave could go forth free. The preacher emphasizes the importance of trusting in the name of the Lord and putting one's trust in God, even in times of darkness and uncertainty. The sermon concludes with a reference to God's call and Jesus' rejection by his own people.

Transcript

Now in chapter 48, God speaks about how that He is going to restore them under the Holy One, Jehovah's servant. And God is going to restore the house of Jacob. Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, what you're called by the name of Israel.

You're called by the name of Israel. The name of Israel literally means governed by God. It's a beautiful name, a man governed by God, Israel.

It was a name that was given to Jacob by the Lord. After Jacob had wrestled all evening and finally surrendered, weeping and crying, he said, please don't go before you bless me. And he said, what is your name? He said, heel catcher.

He said, you won't be called heel catcher anymore. You're going to be called a man governed by God. All his life he had been a supplanter.

All of his life he had lived by his wits. All of his life he was conniving, living on the border, crooked, scheming. You're no longer going to be a schemer, conniver.

You're going to be a man governed by God. And so the name Israel is a beautiful name, because it means a man governed by God. And so you've been called, he said, by the name of Israel.

And are come forth out of the waters of Judah. You have sworn by the name of the Lord and you make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth nor in righteousness. You've been called by the name, but not in truth.

You've sworn by God, but not in righteousness. You haven't really been governed by God. You've only got the name.

But it's not a reality. Now, this is an unfortunate thing and it exists so prevalently today. There are so many people calling themselves Christians.

So many of the Hollywood set calling themselves Christians. So many of the Washington set calling themselves Christians. But you read of their activities and it is anything but Christian.

So they take the name. You've been called by the name of Israel. You've taken the name governed by God, but God isn't governing your lives.

You've not submitted your life to God. You take the name of Christian, but you're not living as Christ. You're living after the flesh and your moral impurities and in your cesspools.

And yet you say, we are Christ-like. It's not Christ-like at all. So God is rebuking them for taking the name.

When in reality it isn't taken in righteousness nor in truth. For they call themselves of the Holy City. And they stay themselves on the God of Israel.

The Lord of hosts is his name. But I have declared the former things from the beginning and they went forth out of my mouth. And I showed them and I did them suddenly and they came to pass.

Because I knew that you are obstinate and your neck is as an iron sinew. Or your iron muscles in your neck and your brow is brass. You're a hard-headed, stiff-necked bunch of people, God is saying.

Can't get anything through your skull. It's like brass. You're so stiff-necked.

I have even from the beginning declared it to thee before it came to pass. I showed it to you. Lest you should say, my little idol did this.

And my graven and my molten image has wiped them out. Now God declared what he was going to do to Babylon. And God declared how he was going to bring them from their captivity.

Lest when this did happen, God told them in advance. Lest that when it did happen, they'd hold up their little idol. Well, my little God, he delivered us.

Isn't that wonderful? And they start giving credit to their idols again. And so God spoke of the whole thing in advance. So that they would know that he was the one who had accomplished it by telling them in advance.

Now you have heard. See all of this. And will not ye declare it? I have showed you new things from this time, even hidden things.

And you did not know them. They are created now and not from the beginning. Even before the day when you heard them not.

Lest you should say, behold, I knew them. In other words, I've told you things before they happened. Now they are happening, but I've told you already.

Lest you should go, well, I knew it was going to be. And say, well, of course, you can figure that out. There's a lot of people that still take this attitude towards the things of God.

Well, it's obviously going to happen, you know. Does God really know? Yea, you did not hear. Yea, you did not know.

Yea, from that time that your ear was not open. For I knew that you would deal very treacherously. And you were called a transgressor from the womb.

I knew you and I knew that this would be. But for my namesake will I defer mine anger. And for my praise will I refrain for thee that I do not cut you off.

Now it's only my own mercy and grace that I don't cut you off. And God could very well say that to each of us. You've been stiff-necked, you've been hard-headed.

And yet God's put up with you. And only for His namesake He hasn't cut us off. Behold, I have refined thee.

But not with silver. But I have chosen for thee the furnace of affliction. So their refining was to come through great affliction.

And so that great affliction that they experienced in Babylon was a part of God's refining process for these people. God chose the furnace of affliction as the refining agent. And tell me, what people of earth have experienced more affliction than the Jews? They are persecuted almost wherever they have gone.

They've been persecuted, they've been hated. And God declares that He has chosen the furnace of affliction. But for my own sake, even for my own sake will I do it.

For how should my name be polluted and I will not give my glory to another? You see, the Bible says, to whom much is given, much is required. To sin against revealed light is far worse than to sin in total ignorance. For he who knew the will of God and did it not will suffer many stripes.

Yet he who knew not the will of God yet did things worthy of many stripes shall be beaten with few. For unto whom much is given, much is required. Now, the greater your knowledge of God, the greater the revelation of God to your life, the greater is the sin if you sin against that knowledge and revelation.

And these people have been chosen as God's instrument to bring light to the world, to bring God's truth to the world. They had received the oracles of God. They had received the ordinances of God, the statutes, the law.

God had committed unto them all of these things. And yet, they turned from the true and the living God and they began to worship the gods of the Canaanites. They began to worship Bel and Molech and Mammon.

They began to make their idols and bow down to them and worship them. And thus, their sin was greater. And thus, the judgment more severe as God chose the furnace of affliction to purify these people again as a people unto himself and for his own sake.

God said, I will do it because you've polluted my name. And I will not give my glory to another. Hearken unto me, O Jacob in Israel, my call.

I am he, I am the first and the last. My hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth and my right hand hath spanned the heavens. When I call unto them, they stand up together.

Oh, now God is saying, hey, now look. You've been worshiping these dumb little idols that can't speak, they can't hear, they can't move. You've got to carry them around.

I am the true and the living God. I've brought the furnace of affliction. I've chosen this as a refining instrument.

Now listen to me. Listen to me, for I am God. I'm the first and I'm the last.

In Revelation we read, I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. My hand also laid the foundation of the earth and again, my right hand hath spanned the heavens. What does that mean? That God measured the universe with the span of his right hand.

Now, when I was in school, we were taught that the universe was about 4 billion light years in diameter. By the time I graduated from college, we were taught that the universe was 6 billion light years in radius. It had increased tremendously in my schooling years.

Now there are some scientists who have proclaimed that they have discovered galaxies 50 billion light years away. Now, I really don't know how they know that it's that far. But that is what the claim is.

Of course, you see, there's a lot of exaggeration and guesswork that is done in the name of science and just some true fraudulism, such as the Piltdown Man, the Jabba Man, absolute frauds. But these things are done in the name of science and I was talking with a famous archaeologist and scientist one day about the dating of the age of some of these fragments of skulls and so forth that they have found. And so he said to me, well now Charles, he was my professor and he was a tutor for a while.

He took a great interest in me and I gained much from him, Dr. Albro. He said, now Charles, he said, if we were say digging out here in the area of Sabina Canyon and as we are digging we come upon a skull. He said, we are needing money for our further digging and exploration and so we want this to be an important find.

Now they have already found skulls of Indians that they have dated in this area as having been here 4,000 years ago. So if we say this skull is 2,000 years, it's not news because they know that Indians have been here for 4,000 years because the last guy said his skull was 4,000 years old. That's where he got his headlines.

So, in order that we might get notoriety and attention for our find, I examine it carefully, I take fragments and send it to the carbon dating laboratories and I send them to enough until I get the age that I want and he said, I make the proclamation we have found a skull that is 5,000 years old proving that Indians were here 5,000 years ago. All of a sudden we've got the oldest skull that was ever discovered and news,

everybody wants to know about it and everybody is interested and he said then it's easy to get money for further digging and exploration. He said that's how most of the skulls are dated.

Now the same is true if the scientists would say we've discovered a new galaxy at 6 billion light years. Oh, go away. They've already discovered them 12 billion light years out there.

So some guy really went out on the string the other day, he found one 50 billion and it's going to take something to beat him now. But, supposing he is correct. Now, from his find, 50 billion light years, they have developed a whole new theory of the universe and that is that the universe is continually and constantly expanding, clearing out, in other words, the present theory, the big bang, everything went out and as it finally reaches the apogee that it will start to pull back together and finally all of the stars in the black hole will be drawn and sucked into this big, you know, gravitational black hole that's here in the universe.

The reason why it's a black hole is because the gravitational pull is so strong the light can't escape from it. And so everything is going to be gobbled up by this big black hole until the atoms will be compacted so tightly in this gravitational pull, the big black hole, that something will go wrong and they'll explode again and the whole thing can start over and out on one little planet under ideal conditions. An amoeba may develop in the ooze and in billions of years a new man may again stand upon a new planet in this whole new universe, you know, and start guessing how old are the fossils that he found.

Now, if indeed the man found a galaxy 50 billion light years away, all he did was make God that much bigger. I thought he was big when he could spend the universe of 12 billion light years with his right hand. God said, I spend it with my right hand.

That is, he made... How big is God? You... Oh... Now, God, I've got this horrible problem. It's so big. I don't know if even you can work this one out, God, you know.

I need to lift this trunk and it's so heavy, you know. Oh, if we only realize the greatness of our God. Hearken unto me, O Jacob in Israel.

I am the first and the last. My hand laid the foundation of the earth and my right hand spanned the heavens. And when I call them, they stand, I say, hey, and they come to attention.

Oh, my, it's going to be glorious to be in heaven and watch God order things around. All of ye assemble yourselves and hear which among them hath declared these things. The Lord hath loved him.

He will do his pleasure on Babylon and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans. I've loved my people. I will do my pleasure, but I will bring out on the Chaldeans and the Babylonians my judgment.

Even I have spoken it, yea, I have called him, I have brought him, and I will make his way prosperous. Now, verse 16, one that really jumped out at me. Come ye near unto me, hear ye this.

I have not spoken in secret from the beginning. From the time that it was, there I am. And now the Lord God and his spirit hath sent me.

Who is this speaking? It would have to be Jesus. You remember when Jesus was talking with the Pharisees? And they said, we are Abraham's children. He said, if you were the children of Abraham, then would you believe me? Because Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it.

And they said, what are you talking about? You're not even 50 years old and you say that Abraham saw you? And Jesus said, before Abraham was, I am. Now you have much the same here. From the beginning, from the time that it was, I am.

There I am. And now the Lord God and his spirit hath sent me. Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, none other than Jesus Christ, I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that you should go.

Oh, that you would have hearkened to my commandments. Then had your peace been as a river and your righteousness as the waves of the sea. Oh, if you'd only listen, the Lord said.

I'm the one who has taught you to prosper. God has put it in them, that uncanny ability to prosper. I have led you in the way that you should go.

Oh, if you'd only have hearkened to my commandments. Then your peace would have been as a river. The people, it is interesting, many of them are angry with God because of that furnace of affliction that they have gone through.

But that has only come as the result of their not obeying the commandments of God. Had they only obeyed. Now, even today they are seeking to effect before God a righteousness, not of the covenant of the law, but of their own making, a righteousness of works.

As on Yom Kippur, they balance their good deeds with their evil and offer their good works unto God for an atonement for their sins. And yet, God's covenant said, without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. And so, God says, hey, if you'd only listened, if you'd only obeyed my commandments, your peace would have been as a river.

Thy seed also has been as the sand, and your offspring as the bowels like the gravel thereof. His name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me. Go ye forth of Babylon, flee from the Chaldeans with the voice of singing.

Declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth. Say ye, the Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob. And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts.

He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them. He claved the rock also and the waters gushed out. There is no peace, saith the Lord, for the wicked.

Now, if you'd only obeyed the commandments, your peace would have been like a river. But there is no peace for the wicked. Now, in chapter 49, we have a fabulous prophecy of Jesus Christ.

In the first seven verses, as God speaks to the Redeemer that he is sending, Listen, O coast unto me. Harken ye people from far, for the Lord hath called me from the womb. From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword. And in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me. And made me a polished shaft in his quiver hath he hid me.

You go back to Psalm 22, that glorious, prophetic, messianic Psalm of David. And we read there in Psalm 22, verse 8, no, verse 9. But thou art he that took me out of the womb. Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast.

I was cast upon thee from the womb. Thou art my God from my mother's belly. And that is the equivalent here to thou hath called me from the womb.

From the bowels of my mother hast thou made mention of my name. You have made my mouth like a sharp sword. We are told that the word that goes forth out of his mouth is like a sharp, two-edged sword.

Revelation, in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me. And made me a polished shaft in his quiver he hid me. And he said unto me, thou art my servant, O Israel.

And in this Israel is the true name expressed, that is in Christ. He was a man who was governed by God. In whom I will be glorified.

Then I said, I have labored in vain. For he came to his own, his own received him not. He was despised and rejected, he was crucified.

He said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing. And in vain, yet surely my judgment is with the Lord and my work with my God. As they rejected him, as they despised him.

His coming to them was in vain. And now saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him. The purpose of Jesus Christ was to bring Jacob back to God.

Back to the Father. And to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee.

Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord and my God shall be my strength. And he said, is it a light thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles.

That thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. And so Jesus who was rejected by the Jews has become a light unto the Gentiles. And the gospel of Jesus Christ has come unto us.

Who were once alienated from God and far off from the promises. But through him we've been brought nigh. Oh, thank God for the light of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles.

Thus saith the Lord the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One. To him whom man despised. To him whom the nation abhorred.

To the servant of rulers. Kings shall see and arise. Princes also shall worship because of the Lord that is faithful.

And the Holy One of Israel. And he shall choose thee. So the work of Christ among the Gentiles, the kings worshiping and so forth.

As the gospel of Jesus Christ has permeated many kingdoms of the Gentiles. Now, even so God is going to preserve the people of Israel. Thus saith the Lord in an acceptable time have I heard thee.

In the day of salvation have I helped thee. I will preserve thee and give thee for a covenant of the people. To establish the earth to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.

That you may say to the prisoners go forth. To them that are in darkness. Show yourselves.

They shall feed in the ways and their pastures shall be in the high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst. Neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them.

For he that hath mercy on them shall lead them. Even by the springs of water shall he guide them. This brings to mind in Revelation chapter 7. And they shall hunger and thirst no more.

Neither shall the sun shine upon them and all. And it is equivalent to Revelation 7 16. And I will make all my mountains away and my highways shall be exalted.

Behold these shall come from far and low. These from the north and from the west. And these from the land of China.

Sinim is the land of the east. Sing O heavens and be joyful O earth. Break forth into singing O mountains.

For the Lord hath comforted his people. And will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me.

And my Lord hath forgotten me. Now he speaks here about the fact that he's going to bring them back again. He'll gather them from the north and from the west and from the east.

And yet they're going to say the Lord's forsaken me. And you go today and the declaration of so many Jews is where was God during the Holocaust? God's forsaken us. And they are still proclaiming that God has forsaken them.

But God said can a woman forget her nursing child? That she should not have compassion on the son of her womb. Well they may forget. But I will not forget thee.

They accuse God of forsaking them. God said no way. I haven't forgotten you.

Can a nursing mother forget her nursing child? You remember in Psalm 137. Is the Psalm of Babylonian captivity. When we were in Babylon.

By the rivers we sat down we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps on the willows in the midst thereof. And they that had carried us away captive said sing us one of your songs.

And they required some happy songs from us. Saying sing one of the songs of Zion. But how shall we sing the Lord's songs in a strange land? Now some of the old rabbis say that the next two verses are God's response.

To this cry. And that it was actually God who declared. If I forget thee oh Jerusalem.

Let my right hand forget its cunning. If I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

And some of the old rabbis say that that is God speaking there. In response to the people who were captives in Babylon. Who said God has forgotten us.

God has forsaken us. And of course here God said can a mother forsake her. Or forget her nursing child.

She would not have compassion and love for that. Well she might. But I won't forget.

You might find some case where you say well there's a mother forgot. Well God said well alright. But I still won't.

Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands. Your walls are continually before me. Your children shall make haste.

Your destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. Lift up thine eyes round about. And behold all these gather themselves together.

They come to thee. As I live saith the Lord. Thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all.

As with an ornament. And bind them on thee as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate places.

And the land of thy destruction. Shall even now be too narrow. By reason of the inhabitants.

And they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children which thou shalt have. After thou hast lost the other.

Shall say again in thine ears. The place is too straight for me. Give place to me.

That I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart. Who hath begotten me these.

Seeing I have lost my children. And am desolate a captive. And removing to and fro.

And who hath brought up these. Behold I was left alone. These where had they been.

So he speaks about them coming into the land. And being prospered. And the land being too small for them.

And their desire to extend. And expand their borders. Now the regathering.

And the rebuilding of the nation Israel. Has been a very remarkable thing in our days. And God's purposes are to be fulfilled there.

It's exciting. Because God fulfilled his promise. He's brought them back in the land.

They are dwelling there. But they are seeking to expand. They say the area that we have is too small.

And if you look at it. It is a very small area. Not much.

Well actually. You can drive from one side of Israel. To the other in two hours.

You can drive from one end to the other. In six hours. It's just idea of the size of Israel.

It's two hours wide. And six hours long. Driving in a car.

But it's about 5,800 years deep. The history that is there in the land. Goes back.

Now. There are those who see an interesting scenario. Arising in the Middle East right now.

I've heard some Bible scholars suggest the possibility. And some analysts. And I've talked to some Israelis.

Who have suggested also the possibility. That the next outbreak of warfare. Over there in the Middle East. That Israel. Plans for it to be the last outbreak. By so thoroughly defeating. All of those who have risen against them. That they will not be able to rise against them again. They intend to thoroughly thrash. Their enemies. All of the Arab states. That have been giving them such a bad time. They're planning to go full on. Against the Arab world. And a part of their plan. Very shrewd indeed. Is to take. Saudi Arabia. And immediately cut the price of oil in half. And who in the world would object. That's pretty smart. You see. Our world problems today. Especially the problem of starving. The great starvation that is coming in the third world. Is all the result. Of the increased oil prices. The whole problem that we're having here with inflation. Our whole problem of economy. Is based to the increased oil prices. That's where it all comes from. Now the byproducts of the oil. The fertilizers and the chemical fertilizers. That help grow the crops. Have become so expensive. That your food bill. Has gone up tremendously. The whole inflationary cycle. Can be placed on the increased oil prices. And it is a thing. That is actually. Causing millions of people to starve to death in the third world. Because they do not have. The economic base. To afford. The worldwide inflation that has ensued. From the increased oil prices. Now those men in. Libya. Iran. Iraq. Saudi Arabia. They could care less. What havoc they've wrecked upon the world. And when the Israelis go in. And take the oil. And cut the prices in half. Everybody is going to hail them. As the heroes. Because suddenly. This whole problem of world economy. Is going to be reversed. Price of gasoline will go down. Price of raw materials will go down. The whole thing comes back to the oil. So. It is a wise plan. And who is going to object. So. God speaks here that they are going to say. Hey we need to expand our borders. There is not enough room. The land will be too narrow for you. By reason of the inhabitants. Thus says the Lord God.

Now God here speaks of the judgment. He's going to bring on their oppressors. Behold I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles.

And set up my standard to the people. And they shall bring their sons in their arms. And thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

And kings shall be thy nursing fathers. And thy. And their queens thy nursing mothers.

They shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth. And lick up the dust of thy feet. And thou shalt know that I am the Lord.

For they will not be ashamed. That wait for me. The glorious day of Israel's future.

When the kings of the earth come. And pay their homage year by year. Shall the prey be taken from the mighty.

Or the lawful captive delivered. But thus saith the Lord. Even the captives of the mighty.

Shall be taken away. And the prey of the terrible shall be delivered. For I will contend with him that contends with you.

And I will save thy children. God is saying I'll fight with those that fight with you. So any nation or any people that opposes the Jew.

Is not just contending with a race of people. They are contending with the eternal God of heaven. I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh.

And they shall be drunken with their own blood. And as with sweet wine and all flesh. Shall know that I the Lord am the Savior.

And thy Redeemer the mighty one of Jacob. The whole world will know it. And of course God tells us in the day that he destroys.

The invading Russian army with her allies. Shall the whole world know that I am God. And I'll be sanctified before the nations of the earth.

Now in chapter 50. Another marvelous prophecy of Jesus Christ. And of the humiliation.

That he would receive. From his own people. Thus saith the Lord.

Talking to Israel now. Where is the bill of your mother's divorce month. Whom I have put away.

Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you. Behold for your iniquities have you sold yourselves. And for your transgressions is your mother put away.

So God is declaring. That the nation was divorced. It was put away because of the transgressions.

And that God did not sell them to their enemies. They sold themselves. By their own iniquities.

They had turned from God. The fountain of living water. They worship the other gods.

They sold themselves. Wherefore when I came was there no man. When I called there was none to answer.

Is my hand shortened at all. That it cannot redeem. Or have I no power to deliver.

God said I called but you didn't answer. I came but no one met me. And so Jesus came to his own.

His own received him not. He called unto them. They would not respond.

Have I no power to deliver. Behold at my rebuke I can dry up the sea. I make the rivers a wilderness and their fish stink.

Because there is no water and they die for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness and I make sackcloth their covering. The Lord God and of course here is the prophecy now directly of Jesus Christ.

The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned. That I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. He wakeneth morning by morning.

He wakeneth my ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened mine ear. And I was not rebellious.

Neither turned away back. Now here is the Lord Jesus Christ speaking as the servant. And as the obedient servant of the Father.

You remember he said I came not to do my will. But the will of him who sent me. I do always those things that please the Father.

Here he said the Lord God hath opened mine ear. I was not rebellious. Neither turned away back.

In the Old Testament time. If you were a slave. You served a six year term of slavery.

It was the responsibility of your master to take care of all of your needs. If you were of marriageable age. He could give to you a bride.

But in reality you could own nothing for yourself. And so the bride you really didn't own her. Nor the children that were born.

They still belong to your master. Though you be married to her. And you have children by her.

Now in the sixth year. After the six years of service. In the seventh year.

You could go forth free. But. If you say but I love my wife.

And I love my children. And I love serving here. I want to stay on.

And I want to serve you. Then he would bring you. He would call the elders of the city.

He would bring you to the door post of his house. He would take an awl and drive it through the lobe of your ear. He would open your ear with the awl.

He would pin your ear. You would be pinned to the door post by your ear. And then.

They would put a gold ring through that pierced ear. And you would then be a bond slave. A servant by choice.

For life. Now. The Lord said.

He has opened mine ear. But I was not rebellious. That is he submitted himself.

To the father's will. And it is a beautiful. Picture of the submission of Jesus Christ into the father.

Even to the death. Of the cross. I gave my back to the smiters.

We are told in the scripture that Pilate had him scourged. Now the scourging was a beating. Of 39 stripes laid across the back of the prisoner with a. Whip that they called the cat of nine tails whip.

It was a leather whip with little bits of cut glass and lead embedded in it. That would rip open the flesh. The purpose of the scourging.

Was to elicit confessions. It was the third degree techniques. Of the Roman government.

In order to get confessions from convicted felons. In order that they might clear up much of the crime. And a few licks on the back and anybody would confess.

Even the hardest of criminals. And the idea was. With each confession the next lick would be a little easier.

And so it sort of encouraged confessions. A refusal to confess each lick would be a little harder. Again to encourage confessions.

And as a lamb before her shearers is done. So he opened not his mouth. He said I gave my back to the smiters.

But he had no sins or crimes against man to confess. And Jesus was scourged by the Roman government. He received 39 strikes laid across his back.

We will read more about this and study more about this next Sunday night. As we get into the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. And we discover there the purposes of God.

In his being smitten. My cheeks also. We are told that they covered his face.

And they began to buffet him. They began to hit him. And they said prophesy.

Who was it that hit you? Now when you can see a blow coming. You have certain natural reflexes of fainting with that blow. So that you more or less cushion the blow.

By an automatic reflex of pulling your head back. As you see the blow coming. Our bodies are marvelously coordinated.

And you can step off of a curb. Very smoothly. Because of the coordination of your body.

However. If you've ever stepped off and you didn't know the curb was there. And your mind was not coordinating the activities of the body.

To step off gracefully. Just six inches. Can be a horrible jar.

When we were over in Israel this last trip. We stayed in the King David Hotel. And in this one fire escape kind of an exit.

Which we often times used because the elevators were slow. There is one step that is about an inch and a half deeper than the other steps. And we had a lady on our trip.

Who was coming down the steps. And when she came to the one step that was just an inch and a half deeper than the other steps. Because her mind was not coordinating.

It was coordinating for a six inch step. When she came to the seven and a half inch step. Just that extra inch and a half.

Broke her ankle in two places. Because her mind wasn't coordinating to cushion. The blow.

So. Our minds. Have an automatic reflex action even as you blink your eyes.

There is a certain pulling back reflex when you see a blow coming. That cushions the blow. Otherwise boxers would kill each other all the time in the ring.

But you'll see how they are moving. And you do that instinctively and automatically. Now they covered the face of Jesus so he could not see the blows coming.

So that he could not instinctively pull back. So that the blows landed on his face with full force. Until they had beaten him to the place.

Where his face was so bloated and so marred. That you look at him and would not even know that he was a human being. We'll get to that in Isaiah 52 next Sunday.

Now here is the prophecy. I gave my back to the smiters. And my cheeks to those who plucked off the hair.

They evidently pulled out his beard by the fistful. And with these beatings. His face was so distorted.

That you could not even recognize him as a human being. And I hid not my face from shame and spitting. Now spitting is a sign in the oriental culture of total disdain and disgust.

Now the Arabs have quite a disdain many times for American tourists. And we have been spit upon. Or at, good dodger.

But they often times disdain the American tourists there. And especially if they try to sell you something. And you say, no I don't want it.

Many times they'll spit at you. Just to show their absolute disgust and disdain. It's just a part of their oriental culture.

And thus the Jews not only rejected him. But they spit upon him. My cheeks to the smiters.

And I did not hide my face from their shame and their spitting. Isaiah in chapter 52. And we'll get there next week also.

Really this all comes together. Chapter 50 begins with the humiliation of Christ and goes on through. It said, and as many as saw him were astonished, shocked.

And we hid as it were our faces from him. Jesus was not a pretty picture. When he redeemed you from your sin.

His face was a bloody bloated mass. Swollen and distorted beyond recognition. Covered with spit.

His back laid open by the beating. A crown of thorns upon his head. And Pilate said, behold the man.

But you couldn't even recognize that he was a man. And yet he did it. He endured it.

He did not turn away. His ear was opened. He submitted to the will of the Father.

Because he loved you. And who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross. Though he despised the spitting even as you would.

And the shame of the whole thing. He despised it. But yet he endured it.

Because his love for you was stronger than anything else. And the joy of being able to wash you and redeem you. And to cleanse you from all of your sins.

Was the thing that kept him going. In that moment of disgrace. And ignominy.

How much he loves us. Oh God help us. To respond to that love.

For the Lord God will help me. Therefore I will not be confounded. Therefore I have set my face as flint.

And I know that I shall not be ashamed. His trust was in the Father. He had committed himself unto God and to the will of God.

Completely. He is near that justifies me. Who will contend with me? Let us stand together.

Who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me. Who is he that shall condemn me? Lo they all shall wax old as a garment.

The moth shall eat them up. Who is among you that feareth the Lord? That obeyeth the voice of his servant? That walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord. And put his trust upon his God.

Behold all ye that kindle a fire. Now in the last verse he refers to a little pagan ceremony that they went in. That they did.

All of ye that kindle a fire. That put a circle of sparks around you. That you might walk in the light of your fire.

And in the sparks that you have kindled. This shall ye have of my hand. Ye shall lie down in sorrow.

You that have gone after the false gods. You that are worshipping these false idols. You that are worshipping in this false system.

This you are going to have from me. You are going to go down in sorrow. I do not know how a Jew can read these scriptures.

And not recognize that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. I do not know how they can look at these. And deny the prophecy of Jesus Christ.

Or the fulfillment of Jesus Christ of these prophecies. Father we thank you for the great love that you have for us. Though we realize how unworthy we are and undeserving.

Yet Lord you have loved us with an everlasting love. And you have drawn us with your cords of kindness. And Lord you sent your son.

How thankful we are. And now Lord we receive your love. And Father we love you.

And we thank you that you chose us. That we should be your disciples. That we should bring forth fruit.

That we should serve you. And that we should be with you. In your kingdom.

We thank you Lord that you called us. We thank you Lord that you have redeemed us. In the blood of Jesus Christ.

And that you have accepted us in him. And now Lord we are your children. May we walk as children.

In this dark and perverse world. In Jesus name. Amen.

And now may the Lord be with you. And may the Lord bless you. And keep you through this week.

May the grace of God abound. Towards thee in all things. That you might experience the full richness of his love.

And of his grace towards you in Christ Jesus. Our Lord. In his name.

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