

## A Trek Through Isaiah 66 - 50:1-11

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For this week:

- Nation and Servant contrasted (Part 2) 50:1-11

Context

<b>The Greater Deliverance: the Work of the Servant (49:1 - 55:13)</b>
The Servant's mission 49:1-13
Nation and Servant contrasted 49:14 - 50:11
To the faithful remnant 51:1 – 52:12
The Servant's triumph 52:13 - 55:13

- In the book of the Servant (38 - 55): How will God's people be redeemed from captivity?
- This section (49 - 55) describes the greater deliverance (redemption from sin) accomplished through the Servant.
  - The Servant's mission: to redeem Israel and to redeem the world. 49:1-13
  - Nation and Servant Contrasted 49:14 – 50:11
  - To the faithful remnant 51:1 – 52:12
  - The Servant's triumph 52:13 - 55:13
    - The Servant bears the sins of all mankind. 52:13 - 53:12
    - The call to enter gladly and freely into the Servant's salvation. 54 - 55

## Nation and Servant Contrasted 49:14 – 50:11

### Contrast 49:14 - 50:9

- The nation's complaint 49:14
- God's promises 49:15-26
  - V15-16 The promise that God's people are not forgotten.
  - V18-20 The promise of increase and security
  - V21-23 The promise of world dominion
  - V24-26 The promise of deliverance
- The nation's lack of **trust** 50:1-3

1 Thus says the LORD: "Where is your mother's certificate of divorce, with which I sent her away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities you were sold, and for your transgressions your mother was sent away. 2 Why, when I came, was there no man; why, when I called, was there no one to answer? Is my hand shortened, that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? Behold, by my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a desert; their fish stink for lack of water and die of thirst. 3 I clothe the heavens with blackness and make sackcloth their covering."

- V1 No excuse

#### ■ Where is your mother's certificate of divorce, with which I sent her away?

- Re Dt 24:1, 4 When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house...4 then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife,

- For divorce, Mosaic law required a certificate of divorce
- The separation was permanent, with no reconciliation
- Here there is no certificate of divorce

#### ■ Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you?

- As 2 Ki 4:1 Now the wife of one of the sons of the prophets cried to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the LORD, but the creditor has come to take my two children to be his slaves."

- For a man's unpaid debt, the creditor could take either his wife or his children as slaves.

- Here the nation has not been sold.

#### ■ Behold, for your iniquities you were sold, and for your transgressions your mother was sent away.

- What Israel is experiencing is the due penalty of her sin.
- The LORD is the injured party.

#### ■ Since there is neither irreconcilable separation or legal barriers, Israel has no excuse for self-pity; the LORD can call them back if He chooses.

○ V2a The nation's response

■ Why, when I came, was there no man; why, when I called, was there no one to answer?

- when I came...when I called. Through the prophets.
- no man...no one to answer.
  - No response.
  - Heb emphatic: no man...no one at all.

○ V2b-3 The LORD's qualifications

■ Is my hand shortened, that it cannot redeem?

- Questioning the LORD's resources.
- Short hand. financial idiom: Is the LORD without the necessary funds to pay His people's debts.

■ have I no power to deliver?

- Questioning the LORD's power
- Answered by pictures from the Exodus when the LORD delivered His people: sea dried up, fish dying, black darkness.

■ Motyer: "To fail to respond to such a God is without excuse."

- The **willing** Servant 50:4-9
  - A new voice speaks. Spoken in the first person.
  - In contrast to v2, here is one who hears and responds.
  - In v10 we will see that this is the Servant.
  - Four sections marked by “the LORD God”
  
  - V4 The Servant’s instructed tongue

4 The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught.

- The Lord God has given me
  - A gift from the LORD.
  - Equipped for His task
- the tongue of those who are taught,
  - Heb: a disciple’s tongue
  - Taught what to say and how to say it.
- that I may know how to sustain with a word
  - A speaking ministry that is effective
  - Sustain: To console; to respond to needs; a timely word.
- Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught.
  - The LORD takes the initiative.
  - The Servant’s ear is awakened daily.
  - hear as those who are taught
    - Willing hearing.
    - The ear of a true disciple

- V5-6 The Servant's willingness

5 The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I turned not backward. 6 I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.

- V5 Call and response

- The Lord God has opened my ear,
  - His task revealed
- I was not rebellious;
  - The Servant's response: obedience.
- I turned not backward.
  - Slip away. Take evasive action.

- V6 The task

- I gave...I hid. The Servant is in full control of the situation.
- Those. Surrounded by enemies.
- Strike. Beat a criminal.
- Pull out the beard.
  - Not like getting eyebrows plucked. :-)
  - A man's beard was considered a sign of freedom and respect.
  - Plucking out the hair of the beard is a act of utter contempt.
- Disgrace and spitting. Put to public humiliation.
- What person could endure these things and not have a spirit of vengeance welling up in him. But this is only a harbinger of what is to come in Is 53.

- V7-8 The Servant vindicated

7 But the Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. 8 He who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me.

- V7 Confidence

- But the Lord God helps me;
  - In contrast to the enemies of v6
  - Trust in the invisible God
- therefore I have not been disgraced;
  - Shame that comes as a result of failure.
  - Contrast v6. The enemies subject Him to public disgrace and humiliation but He is not ashamed.
- As Is 49:4-5 surely my right is with the Lord, and my recompense with my God." ... for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength
- therefore I have set my face like a flint,
  - Set to His work with resolve and determination.
  - As Lk 9:51 ...he set his face to go to Jerusalem.
- and I know that I shall not be put to shame.
  - Confidence in the outcome.
  - Young says, "The shame and reproach heaped upon him will lead only to greater glory and honor for him."

- V8 Vindication

- An exclamation of triumph
- He who vindicates me is near.
  - Near placed first for emphasis.
  - Vindicates.
    - Legal term: Declares to be just.
    - The Servant has no sin. As Is 53:9 ...he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.
    - The enemies thought that He was being punished for His own sins, but they were wrong.
    - God as the Judge renders the verdict of righteous based on the Servant's righteous behavior.
- Who will contend with me? A bold challenge.

- V9 The Servant's enemies routed

9 Behold, the Lord GOD helps me; who will declare me guilty? Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

■ Behold, the Lord God helps me; who will declare me guilty?

- Declare me guilty.
  - Opposite of justify.
  - The guilty verdict cannot be sustained because God helps Him and justifies Him.

■ Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

- All the enemies that surrounded Him in v6.
- Wear out (from external forces)
- Be eaten (by internal forces)

### Call to Trust in the LORD 50:10-11

- V10 Those who trust in the **LORD**

10 Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of his servant? Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.

- Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the voice of his servant?
  - The believing remnant
  - Fear the Lord = obey the voice of the Servant.
- Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.
  - They encounter darkness.
  - They trust in and rely upon God.
  - Chiasm
    - Fears the LORD = trusts in the name of the LORD.
    - Obeys the voice of His Servant = relies on his God.

- V11 Those who trust in **themselves**

11 Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who equip yourselves with burning torches! Walk by the light of your fire, and by the torches that you have kindled! This you have from my hand: you shall lie down in torment.

- They encounter darkness
- Response
  - Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who equip yourselves with burning torches!
    - The response of self-reliance, saying, "There is no God."
- Result
  - This you have from my hand: you shall lie down in torment.
    - Self-reliance brings divine opposition
    - As God said to Adam in Gen 3:17 ...cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;



## **Discussion**

We will break into three groups for discussion. The questions are

- 1. The instructed disciple 50:4**
  - a. Awakened morning by morning**
  - b. An ear to hear**
  - c. Equipped for the work**
- 2. Not disgraced 50:7-8**
  - a. Public humiliation**
  - b. God helps me**
  - c. Not disgraced**
- 3. Trusting in darkness 50:10-11**
  - a. Trusting in the Lord**
  - b. Walking by the light of our torches**

Remember to worship the Lord: (1) See (2) Know (3) Respond

For next week: To the Faithful Remnant (part 1) 51:1-11

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