



Sermon Discussion Questions
December 10, 2023,
Advent - The Servant is Coming
A LIGHT FOR THE NATIONS
Isaiah 49:1-7



1. Opening Discussion Questions

- a. Have you ever been in a situation where you heard, but were not part of, a really important discussion between two people that would have serious and long-term consequences – perhaps your parents discussing the purchase of a new home or moving to another city? What was the attitude (mood) of those involved in the discussion? How did you feel about being allowed to hear what was being discussed?
- b. When were you challenged to do something that seemed to be “above and beyond the call of duty”? What was the specific situation and how did you feel about being asked to do more than the minimum you thought was necessary/expected? If you accepted the challenge, how did you feel when it was completed?

2. Sermon Outline/Key Points

- a. Jesus would be born in human flesh.
 - i. God the Father named His Servant to the world through prophets and angels.
 - ii. God would be honored through Him.
- b. Jesus would be God’s Servant to bring Him glory.
 - i. An instrument of truth and grace
 - ii. Coming into the world at the perfect time
 - iii. Named Jesus as the true Israel.
- c. Jesus would be a light to the nations that salvation may reach the end of the earth.
 - i. Jesus would restore God’s people from the tribes of Jacob, the nation of Israel.
 - ii. Proclamation to the ends of the earth; coastlands or islands denote people in faraway places.
 - iii. Too light a thing, not significant enough to just restore Israel.
 - iv. A light to the nations, all peoples, a task of such magnitude that only Jesus could do it.
- d. Jesus would redeem the world and restore the Kingdom of God.
 - i. Redeem the peoples of the world by coming into the world in human form.
 - ii. Restore the Kingdom of God when He returns in all of His Glory.

3. Study/Discussion Points:

- a. *Sunday Afternoon*** – As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to prayerfully ponder these questions:
- i. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?
 - ii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?
 - iii. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?
 - iv. What is one specific thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
 - v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?
- b. *Monday*** – *The Second Servant Song (Isaiah 49:1-7)*
- i. The focal passage for this week, Isaiah 49:1-7, is known as Isaiah’s Second Servant Song and reveals more about the Servant who was to come. Read the passage slowly, meditating on the words and paying particular attention to who is speaking in each of the verses. It may be helpful to read it from several different translations if you have them.
 - ii. A significant issue to understanding this passage is the need to determine who is meant by “Israel” in verse 3. Can you think of three possibilities?
 1. The most obvious explanation would seem to be that “Israel” is exactly that, the Jewish nation to whom Isaiah is writing. How/why do verses 5 and 6a make this explanation seem unacceptable?
 2. Since Isaiah uses personal pronoun “me” and “my”, another possibility might be that he is referring to himself. How/why do verses 6b and 7 make this view seem unacceptable?
 3. A third possibility is that “Israel” is used as a title for the Servant that is to come – Jesus. Read Luke 2:28-32, Acts 13:46-47 and Acts 26:22-23.
 - a. How do these passages reinforce the belief that Isaiah 49:1-7 is talking about Jesus (see especially verse 6b)?
 - b. How does the Prolog to John’s Gospel (John 1:4-9) reinforce such a view?
- c. *Tuesday*** – *Jesus would be born in human flesh (Isaiah 49:1 & 5).*
- i. As we are preparing once again to celebrate Jesus’ birth, Isaiah 49:1 & 5 point us forward to a passage of scripture we hear each year. Read again the account of Gabriel appearing to Mary in Luke 1:26-30.
 1. How are the words of Isaiah 49:1 & 5 fulfilled in this passage?

2. How does Gabriel's announcement clarify the true identity of the Servant Isaiah presents in the focal passage?
 3. Since at Christmas we focus on the birth of the baby Jesus it would be strange to argue that such a birth never took place – but many throughout history, and especially in America today, would suggest that Jesus was just “a good man”.
 - a. How do these passages in Isaiah and Luke reject such a belief?
 - b. Belief in the full deity of Jesus is a core doctrine of all Christians. Read these verses that confirm that belief: John 1:1, 1:18, 20:28, Romans 9:5, Titus 2:13, Hebrew 1:8, 2 Peter 1:1.
- ii. Gabriel told Mary to name her son Jesus, the name we best know Him by, but there are many other names/titles for the Servant. Read these verses and identify the other names used for the Jesus.
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| 1. Matthew 1:23 & Isaiah 7:14 | 6. Isaiah 40:13-14 |
| 2. John 1:29 | 7. 1 Peter 5:4 |
| 3. Revelation 1:8 & 22:13 | 8. Revelation 5:5 |
| 4. Daniel 7:9 | 9. Isaiah 9:6 |
| 5. John 6:33 | 10. Isaiah 45:21-22, John 4:42, & 1 Timothy 4:1 |
- d. **Wednesday** – *Jesus would be God's Servant to bring Him glory (Isaiah 49:2-4)*
- i. Twice in Isaiah 49:2 the Servant tells us that the Lord “hid” Him?
 1. What do you think it means that God “hid” the Servant (see Galatians 4:4)?
 2. Think of the Christmas story. Which part might be an example of the Lord hiding Jesus (Matthew 2:13-14)
 - ii. Verse 2 also describes two characteristics of the Servant using images of weapons. What are the weapons?
 1. Read Ephesians 6:17, Hebrews 4:12, and Revelation 1:16. What role of the Servant do you think is implied by comparing His mouth to a sword?
 2. What role do you think the arrows might represent (see Deuteronomy 32:23, 2 Samuel 22:15, Psalm 45:5, Ezekiel 5:16, and Habakkuk 3:11)?
- e. **Thursday** – *Jesus would be God's Servant to bring Him glory (Isaiah 49:2-4)*
- i. According to verse 3 what seems to be God's ultimate purpose in sending the Servant? How does that compare with what was said in the First Servant Song that was considered last week (Isaiah 42:8)?
 - ii. Isaiah 49:4 is somewhat surprising as it speaks about the apparent discontentment of the Servant!

1. Can you think of a time in Jesus' ministry when these words might have applied (consider John 6:66-67, Mark 4:13, and Matthew 26:38-39)?
 2. Has there ever been a time in your Christian life that you felt this way? How would you paraphrase verse 4 to make it personal to your situation? What does it mean to you that our Savior apparently may have experienced the same doubts and concerns?
- f. **Friday** – *Jesus would be a light to the nations and brings salvation to the ends of the earth (Isaiah 49:5-6).*
- i. What does verse 5 tell us is one of the specific things the Servant was being sent to accomplish?
 1. How did Jesus show His awareness of this task in Matthew 10:5-6, 15:24, and Luke 24:44-49?
 2. How do Acts 3:25-26, 13:46-47, and Romans 1:16 show that the Apostles understood this teaching?
 3. What does it mean to you that our “salvation is from the Jews” (John 4:22)?
 - ii. Why is the Lord's comment/instruction to the Servant in verse 6 so terribly important to us? What would have been the implication if it had been left out?
 - iii. Read the Matthew Great Commission passage (Matthew 28:18:20). How does it capture/implement the instruction the Servant received in verse 6?
- g. **Saturday** – *Jesus will redeem the world and restore the Kingdom of God. (Isaiah 49:7)*
- i. How does verse 7 say the nation (Israel) will treat the Servant?
 - ii. What does the Lord promise will eventually happen? Compare this with Isaiah 52:15. With Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:10. What do these verses tell us about the ultimate outcome?
 - iii. End by reading 1 Corinthians 15:20-28
4. **Application:** The Second Servant Song and the rest of Isaiah 49 are one of the great missionary chapters in the Bible. As seen throughout Isaiah, the Jewish nation failed in the mission God gave them to glorify Him and be a light to the Gentile nations. Today God has given a similar mission to His Church – to be a light to the nations in a dark world. We must ask ourselves if we are doing any better than they did; more importantly we must each ask ourselves individually, “Am I doing everything that He asked and commanded?” The answer is either “Yes” or “No”. If the latter, what must be done?

5. Prayer Points:

- a. **A**doration – 1 Peter 4:16
- b. **C**onfession – James 5:16
- c. **T**hanksgiving – 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- d. **S**upplications – James 4:2-3