

**Isaiah Saw His Glory #5
(Is. 50:4-11)
The Suffering Servant**

Intro: This morning I mentioned to you that in the latter half of Isaiah there are four prophecies that focus on Jesus as the Servant of the Lord. They are sometimes called the Servant Songs of Isaiah. Each of them advances our understanding of the ministry of Christ.

In the first one (Is. 42) we see the Servants call to service, manner of service, goal of service, and success in service.

In the second one (Is. 49, which we'll not be studying in this series) we see his call to bring Israel back to God and how that his apparent failure in this task results in the salvation of the Gentiles as well as Israel.

Now let's consider the third Servant psalm in Is. 50. In it we are confronted for the first time with the suffering of the servant to come. The Servant speaks as if he's already lived and experienced this suffering. Isaiah lets him speak for himself. (Read 50:4-9)

The Servant's Suffering

We see in the servant's soliloquy a prophet who has met with hostility. Poetically we can see that his experiences are described in terms of the body.

A Disciple's Tongue

The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples, that I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. (Is. 50:4)

An Open Ear

He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple. The Lord God has opened My ear; and I was not disobedient, nor did I turn back. (Isaiah 50:4b-5)

A Stricken Back & Smitten Cheeks

I gave My back to those who strike Me, and My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting. For the Lord God helps Me, Therefore, I am not disgraced; (Isaiah 50:6a-7a)

A Face like flint

Therefore, I have set My face like flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. (Is. 50:7b)

The Servant's Faith in God's Vindication

Faith in God's presence

He who vindicates Me is near;

Faith in His personal innocence

Who will contend with Me? Let us stand up to each other; who has a case against Me? Let him draw near to Me.

Faith in the superior power of the Lord

Behold, the Lord God helps Me; who is he who condemns Me?

Faith in the ultimate judgment of God

Behold, they will all wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them. (Isaiah 50:8-9)

Jesus, the fulfillment of the Suffering Servant

The Gospel picture of Jesus perfectly conforms to Isaiah's suffering servant

He opened His ears to the word of God

Jesus therefore answered them, and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. (John 7:16)

He gave His back to the hostility of the Jews

Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he delivered Him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. And they stripped Him, and put a scarlet robe on Him.²⁹ And after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head. And after they had mocked Him, they took His robe off and put His garments on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him. (Matthew 27:26-31)

He set His face like flint in the midst of persecution

And it came about, when the days were approaching for His ascension, that He resolutely set His face to go to Jerusalem; (Luke 9:51)

He placed His faith in the justice of God

who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; (1 Peter 2:22-23)

He sustains the weary with a word of comfort

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)

Clearly we can see that Jesus is the one who fulfills Isaiah's prophecy!

A valuable lesson for Jesus' disciples

The call to be his disciple requires that we follow in His footsteps.

We must open our ears to the word of God.

We must experience the hostility of an unbelieving world.

We must be determined to remain faithful no matter the cost.

We must put our faith in the justice of God.

We must look to Jesus as our source of comfort.

No matter how hard life gets, here is one consoling truth. There is no suffering we experience that Jesus cannot understand and help us with.

In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was

heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, (Hebrews 5:7-9) Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:1-3)

Conclusion: The final words of Isaiah 50 remind us that a day of judgment is coming in which all will receive their judge recompense. The servant issues His own warning:

Who is among you that fears the Lord, that obeys the voice of His servant, that walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God. Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who encircle yourselves with firebrands, walk in the light of your fire and among the brands you have set ablaze. This you will have from My hand; and you will lie down in torment. (Isaiah 50:10-11)