

2nd Servant Song – Part 1

Are you prepared?

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Are you prepared? Headlines in the news include bad financial news, bad news on wars, bad news on crime, bad news on inflation. The list goes on and on. There are new articles almost every week about attacks on Christians, even in the US.

This litany of bad news reminded me of Billy Joel's song, "We Didn't Start the Fire." One line ends with "JFK blown away, what else do I have to say?" A songwriter today could substitute today's headlines for Billy Joel's lyrics.

It is interesting to read to Wikipedia explanation of how Billy Joel came to write the song.

"Billy Joel conceived the idea for the song when he had just turned 40. He was in a recording studio and met a 21-year-old friend of Sean Lennon who said "It's a terrible time to be 21!". Joel replied: "Yeah, I remember when I was 21 – I thought it was an awful time and we had Vietnam, and y'know, drug problems, and civil rights problems and everything seemed to be awful". The friend replied: "Yeah, yeah, yeah, but it's different for you. You were a kid in the fifties and everybody

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

knows that nothing happened in the fifties". Joel retorted: "Wait a minute, didn't you hear of the Korean War or the Suez Canal Crisis?". Joel later said those headlines formed the basic framework for the song."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/We_Didn%27t_Start_the_Fire

Then there is the refrain:

“We didn't start the fire
It was always burning, since the world's been turning
We didn't start the fire
No, we didn't light it, but we tried to fight it”

Today may seem awful to you. But it could be worse. Indeed, it will likely get worse. History repeats itself. Look at the Bible for this.

Habakkuk in his day asked:

Habakkuk 1:2 How long, O Lord, will I call for help, And You will not hear? I cry out to You, “Violence!” Yet You do not save.

Habakkuk 1:3 Why do You make me see iniquity, And cause me to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; Strife exists and contention arises.

Habakkuk 1:4 Therefore the law is ignored And justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore justice comes out perverted.

What we see today is not new. The left accuses the right of being an existential threat; the right accuses the left of being an existential threat.

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

Today if you feel threatened, are you prepared to weather the storm? Remember, you walk by faith. As a Christian you should obey the law. As a Christian we are on defense in the Angelic Conflict. We use promises and faith as in Hebrews 4:1-2. We depend on the power of the Holy Spirit to guide us, to empower us.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.

Hope. This means “confident expectation.” We have confident expectation because of what we believe and what we look forward to, in faith. I understand that we may have in our souls that little kid in the back seat saying, “Are we there yet?” Or like Habakkuk, “How long O Lord?”

1 Thessalonians 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 4:15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

But each of us has a job, a mission from God. Each Christian has a spiritual gift which is given to support the local church. You have a

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

mission. A pastor teacher has a well-defined mission of study and teach. Others will realize their mission as they study and learn and believe Bible information that is sometimes called “Bible Doctrine.”

You need to understand who you are in Christ, your relationship to God the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit. You need doctrine. But as Hebrews 4:1-2 says, without faith the doctrine will not benefit or profit you.

So, are you prepared for the coming storm?

A review of what has been covered so far in the study of the four Servant Songs in Isaiah is needed.

These four songs are characterized by Duane Lindsey as follows (from his table of contents in his book “A Study in Isaiah: The Servant Songs.”

Characterization	Scripture
The Call of the Servant	42:1-9
The Commission of the Servant	49:1-13
The Commitment of the Servant	50:4-11
The Career of the Servant	52:13-53:12

As a reminder, there is nothing divinely inspired in the name “Servant Songs” or “Servant Poems.” Someone noticed that these verses referred to and provided information on someone called the “Servant” or the “Servant of Yahweh.” Different commentators include more or fewer verses in the poems than other writers. But the important point is that these “songs” are applied to Jesus Christ. In the New Testament, portions of these songs are quoted and applied to Jesus Christ. They are important because they are prophecies about Jesus Christ.

God emphasizes in portions of Isaiah, that He provides prophecy.

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

Isaiah 43:11 “I, even I, am the Lord, And there is no savior besides Me.

Isaiah 43:12 “It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed, And there was no strange god among you; So you are My witnesses,” declares the Lord, “And I am God.

Summarizing what we learned from the 1st Servant Song.

Summary from Duane Lindsey:

“In the first Servant song (Isa. 42:1-9) Yahweh conveyed a distant prophecy of His Servant who will bring salvation and establish a proper order on the entire earth. The passage introduced the Servant and promised His faithfulness in accomplishing the mission to which He was divinely called. Scarcely a hint was given of the path of suffering to be trodden by the Servant on the way to His completed mission. The task itself involved mediating a new covenant with Israel and causing a just order to prevail on the whole Gentile world. I concluded that the anonymous Servant of Isaiah 42:1-9 is the royal Davidic Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will cause a right order to prevail on the earth following His second advent at the time of the fulfillment of the promised new covenant for the nation Israel. In the millennial kingdom worldwide spiritual blessings will extend not only to Israel but also to the Gentiles.”

Understanding portions of the book of Isaiah require that the listener/reader understand a) prophecy, b) dispensations and c) the angelic conflict.

Prophecy. This portion of Isaiah contains information about the incarnation of Jesus Christ and the Millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ. It

2nd Servant Song – Part 1 Isaiah 49:1-13

is future to Isaiah. It is prophecy, some of which has now been fulfilled by Jesus in His 1st Advent and some which is yet to be fulfilled during the 2nd Advent. These prophecies are about our Savior.

Direct Fulfillment: Literal prediction and literal direct fulfillment.

Typical Fulfillment: A literal, historical event applied typologically.

Applicational Fulfillment: An historical event is used to draw out an application with reference to a future event.

Summary Fulfillment: No actual event is prophesied, but the fulfillment represents a summation of Old Testament prophecies.

Quoted from Dean's Lessons 15 & 16 of God's Plan for the Ages - Dispensations (2014)

One Bible teacher recently said that we should internalize these rules. These are the “spectacles” through which the New Testament writers viewed Old Testament prophecies.

Angelic Conflict. Starting in Isaiah chapter 40, Isaiah is standing in the heavenly court as part of the Appeal Trial of Satan. This is the angelic conflict on display. But, remember, this was originally written for a Hebrew audience. It is not a theological, categorical essay, it is a show and tell about Jesus Christ. The Hebrews needed to see and hear. There is no introduction that says, “Now we are in heaven with Isaiah attending a court scene with God and His angels on one side and Satan and the cosmos diabolicus on the other.” The court/legal language used, tells us this. This is part of the appeal trial in which Jesus Christ, our Savior, is the star witness and the prosecution’s exhibit #1.

Dispensations. The Church Age is not revealed in the Old Testament which includes the book of Isaiah. It does include information about the

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

dispensation of the Law/Jewish Age which includes the Tribulation/Jacob's Troubles as well as the future Kingdom of Jesus Christ on earth that we call the Millennium. It also includes the Gospels. They occurred in the dispensation of the Law. The gospel writers included many quotes from the Old Testament that fall into the realm of prophecy. History, as we know it, culminates in the last of the documented dispensations which we call the Millennium and the Jews call the kingdom, the kingdom of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Introduction to the 2nd Servant Song (Duane Lindsey):

“The second Servant song (Isa. 49:1-13) brings out the same basic concepts as the first poem, though the establishment of a worldwide righteous order is not stressed. Instead, greater emphasis is placed on the physical and spiritual restoration of the nation Israel. The primary new feature in the second song is the apparent initial failure of the Servant in His mission to Israel, which brings about an expanded commission from Yahweh to bring about the salvation of the Gentiles.”

Per Page Kelley:

“The second of the Servant Songs is found in 49:1-6. In this passage the Servant himself is the speaker. He describes his predestination for his task (v. 1), the weapons of his warfare (v. 2a), his concealment until the proper time (v. 2b), his initial discouragement (v. 4), and the enlargement of his mission to include not only the tribes of Jacob but also all the nations of the earth (vv. 5-6).”

Note that Page Kelley only includes verses 1-6 in the second Song.

Isaiah 49:1 Listen to Me, O islands, And pay attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me.

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

Listen to Me. This is like the calls to Israel, Hear O Israel...

Deuteronomy 6:4 “Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!”

Repeated in Mark chapter 12:

Mark 12:28 One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, “What commandment is the foremost of all?”

Mark 12:29 Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord;

Mark 12:30 and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’

But, here in Isaiah 49:1, the call is to the gentile nations. In the Millennial Kingdom, Israel will be blessed by the fulfilled covenants, but these blessings will overflow to gentile nations.

O islands. The meaning is usually assigned to gentile nations on the coast or islands. This is not apparently addressed to Israel. The call to the gentiles during the kingdom is something that is repeated again and again in the Millennium/Kingdom passages. Christians are familiar with the term “Millennium.” That term, “Millennium” is not in the Old Testament. The Jewish term is “kingdom.” It is in the Old Testament as well as in the four Gospels and in Acts. Duane Lindsey quotes H. C. Leupold to indicate that “islands” refers to “the distant shores of the West

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

[i.e., the Mediterranean basin], representative of all remote areas of the then-known world.”

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

Since this is Hebrew poetry, we see two parallel thoughts in this verse:

**Isaiah 49:1a Listen to Me, O islands,
And pay attention, you peoples from afar...**

Listen and Pay attention are two different verbs, both in the imperative. They are similar in meaning and function. Islands and peoples are parallel. Islands and peoples from afar (or distant peoples) are parallel.

As previously mentioned, assuming this is a divine convocation in heaven, Isaiah is the only human attendee among the angelic beings. So, knowing that there are angels assigned to various kingdoms on earth, the speaker could be addressing the peoples through their “angelic representatives.” That is speculation on my part. But it is also true that Scriptures were presented to various unbelievers.

Take for instance when Alexander the Great went through Israel (taking information from Josephus). The people in Israel were afraid of what Alexander would do to the people and the priests as he entered the country to conquer it. As Alexander approached Jerusalem, the priests dressed up in their “Sabbath best” went out to meet him. The meeting went well. Later, in Jerusalem the high priest came out with a copy of the book of Daniel. According to Josephus (Antiquities of the Jews Book XI chapter VII para 5) “And when the book of Daniel was shewed him, wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended; and as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present, but the next day he called them to him, and bade them ask what favours they pleased of him;...”

**Isaiah 49:1b ...The Lord called Me from the
womb; From the body of My mother He named
Me.**

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

Obviously, this is talking about a person. And remember, the person it references is the person who is talking.

womb/body. These two words are in parallel. They can both mean “belly.”

Isaiah 49:1c ...The Lord called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me.

Isaiah has already told us His name, “Immanuel.”

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.

And if we were hesitant, Matthew confirms this:

Matthew 1:20 But when he (Joseph) had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1:21 She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

Matthew 1:22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

Obviously, since this is a quote from Isaiah 7:14, the “prophet” mentioned is Isaiah.

Matthew 1:23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which translated means, “God with us.”

Paul reiterates this concept at the very beginning of the book of Romans:

Romans 1:1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

Romans 1:2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,

Romans 1:3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,

One more thing before we move on to verse 2. Question: Who is talking in Isaiah 49:1? If the person talking is describing His own birth and this is the birth of Jesus Christ, then this must be the pre-incarnate Christ. If I have this straight, the deity of Christ, the second person of the Trinity, is explaining his future birth as a human. Interesting.

So Isaiah 49:1 gives us a summary of Jesus’ birth.

Isaiah 49:2 He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me

2nd Servant Song – Part 1
Isaiah 49:1-13

a select arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver.

Sword and arrow. Sword is for close combat. Arrow is for distant combat.

Isaiah 49:3 He said to Me, “You are My Servant, Israel, In Whom I will show My glory.”

Some have problem with the Servant being called “Israel.” Everyone knows that Israel is the nation Israel, right? Except that is God’s name for Jacob. And sometimes Jesus Christ is topologically referred to as Israel.

Hosea 11:1 When Israel was a youth I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.

Compare that to Matthew’s application of this verse to Jesus Christ.

Matthew 2:14 So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt.

Matthew 2:15 He remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called My Son.”