

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Servant Song – Part 2

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.

The following is the lead-in to an article by Liel Leibovitz on Commentary magazine. The article lead-in is quoted several places on the internet (Twitter, Richochet, Freerepublic.com). His article is only one among many on the internet on the new paganism.

“When a 28-year-old person identifying as transgender shot up a Tennessee school in March, killing three children and three adults, the usual grim afterlife of tragedy was underlined by an odd note: One by one, media outlets rushed to apologize for “misgendering” the shooter, who, they explained, had been born female but had recently begun identifying as male.”

“How to make sense of such a statement? And what to do when a newspaper headline tells you about a “trans woman left sobbing in JFK Airport after TSA agent hit her testicles”? Appealing to reason hardly helps, as J.K. Rowling and others learned the hard way when trying to ask simple questions such as how one might define sex if not according to the chromosomes rooted in literally every cell of our bodies. Instead, anyone wishing to find his way through the thicket of American public

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discourse these days should start by embracing one simple and terrifying idea: The barbarians are at the gates.”

I mean this almost literally. Everywhere you turn these days, pagans are afoot, busily hacking away at the Christian and Jewish foundations of American life and replacing them with a cosmology that would have been absolutely coherent to followers of, say, Voltumna, the Etruscan earth god, or to those who worshipped the Celt tribal protector Toutatis.

The full article can be found at the following address. However, it may require a subscription.

<https://www.commentary.org/articles/liel-leibovitz/paganism-afflicts-america/>

COMMENTARY is America’s premier monthly magazine of opinion and a pivotal voice in American intellectual life. Since its inception in 1945, and increasingly after it emerged as the flagship of neoconservatism in the 1970s, the magazine has been consistently engaged with several large, interrelated questions: the fate of democracy and of democratic ideas in a world threatened by totalitarian ideologies; the state of American and Western security; the future of the Jews, Judaism, and Jewish culture in Israel, the United States, and around the world; and the preservation of high culture in an age of political correctness and the collapse of critical standards.

NBC News in an opinion piece from October 2022 added some statistics:

“In 1990, Trinity College in Connecticut estimated there were 8,000 adherents of Wicca. In 2008, the U.S. Census Bureau figure was 342,000. A 2014 Pew Research Center study increased that projection several times over in assessing that 0.4% of Americans identified as pagan, Wiccan or New Age. (Most modern pagan worship, of which Wicca is one type, draws on pre-Christian traditions in revering nature.)

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By 2050, it said, the number of Americans practicing “other religions” — faiths outside Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism — would triple “due largely to switching into other religions (such as Wicca and pagan religions).””

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/paganism-witchcraft-are-making-comeback-rcna54444>

There is even a 2016 article titled “The Return of Baal to the Holy Land.”

Are you ready, as a Christian, to be in the minority and discriminated against?

There is another item that must receive some attention. That is the explosion in the use of fentanyl. Sometimes fentanyl is added to other street drugs to enhance the effect. The problem is that fentanyl in very small quantities can be deadly. There is also another drug that is “legal” for horses but can also be deadly when humans use it. That is Xylazine. The antidote for fentanyl is narcan. But there is no antidote for Xylazine. My personal opinion is that taking any of these drugs is insane. Some young people are aware of the problem with fentanyl and are using “fentanyl test strips.”



From Fox News: <https://www.foxnews.com/us/states-legalize-fentanyl-test-strips>

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I am coming down with a case of Zephaniah fever. Looking forward to the completion of the first three of the four Isaiah Servant Songs, there is my unfinished effort on Zephaniah. One of the evils mentioned in Zephaniah is paganism as it will be practiced by Jews during the Tribulation. Look no further than the 2016 article titled “The Return of Baal to the Holy Land.” Remember, only about 1/3 of Jews in the Tribulation will become believers. The rest will be practicing some form of anti-God religion. So you may be incredulous that anyone today would practice paganism. But as recent news articles on the internet suggest, paganism is increasing.

This brings up a question concerning Israel’s enemies. Will the old enemies be “revived?” We talk about Daniel’s vision of a revived Roman Empire. We often think in terms of modern electronics and weapons, etc. Is it possible that the earth is going through a metamorphosis that will return it to some semblance of a Roman empire as it was around 70 AD.? The return of Baal and paganism.

Billy Graham is reputed to have said the following quote. I cannot verify if he actually said that and when, but it seems to be on several websites.

“We are like people under [a] sentence of death, waiting for the date to be set. We sense that something is about to happen. We know that things cannot go on as they are. History has reached an impasse. We are now on a collision course. Something is about to give.” - Reverend Billy Graham

Many Christians today expect the rapture to happen at any time. They know the world is broken and expect history to take the next big step: The Tribulation. After the Rapture, of course. The point of this study is to demonstrate the messianic links between the Old Testament and the New.

OK, let’s make some progress in Isaiah chapter 49.

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**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.**

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

He says from the body of My Mother. It is interesting that in several of the prophecies of the Messiah there are mentions of His mother. This would lead one to speculate that they pointed to a virgin birth. Indeed, in Isaiah 7:14 it specifically says that.

The first prophecy normally associated with the Messiah is Genesis 3:15.

**Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”**

Robby Dean

“So we see a movement in the prophecies from general to specific. Genesis 3:15 predicts that it will be the seed of the woman who will defeat the serpent (Satan), and we see the shift to the third person singular pronoun, “he”, meaning the seed of the woman, “shall bruise your head,” addressing the serpent, “and you shall trample on His heel.” It appears from this verse that what happens is, they each strike a fatal blow on the other. It is necessary for the seed of the woman to defeat the serpent through His own death and then He will be raised from the dead.”

“The second key prophecy is that the seed of the woman would come through a virgin birth. Isaiah 7:14 NASB “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.” Isaiah is addressing Ahaz who

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was one of the evil kings in the southern kingdom of Judah and it is at a time when the northern kingdom of Israel has gone into an alliance with the Syrians and they are threatening to attack and conquer the southern kingdom of Judah. And not just that, but they want to replace the king in Jerusalem with someone of their own choosing. So it is a direct attack against the house of David. It goes back to the promise that God had made to David that there would always be someone from his descendants who would sit on the throne of David. The threat now is to the house of David and so God told Ahaz through Isaiah to ask for a sign. Ahaz in his false humility said he wasn't going to do that, he wasn't going to test God. Isaiah said the Lord would give him a sign anyway. "Behold a virgin" has an article, "the virgin; and the use of the article was designed to get his attention. There was a thread of thought within Judaism at that time of the Old Testament prophets that "the virgin" refers to the woman who will give birth to the seed. So the use of the article emphasizes a unique individual woman: that "the virgin shall conceive and bear a son.""

"Then there are prophecies related to calling Jesus the Son of God. Psalm 2:7 identifies the Lord's anointed, Heb. *mashiach*, as the Son of God; "this day I have begotten you" is fulfilled in passages such as Matthew 3:17 where at the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist a voice came from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." We also know that He will be a descendant of Abraham, Genesis 22:18 NASB "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." This is fulfilled in such passages as Matthew 1:1 NASB "The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Galatians 3:16 NASB "Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed". He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as {referring} to many, but {rather} to one, 'And to your seed,' that is, Christ." Numbers 24:17 tells us that he will be a descendant from Jacob. NASB "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A

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star shall come forth from Jacob...” So there is the allusion to a star, which is then fulfilled at the time of the birth of Jesus when there is a special star that is seen in the heavens.”

“Just a word about this star. Every year at Christmas time we are going to read in National Geographic or watch one of those specials on television where they are going to try to explain the star as a normal, natural phenomena. But this is not what we are referred to in Matthew’s magi account, because they saw a sign in the heavens, His star, and then they followed this star which took them directly to the house where the Lord Jesus was staying. Stars are so far away that they can’t indicate any particular individual house. So this was a special star, believed to be the glory of God, the Shekinah, that was shining to indicate the location of the birth of Jesus.”

“There is also the promise in Genesis 49:10 As Jacob was pronouncing prophecies over each of his sons. NASB “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him {shall be} the obedience of the peoples.” This has always been understood both by Jews and Christians as a messianic verse indicating that the Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah. It is indicated in Luke 3 that Jesus’ descent is through the line of Judah. Jesus is also indicated as being a son of David. Isaiah 11:1 also points out that He is a descendant of Jesse, David’s father. Jeremiah 23:5 NASB “Behold, {the} days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land.” In Isaiah 11:1 & 10 the Messiah is indicated as a Branch coming out of the root of Jesse. Jesus is a Branch from David. Passages such as Luke 3:31 indicate that Jesus is of direct descent through Nathan the son of David. The heir of David could not come through the Solomonic line; it comes through the

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line of Nathan. The purpose for the genealogy in Matthew is to show that Joseph can't be the Dad, because Joseph comes from Coniah.”

“He was born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2 NASB “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, {Too} little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.” The only way to have somebody born in Bethlehem whose goings forth are from everlasting [eternity] is if the person that is born is also an eternal being. So again and again and again in the Old Testament these prophecies about the Messiah emphasize that he is going to be born of a woman, born of a virgin, born in the line of David; He is going to be true humanity but He is going to be called Mighty God, He is from everlasting. The attributes of deity are also assigned to Him. He is called Immanuel, Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23.”

“So in Romans 1:2, the first relative clause, Paul states that the gospel was promised beforehand by the prophets in the holy Scriptures. The second clause, the prepositional clause in verse 3, also refers back to head noun, the gospel. Verse 3 is an extension of verse 2; verse 3 is on the same line adding more information related to the gospel. The gospel was “concerning His Son,” Jesus Christ our Lord. There is an emphasis here that Jesus Christ is His Son. That emphasizes the pre-existence of Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus did not become the Son of God when He was physically born, when He was baptized by John the Baptist, or at the resurrection; He was eternally the Son of God, recognizing that the Father was eternally the Father. These are distinctions or titles that are made to indicate their respective functions and roles within the plan of God. But Jesus is eternally the Son. So He is referred to here, “concerning His Son”; and NKJV “Jesus,” the Hebrew word meaning Savior, “Christ,” the Greek word for the anointed one or appointed one, the equivalent of the Hebrew word “Messiah.””



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“There are prophecies in Isaiah that speak of the fact that the Messiah will appear and will heal many, give sight to the blind, and He will heal the lame. Isaiah 61 is one of those passages that emphasize the role of the Messiah and that this would be one of the signs. Another passage is Isaiah 53, which is one of the most specific prophecies about the death of the Messiah. In that chapter there are twelve things that are pointed out about the Messiah: He would be rejected by His people, He would be called a man of sorrows, that He would live a life of rejection and suffering. He was despised by others; He carried our sorrows, He was smitten and afflicted by God, indicating that he would be judged by God. He was pierced for our transgressions, indicating a substitutionary payment; He was wounded for our sins; He suffered like a lamb, showing that the sacrificial lamb was a picture of the substitutionary payment of Jesus for our sins. He would die with the wicked; He had two thieves on either side of Him on the cross; He was sinless and did not deserve the punishment that He received, He had committed no sin; and while He was being punished He prayed for others. Other passages such as Psalm 22:16 indicate that His hands and His feet would be pierced. Zechariah 12:10 indicates that His side would be pierced, and in Psalm 22:18 it indicates that they would cast lots for His garments. All of that was fulfilled as prophesied. In terms of chronology almost the precise week of His death was predicted in the revelation given to Daniel in Daniel 9:24-26. His resurrection is predicted in Psalm 16:10 and His ascension was predicted in Psalm 110:1.”

The reason for this detour is we ran across a passage, Isaiah 49:1, that points to Jesus Christ in His humanity. There are many which have been fulfilled. Yet, there are many so called conservative Christians who do not believe the Old Testament is a Messianic book. Michael Rydelnik wrote a book on the “The Messianic Hope,” saying in his introduction, “There is a growing movement among evangelicals away from interpreting the Hebrew Bible as a messianic book.”

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Are you prepared?

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

**Sword.** According to a comment in the NIV Study Bible, the sword is a symbol of divine judgment.

**Revelation 1:16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.**

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

**My Servant, Israel.** Many point to “Israel” and say this servant is the nation Israel. But context is key here. The context is of a person, a man. Indeed, there are times when Jesus is a type of Israel as in:

**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.”**

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The servant here, is the Messiah, Jesus Christ. The Matthew passage applies the “Son” typologically to Jesus.

**Glory.** There are several New Testament passages that identify the glory of Jesus.

**John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

In Isaiah 49:1 Isaiah quotes the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Trinity saying he will become flesh through birth to a woman. Here in John chapter 1, the Word, Jesus Christ, became flesh and was glorified.

**John 2:11 This beginning of *His* signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.**

Referring to other passages in the book of Isaiah, John says:

**John 12:41 These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.**

There are other passages that could be quoted. The point is, that Jesus manifested His glory even in His humanity.

Per Constable:

“Yahweh called His Servant "Israel." Israel would indeed prove to be an instrument of God by which He demonstrated His glory, but in the context, the Servant appears to be an individual. Messiah was "Israel," in that He was the personal embodiment of the ideal Israel: what the nation should have been but never attained. Furthermore, He was the "Prince

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with God" which neither the nation nor its namesake (Israel) ever fully became.”

**Isaiah 49:4 But I said, “I have toiled in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing and vanity; Yet surely the justice due to Me is with the Lord, And My reward with My God.”**

From a human perspective, Jesus died on the cross and did not bring in the Kingdom. He was taunted and appeared to unbelievers to have accomplished nothing:

**Matthew 27:41 In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying,**

**Matthew 27:42 “He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him.**

**Matthew 27:43 He trusts in God; let God rescue Him now, if He delights in Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”**

**Matthew 27:44 The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words.**

**Isaiah 49:5 And now says the Lord, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel**

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**might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of the Lord, And My God is My strength),**

**Isaiah 49:6 He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”**

**John 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”**

And yet, the fulfillment of Jesus work will have to wait until the Millennium/the Kingdom which is brought in by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent.