

A Trek Through Isaiah 73 - 55:8-13 & Servant Songs (Part 1)

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For this week:

- The whole world invited 55:1-13 (continued)
- The first servant song 42:1-9

Context

Worldwide Salvation 54:1 - 55:13	
Zion restored 54:1-17	The whole world invited 55:1-13

Worldwide Salvation 54:1 - 55:13

- The Whole World Invited 55:1-13
 - V1-2 Free provision_for every need
 - V3-5 Co-equal citizenship
 - V6-7 The way of salvation
 - V8-9 The **incomparable** God

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

- For.
 - The first of two reasons why the seeking and repentance of v6-7 are effective.
- my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.
 - Chiasitic structure in the suffixes: my - your - your - my
 - Not. Emphatic: God is completely different from mankind.
 - Thoughts. In His thinking.
 - Ways. In His actions.
 - This is faith's answer to the question, "Why?"
- as the heavens are higher than the earth
 - A picture of the gap between God and mankind.
 - God's thoughts and ways are righteous; people's thoughts and ways are wicked.
 - God's thoughts and ways are so high that people cannot comprehend them.
 - Mankind is unable to bridge the gap between them and God, but in Christ the gap is bridged.

■ V10-11 The sure word

10 “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

- For
 - The second reason why seeking and repentance are effective.
- Picture of rain and snow watering the earth and bringing forth a crop.
 - Rain and snow come down from heaven.
 - They do not return. They accomplish God’s purpose.
 - They water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout.
Transformation
 - giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater. The result.
- Likewise with God’s word
 - Goes out from God’s mouth
 - Does not return empty. Accomplishes His purpose.
 - By implication: brings about transformation, new life, much fruit.

■ V12-13 Promise of a new world

12 “For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. 13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the LORD, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

- For.
 - Introducing the sure result for those who respond.
- Go out
 - As in the Exodus, from bondage to freedom; from alienation back to God.
- Be led forth.
 - In a festive procession
 - By the Lord Himself = the Servant
 - Is 52:12 For you shall not go out in haste, and you shall not go in flight, for the LORD will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.
- Joy...peace
 - Describe how the people will go out
 - Transformed emotions
 - Transformed relationships
 - Complete security
- the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. 13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
 - Transformed environment
 - Mountains and hills. Not obstacles but rejoicing.
 - Reversal of the curse of Gen 3:18: ...cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; 18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you...
- it shall make a name for the LORD
 - Name. Revealed character.
 - As Is 9:6 ...and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.
 - An eternal memorial.

Summary

- The whole world is invited to share in the blessings brought by the Servant.
- There is provision for every need, without cost.
- There is co-equal citizenship in the kingdom of God.
- Now is the time to seek the LORD, while He may be found.
- Because His ways are not our ways.
- Because His word is effective and does not return empty.
- Those that answer the call will see joy and peace forever.

The Servant Songs

Four passages that describe the Servant and His work.

Each has a tailpiece which expands on the song.

Good in this season to review these.

The First Servant Song: The Great Solution 42:1-9

- Introduction and context
 - In the section of comfort and hope for the Gentiles (41:21 - 42:17).
 - They are lost in idolatry which is empty and brings no profit.
 - 42:28-29 But when I look, there is no one; among these there is no counselor who, when I ask, gives an answer. 29 Behold, they are all a delusion; their works are nothing; their metal images are empty wind.
 - The Servant is introduced and commissioned as the One to bring hope.

- The Servant presented 42:1-4

1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. 2 He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; 3 a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. 4 He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.

- behold

- 3rd time

- v24 Behold worthless idols
 - v29 Behold pathetic idolaters
 - v1 Behold My servant

- here is the LORD's answer to the plight of the world

- V1a My **servant**

- Previously used of the nation Israel (41:8), but the nation could not live up to the name.

- Here seems to refer to Someone greater who stands in a special relationship to the LORD: (1) chosen (2) delighting the LORD (3) having the Spirit

- Isaiah is introducing the greater Servant: the Messiah who will redeem His people from their sins.

- Three characteristics of the Servant

- my chosen
 - Selected for the work of the LORD
 - in whom my soul delights;
 - God is delighted in Him with His entire being.
 - As Mt 3:17 a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."
 - I have put my Spirit upon him
 - The LORD's personal presence equipping the Servant for His work

- The Servant commissioned 42:5-9
Tailpiece to the first Servant song.

- V5 God the **Creator**

5 Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it:

- God. ha el The God.
- the Lord. Yahweh.
- Creator of all
 - Of the heavens
 - Of the earth
 - Of all people
- created ... stretched ...spread out ... gives
 - Heb participles: continuing action
 - Creating and maintaining.
- Breath...spirit. Life

o V6-7 The Servant **called**

6 “I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, 7 to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

■ I have called you

- Speaking to the Servant
- Called. Chosen, designated, prepared.

■ I have called you in righteousness;

- In accord with God’s righteous character
- For God’s righteous purpose
- Re Ro 3:21-26 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

■ I will take you by the hand and keep you;

- The Servant is not left alone. God is with Him..
- Luther: God would hold the Servant by the hand “namely, for this reason, that Satan and the world with all their might and wisdom will resist Thy work.”

■ I will give you

- The Servant Himself is the covenant and the light.
 - o The relationship is mediated through Him
 - 1 Tim 2:5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.
 - o All the blessings are found in Him
 - Col 2:2-3 ...which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
 - o Life and light are found in Him.
 - Jn 11:25 I am the resurrection and the life.
 - Jn 8:12 I am the light of the world.

- Parallel structure
 - Covenant - light
 - Covenant: defined relationship between parties
 - Light: grace
 - People - nations
 - For the whole world
- to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.
 - The work of the Servant
 - To restore sight to those blinded by sin
 - To free those in bondage to sin

○ V8 God the **only** One

8 I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.

- I am the Lord; that is my name
 - The LORD. Yahweh.
 - God's personal name revealed to His people.
 - The God of the covenant.
- my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.
 - God is exclusive: (1) There is none like Him (2) He will not deny Himself
 - God is jealous: He will not allow the praise that is rightfully His to go to another.
 - Note now the honor of Yahweh is bound up in the Servant.

○ V9 **New** things replacing the old

9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them."

- the former things have come to pass
 - Previous prophecies.
- new things I now declare
 - The person and work of the Servant (42:1-7)
- before they spring forth
 - Picture from agriculture: seed in the ground before it germinates
- I tell you of them.
 - God, being God, knows future events and reveals them.
 - The prophet speaks of events before they are visible in history.

Summary

- The Gentiles are lost in idolatry.
- The Servant is called and commissioned.
- He is One in whom God delights, and upon whom is God's Spirit.
- His work is to bring God's word to the nations.
- He will do this gently.
- He will persevere until He has brought God's word to the whole world.
- He is given as a covenant for the peoples.
- He brings light to those in darkness, and freedom to those in bondage.

For next week: The remaining Servant songs

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