

# ISAIAH LESSON 44

## Second Servant Song<sup>a</sup>

(Isaiah 49:1-21)

Isaiah 49:1-21 Revised Standard Version (RSV)

### Second Servant Song: Light of the Nations<sup>b</sup>

**49** Listen to me, O coastlands,  
and hearken, you peoples from afar.  
The Lord<sup>c</sup> called me from the womb,  
from the body of my mother he named my name.<sup>d</sup>  
<sup>2</sup> He made my mouth like a sharp sword,  
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;  
he made me a polished arrow,  
in his quiver he hid me away.<sup>e</sup>  
<sup>3</sup> And he said to me, “You are my servant,  
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”<sup>f</sup>  
<sup>4</sup> But I said, “I have labored in vain,  
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;  
yet surely my right is with the Lord,  
and my recompense with my God<sup>g</sup>.”<sup>h</sup>  
<sup>5</sup> And now the Lord says,  
who formed me from the womb to be his servant,  
to bring Jacob back to him,  
and that Israel might be gathered to him,  
for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord,  
and my God has become my strength—<sup>i</sup>  
<sup>6</sup> he says:  
“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant  
to raise up the tribes of Jacob  
and to restore the preserved of Israel;  
I will give you as a light to the nations,  
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”<sup>j</sup>  
<sup>7</sup> Thus says the Lord,  
the Redeemer<sup>k</sup> of Israel and his Holy One,  
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations,  
the servant of rulers:  
“Kings shall see and arise;  
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;  
because of the Lord, who is faithful,  
the Holy One of Israel<sup>l</sup>, who has chosen you.”<sup>m</sup>

### Compassion on Zion’s Children<sup>n</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Thus says the Lord:  
“In a time of favor I have answered you,  
in a day of salvation I have helped you;

I have kept you and given you  
     as a covenant to the people,  
 to establish the land,  
     to apportion the desolate heritages;<sup>o</sup>  
<sup>9</sup> saying to the prisoners, ‘Come forth,’  
     to those who are in darkness, ‘Appear.’  
 They shall feed along the ways,  
     on all bare heights shall be their pasture;<sup>p</sup>  
<sup>10</sup> they shall not hunger or thirst,  
     neither scorching wind nor sun shall smite them,  
 for he who has pity on them will lead them,  
     and by springs of water will guide them.<sup>q</sup>  
<sup>11</sup> And I will make all my mountains a way,  
     and my highways shall be raised up.<sup>r</sup>  
<sup>12</sup> Lo, these shall come from afar,  
     and lo, these from the north and from the west,  
     and these from the land of Syene.”<sup>s</sup>  
<sup>13</sup> Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;  
     break forth, O mountains, into singing!  
 For the Lord has comforted his people,  
     and will have compassion on his afflicted.<sup>t</sup>  
<sup>14</sup> But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me,  
     my Lord<sup>u</sup> has forgotten me.”<sup>v</sup>  
<sup>15</sup> “Can a woman forget her sucking child,  
     that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb?  
 Even these may forget,  
     yet I will not forget you.”<sup>w</sup>  
<sup>16</sup> Behold, I have graven you on the palms of my hands;  
     your walls are continually before me.<sup>x</sup>  
<sup>17</sup> Your builders outstrip your destroyers,  
     and those who laid you waste go forth from you.<sup>y</sup>  
<sup>18</sup> Lift up your eyes round about and see;  
     they all gather, they come to you.  
 As I live, says the Lord,  
     you shall put them all on as an ornament,  
     you shall bind them on as a bride does.<sup>z</sup>  
<sup>19</sup> “Surely your waste and your desolate places  
     and your devastated land—  
 surely now you will be too narrow for your inhabitants,  
     and those who swallowed you up will be far away.<sup>aa</sup>  
<sup>20</sup> The children born in the time of your bereavement  
     will yet say in your ears:  
 ‘The place is too narrow for me;  
     make room for me to dwell in.’<sup>bb</sup>  
<sup>21</sup> Then you will say in your heart:  
     ‘Who has borne me these?’  
 I was bereaved and barren,  
     exiled and put away,

but who has brought up these?  
Behold, I was left alone;  
whence then have these come?''''cc

**Revised Standard Version (RSV)**

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<sup>a</sup> **Second Servant Song** – Scripture, and particularly the Prophets, often represent the words of God in the form of poetry, which allows all the imagery and poetic devices available to poets, thus enhancing the meaning, yet rendering much of it subject to multiple interpretations and meanings. This often enhances the meaning of these passages by allowing them to apply to multiple historical periods. Thus a single passage in Isaiah might have a specific meaning in connection with the Exile in Babylon, yet also be applicable to the history of the Jewish people more generally, and provide a foreshadowing of the coming of Messiah, and provide an application specific to our own lives thousands of years after the events described. Chapters 40-48 of Isaiah chastise Israel for not trusting God, but also provide comfort to them that God will come to set them free from Babylon to return to the Land. In these chapters, God discloses his plan to send Cyrus, King of Persia to defeat Babylon. There is an implication that the Jewish people in Babylon do not like the plan because it would seem to involve simply replacing one gentile ruler for another, and that they would have preferred a Davidic conqueror who would establish an independent Jewish Kingdom rather than a vassal state. In these chapters God also mocks the gentiles for trusting in idols that they make with their own hands. God demonstrates that only He is capable of predicting events and bringing them about. His challenges to the nations and their gods and idols to prove they could do the same were unanswered. In this Chapter 48, which completes an inclusio involving Is. 40:1-5 and Is. 48:20-22, God chastises the Jewish people in Exile for not trusting in God and for rejecting God's plan for their salvation. In this regard there may be similarities to the way in which the Jewish leaders of Jesus' time, and even some of the disciples, expected and desired not a servant Messiah, but a military Messiah who would expel the Romans and establish an independent Davidic Kingdom.

<sup>b</sup> **Second Servant Song: Light of the Nations.** This passage is generally called the second of the servant songs, though there is disagreement as to whether it should end with verse 6, verse 7 or verse 9. It takes up much the same theme as the first (Is 42:1-8) while concentrating on certain aspects of the Servant's mission including His being chosen from the beginning for the mission (v. 1 and 5), that He will regather the Jewish people (v. 5), and that He will bring light to the gentiles (v. 6). It also includes reference to what appears to be failure (v. 4 and 7), of His trust in God alone (v. 4 and 5) and His final triumph (v. 7). [insert references to light/darkness Gn 1:2, Jn 1, etc etc]

<sup>c</sup> **Lord - Yahweh, or Jehovah** (יהוה), YHWH, written without vowel markings, unpronounced by Jews and referred to as the Tetragrammaton. See Note in the Introduction to this Study. **YHWH** appears here and in verses 4, 5 (twice), 6, 7 (thrice), 8, 13, 14 and 18.

<sup>d</sup> (1) Is 7:14, 9:6, 11:11, 33:13, 41:1, 41:8-9, 42:1-4, 42:6, 42:12, 43:1, 44:2, 44:24, 45:22, 46:3, 51:5, 55:3, 57:19, 60:9, 66:19; Ex 33:12; Ps 2:7, 71:5-6; Jr 1:5, 1:9; Zep 2:11; Mt 1:20-21; Lk 1:15, 1:31-31, 2:10-11; Jn 10:36; Gal 1:15; Eph 2:17; Heb 12:25; 1Pt 1:20

**Coastlands** refers to the distant lands in the West known only from their coasts, the further extent of the then known world. The **Peoples** (אֲמֹלִים, *leom*; people/nations, but without the connotation of being gentiles as with *goyim*, and sometimes referring to individual people rather than nations) **from afar** refer to people living outside the Land.

**Called** or chosen **from the womb** indicates that the mission of this servant was determined by God before the servant was born. This is frequently the case for God's chosen spokesmen such as Jeremiah ( ), John the Baptist ( ) and the Apostle Paul ( ). Thus, this servant was called and equipped to bring God's message to a world-wide audience before he was born. The servant was named before he was born (Mt 1:21-23; see also Gn 3:15; Ps 22:10; Is 7:14; Mi 5:2).

<sup>e</sup> (2) Is 11:4, 42:1, 50:4, 51:16, 61:1-3; Ex 33:22; Dt 32:23; Jb 40:18; Ps 45:2-5, 45:5, 64:3, 91:1; Jr 1:18, 15:19-20; Hos 6:5; Hab 3:11; Zec 9:13; Lk 23:46; Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12; Rv 1:16, 2:12-16, 19:15

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The words (Eph 6:17; Rv 2:12-16, 19:15) of this servant have the cutting edge of a **sharp sword** and the penetrating force of a **polished arrow** (Jr 1:10, 23:29). The message of the servant, or perhaps the servant himself, is hidden and protected by God so that their sharpness cannot be dulled.

<sup>f</sup> (3) Is 20:3, 41:8-9, 42:1, 43:21, 44:23, 49:5-7, 50:10, 52:13, 53:10-11; Lv 10:3; Ezk 34:23-24; Zec 3:8; Mt 3:17, 17:5; Lk 2:10-14; Jn 12:28, 13:31-32, 15:8, 17:1-4; Ac 3:13; Eph 1:6; Php 2:6-11; 1Pt 2:9

God redeemed Israel, His disobedient servant, from Babylon for His own Name's sake, or to be glorified (Is 48:\_\_\_, 60:21, 61:3; other translations have "show my beauty") and because it was in his character to do what He had promised (\_\_\_). Yet ultimately, if God were to be glorified through Israel, there must be, according to the flesh, a sinless descendant of Abraham (Rm 9:5), yet set apart from sinners (Heb 7:26). Only the perfect sacrifice of this sinless **servant**, that is the type of an obedient Israel, who God called His son (Ps 2:7), could rescue the world from sin.

<sup>g</sup> **God - Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים), the plural form of the generic *el* (אֱל). See Note in the Introduction to this Study. אֱלֹהִים appears here and in verse 5.

<sup>h</sup> (4) Is 35:4, 40:10, 40:27, 45:25, 50:6-8, 53:10-12, 54:17, 55:2, 59:18, 62:11, 65:2, 65:23; Lv 26:20; Jb 27:2; Ps 22:22-31; Ezk 3:19; Mt 17:17, 23:37, 26:39, 27:46; Lk 24:26; Jn 1:11, 17:4-5; Rm 10:21; 1Co 15:58; 2Co 2:15, 12:15; Gal 4:11; Php 2:9-10; Heb 12:2

It is said of this new **servant** will **labor in vain**, which is akin to the woman in childbirth for whom no child will be born. Yet because God will be with this servant, the labor will not be in vain and will accomplish its purpose (\_\_\_). Nevertheless, redemption for the world would come through the suffering of this servant, during which the servant would offer up prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears (Heb 5:7). Although the servant's efforts will appear to be **vanity** (Ec\_\_\_), that is, accomplishing nothing, God promises that He will be with those efforts (Lk 22:43).

<sup>i</sup> (5) Is 11:12, 12:2, 27:12, 43:4, 44:2, 50:4, 52:13, 56:8; Dt 30:4; Ps 18:1, 110:1-3, 139:13; Mt 3:17, 11:27, 15:24, 17:5, 21:37-41, 23:37, 28:18; Lk 19:42; Jn 3:35, 5:20-27, 17:5; Ac 10:36; Rm 15:8; Gal 1:15; Eph 1:20-22; 1Th 2:15-16;

The phrase **Jacob back to Him** indicates that the Servant's commission is to bring the Jewish people back to God. Thus, the servant cannot be the Nation of Israel itself, but some other servant, and in particular an individual representing the Nation in the same way that Adam represented all his descendants (Rm 5:12; 1Co 15:45). Jesus will come to represent, in some way, all of mankind as a second Adam (Rm 6:1-10). Although the Servant will confront opposition and lack of faith, God will glorify and honor him for his labors. The servant will rely upon God for the fulfillment of his commission. In the LXX the Servant is the one who is gathered which implies that he will be brought near to God who takes delight in him, "And now thus says the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be His own servant, to gather Jacob to Him and Israel." In QIsa the object of "formed" is "you" rather than "he." In the Targum of Isaiah, the "servant" was to bring the "house of Jacob" back to God's service and bring Israel "near to the fear of him."

<sup>j</sup> (6) Is 1:9, 9:2, 11:10, 24:14-16, 26:18, 42:1-6, 44:5, 45:14, 46:13, 48:20, 51:4, 52:10, 55:5, 60:3; Dt 30:4; 2Ki 3:18, 20:10; Ps 2:8, 37:28, 48:10, 72:11, 97:10, 98:2-3; Hag 2:7; Zec 8:22; Mt 28:19; Lk 2:32, 24:46-47; Jn 1:4-9, 11:52; Ac 13:46-47, 26:18-23

**Israel** (יִשְׂרָאֵל, *Yisrael*) and **Jacob** (יַעֲקֹב, *Yaaqob*), which refer to the same person, the patriarch and common ancestor of the Jewish people, are reversed in some texts. This verse makes it even clearer that this **servant** cannot be the Nation of Israel, but some other unique individual who will not just redeem Israel, which would be **too light a thing**, but also be **a light for the nations** (Lk 2:30-32; Jn 8:12, 9:5) and bring God's **salvation** (Heb, the origin of the name of the Messiah; Mt 1:21) to the gentiles (Is 2:1-5, 11:10, 25:6-9, 40:5, 66:23).

<sup>k</sup> Redeemer

<sup>l</sup> **Holy One of Israel** - *Qedosh Yisrael* (קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל), is used as a name for God approximately 45 times, most often in Isaiah.

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<sup>m</sup> (7) Is 1:4, 14:1, 19:21-23, 27:13, 41:8-9, 41:14, 42:1, 43:10, 43:14, 43:20, 44:1-2, 45:4, 48:7, 48:17, 49:23, 50:6-7, 52:15, 53:3, 55:5, 60:3, 60:10, 60:16, 65:9, 65:15, 65:22, 66:23; Gn 27:29; Dt 7:9; Ezr 1:2; Ps 2:10-12, 22:6-8, 22:29, 68:31, 69:7-9, 69:19, 72:10-11, 86:9; Zec 11:8; Mt 20:28, 26:67, 27:38-44; Lk 22:27, 23:18-23, 23:35; Jn 18:40, 19:6, 19:15; 1Co 1:9; 1Pt 2:4; Rv 3:7, 11:15

The use of the term **Redeemer** of Israel (\_\_\_) emphasizes the role of God as the one who rescues and protects the Jewish people through the ages (Is 41:14; Jb 19:25). Using **Holy One** (\_\_\_) to refer to God highlights His judgment (\_\_\_). The servant who will bring light to the nations which will not be overcome (Jn 1:5; 1Tm 6:15; 1Jn 5:4), and to whom the rulers of nations will bow down (Is 52:15, 60:14), will nevertheless be **abhorred** and **despised** by those nations. The Lutheran Book of Concord, Formula, Solid Declaration Article V, Section 23, citing this verse, states, "FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD THESE TWO PROCLAMATIONS [KINDS OF DOCTRINES] HAVE BEEN EVER AND EVER INCULCATED ALONGSIDE OF EACH OTHER IN THE CHURCH OF GOD, WITH A PROPER DISTINCTION. FOR THE DESCENDANTS OF THE VENERATED PATRIARCHS, AS ALSO THE PATRIARCHS THEMSELVES, NOT ONLY CALLED TO MIND CONSTANTLY HOW IN THE BEGINNING MAN HAD BEEN CREATED RIGHTEOUS AND HOLY BY GOD, AND THROUGH THE FRAUD OF THE SERPENT HAD TRANSGRESSED GOD'S COMMAND, HAD BECOME A SINNER, AND HAD CORRUPTED AND PRECIPITATED HIMSELF WITH ALL HIS POSTERITY INTO DEATH AND ETERNAL CONDEMNATION, BUT ALSO ENCOURAGED AND COMFORTED THEMSELVES AGAIN BY THE PREACHING CONCERNING THE SEED OF THE WOMAN, WHO WOULD BRUISE THE SERPENT'S HEAD, GEN. 3:15; LIKEWISE, CONCERNING THE SEED OF ABRAHAM, IN WHOM ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED, GEN. 22:18; LIKEWISE, CONCERNING DAVID'S SON, WHO SHOULD RESTORE AGAIN THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL AND BE A LIGHT TO THE HEATHEN, PS. 110:1; **Is. 49:6**; LUKE 2:32, WHO WAS WOUNDED FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS, AND BRUISED FOR OUR INIQUITIES, BY WHOSE STRIPES WE ARE HEALED, IS. 53:5."

<sup>n</sup> **Compassion on Zion's Children.**

<sup>o</sup> (8) Is 5:2, 26:3, 27:3, 41:10, 42:1, 42:6, 44:26, 49:19, 50:7-9, 51:3, 51:16, 54:3, 58:12, 60:10, 60:21, 61:2-4; Lv 25:10; Nu 34:14; Ps 2:8, 37:9, 69:13, 75:3; Ezk 36:10, 36:33; Am 9:11-14; Mt 26:28; Jn 11:41-42; Ac 2:24-32; 2Co 6:2; Eph 1:6, 2:12-19; Heb 5:7, 8:6, 12:24

There will be a time of God's choosing, probably referring to the Jubilee (Lv 25) "year of the Lord's favor" during which the land will be returned to its original owners and slaves set free (Is 49:9, 61:1; Lk 4:16-21), when God will deliver the people of Israel and allow them to return to the Land. This time is called the day of salvation (Heb \_\_\_; Mt 26:28). The Hebrew could be either a future tense or a past tense, and has been translated both ways. The person to whom is being referred to as "you" here is ambiguous. This person might be the servant being referred to in verses 1-7 making this and following verses refer to a future return of diaspora Jews to the Land, or it might refer to Cyrus allowing the return of the exiles in Babylon, or to both. Others have suggested it refers to Isaiah himself though that makes no sense unless Isaiah refers to "second Isaiah" who wrote in the time of the Exile (see note on Is \_\_\_).

<sup>p</sup> (9) Is 5:17, 9:2, 41:18, 42:7, 42:16, 42:18-22, 52:2, 55:1-2, 60:1-2, 61:1, 65:13; Dt 32:13; Ps 22:26, 23:1-2, 69:33, 102:20, 107:10-16, 146:7; Ezk 34:13-15, 34:23, 34:29; Jl 3:18; Zec 9:11-12; Lk 1:79, 4:18-19; Jn 6:53-58, 8:12, 10:9; Ac 26:18; 2Co 4:4-6; Eph 5:8, 5:14; Col 1:13; 1Th 5:5-6; 1Pt 2:9

The **prisoners** will be called out of **darkness** or dark places (Heb \_\_\_) to show themselves in the light (in some translations, "to be free") to metaphorically graze in good pasture, that is, be provided for as sheep are led to good pasture by their shepherd (Ps 23 \_\_\_). Depending upon the antecedent of "you" in the prior verse, this might refer to being called out of Babylon by Cyrus, a dark place because of its idol worship, or to God's call on our own lives to put away the darkness and serve the Lord (Rm \_\_\_).

<sup>q</sup> (10) Is 4:5-6, 11:6, 14:4, 25:4, 32:2, 33:16, 35:7, 40:3-5, 40:11, 41:17-20, 43:19, 48:20-22, 54:10; Ps 23:2-4, 116:5, 121:5-6; Jr 31:9; Ezk 34:23; Mt 5:6; Jn 4:1, 6:35, 10:3-4; Rv 7:16-17

Again, the meaning of this verse depends largely on the antecedent of "you" in verse 9, who is also the person **who has pity** on the people. If "you" is Cyrus, then this is a promise that the returning exiles will have a safe journey being provided water on the way much as in the Exodus. But, as implied by its quotation in Revelation (Rv 7:16-17), if you is the Servant of verses 1-7, it is a description of heaven, or of the Millennial Kingdom.

<sup>r</sup> (11) Is 11:16, 19:23, 35:5-10, 40:3-4, 41:17-20, 43:19-20, 57:14, 62:10; Ps 107:4-7; Lk 3:4-5; Jn 14:6

This passage is similar to other passages in Isaiah about leveling the land and building roadways and **highways** to Jerusalem (Is 35:5-10, 40:3-4, 62:10, \_\_\_) reinforcing their possible Millennial interpretation.

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<sup>s</sup> (12) Is 2:2-3, 11:10-11, 43:5-6, 60:4, 60:9-14, 66:19-20; Ps 22:27, 72:10-11, 72:17, 107:3; Mi 4:2; Zec 2:11, 8:20-23; Mt 8:11; Lk 13:29; Rv 7:9, 11:15

Syene is modern day Aswan, though the meaning of the Hebrew (\_\_\_) is uncertain. The location in the South makes sense since the North and West are both mentioned. Syene was also the location of a Jewish settlement in Egypt that existed long prior to the Persian conquest of Egypt in 525 B.C. There was, during the Babylonian Exile, already a Jewish diaspora throughout the ancient world. God had promised to regather His people in Jerusalem (Dt 30:4; Jr 31:8-10; Mt 24:31). While it is not clear whether this regathering refers to the regathering after the Babylonian Exile, or to a future regathering upon the return of the Messiah, the failure to mention the East, that is, Babylon, may indicate the latter is the better interpretation.

<sup>t</sup> (13) Is 12:1, 40:1-2, 42:10-11, 44:23, 51:3, 51:12, 52:9, 54:7-10, 55:12, 61:2,3, 66:13-14; Ps 96:11-13, 98:4-9; Jr 31:13; Lk 2:13-14, 15:10; 2Co 7:6; 2Th 2:16-17; Rv 5:8-13, 7:9-12

The heavens and the earth, that is, everything and everyone, and encouraged to **sing** and **shout** for joy because of what God has done for His people. Similar songs appear elsewhere in Isaiah (Is 12:1-\_, 24:16, 25:1, 30:29, 54:1) and in the Scriptures more generally (\_\_\_). The use of **comforting** (heb\_\_\_) is often used of the Lord reminding His people of past events of God protecting His people, and looking forward to similar events in the future.

<sup>u</sup> **Lord** - *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי), see note on the Names of God in the introduction.

<sup>v</sup> (14) Is 37:22, 40:27, 44:21, 50:1, 51:17-52:2, 54:1-14, 62:4; Ps 13:1, 22:1-2, 31:22, 42:9, 77:6-9, 89:38-46; Jr 23:39, 31:20; Lm 5:20; Hos 11:8-9; Rm 11:1-5

To the Jews in Babylon, because of their lack of faith, it seems that God has abandoned them to endless exile. Yet Isaiah's prophecies have promised redemption. In our own day, things often seem so dark that we might feel that God has abandoned us. But for the believer, it is not so. Even for those confident of God's protection, there is still a longing for the Messiah's return, Maranatha (\_\_\_; Rv 6:\_\_\_). Citing verses 14-16, the Westminster Larger Catechism (1647), in answer to Question 63 regarding the "special privileges of the visible church, states, in part, "THE VISIBLE CHURCH HATH THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING UNDER GOD'S SPECIAL CARE AND GOVERNMENT . . ."

<sup>w</sup> (15) Is 43:1, 44:21, 66:13; Lv 26:29; Dt 28:56-57; 1Ki 3:26-27; 2Ki 6:28-29, 11:1-2; Ps 9:18, 27:10, 103:13; Jr 31:20; Lm 4:3, 4:10; Hos 11:1; Mal 3:17; Mt 7:11; Rm 1:31, 11:28-29

God is likened to a nursing mother who could never forget or abandon her child. Indeed, even if a mother could forget her child, God will never abandon His people.

<sup>x</sup> (16) Is 26:1, 54:12, 60:10, 60:18, 62:6-7; Ex 13:9; Song 8:6; Ps 48:12-13; Jr 22:24; Hag 2:23; Rv 13:16, 21:10-21 God speaks to His people telling them that He has written their name upon his hands so that He could not possibly forget them, and indeed that their well-being is constantly on His mind even when it appears He has forgotten. It was common practice in those days that the owner's name would be written on the hands of his servants (\_\_\_). Those gentiles wishing to belong to God's people also are described as writing God's name on their hands (Is 44:5). But here the practice is reversed as the master writes the name of His people on His hand.

<sup>y</sup> (17) Is 10:6, 37:18, 48:20-21, 51:13, 51:18-23, 62:5; Ezr 1:5; Ne 2:4-9,17; Ezk 28:24

Probably addressing Zion itself, God says that her **builders** or children (heb\_\_\_) will hurry back, while those who destroyed Jerusalem, that is the Babylonians and their allies, will flee.

<sup>z</sup> (18) Is 43:5-6, 45:23, 49:12, 49:22, 52:1, 54:1-3, 54:7-9, 60:4-11, 61:10, 66:12-13, 66:20; Gn 13:14, 22:16; Nu 14:21; Pr 17:6; Jr 2:32, 31:8, 43:12; Ezk 5:11; Bar 5:5-9; Mt 13:41-42; Jn 4:35; Gal 3:28-29; Heb 6:13-18; Rv 21:2, 22:15

Again addressing Zion, God promises that she shall be adorned (heb\_\_\_) by those who return to her. In a broader sense, Zion will also be adorned by those gentiles who will eventually come to the Lord through the Messiah (\_\_\_). The believing Jews should not be jealous of the gentiles for coming to the Lord (\_\_\_), just as believing gentiles should not boast or feel superior (Rm \_\_\_). The Apostle Paul writes that it is part of God's plan that the non-believing Jews should become jealous and that the jealousy will bring them back to the Lord (Rm \_\_\_).

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<sup>aa</sup> (19) Is 1:7, 3:8, 5:6, 49:25-26, 51:3, 54:1-2; Ps 56:1-2, 124:3; Pr 1:12; Jr 30:16-19, 33:10-11, 31:15-17, 51:33, 51:44; Ezk 36:3, 36:9-15; Hos 1:10-11; Zec 2:4, 2:11, 10:10

God tells Zion that though the Land is destroyed and desolate, she will be rebuilt and her population will be too large for its current borders. Its enemies, **those who devoured** her, will be far away allowing Zion's expansion. This, again, may have both an immediate meaning as diaspora Jews are regathered in Jerusalem after Cyrus, and a Millennial significance as gentiles are added to the people of God (Is 1:27, 48:19, 54:1-3; Gal 4:26; Rv 5:9-10).

<sup>bb</sup> (20) Is 51:3, 54:1-3, 60:4; Jsh 17:14-16; 2Ki 6:1; Hos 1:10; Mt 3:9; Gal 4:26-28

In a literal sense, the Jews born during the Exile will come back to Jerusalem and find it too small for them to live in, and seek its expansion to accommodate them. Yet taken in context with the following verse, the reference here is more likely to the gentiles who have come to faith while Israel itself appeared to be barren, that is, to those gentiles brought into the people of God through Messiah. There was a debate among the early Jewish believers first as to whether gentiles could be brought in at all (\_\_\_), and then as to whether they had to become Jews first (\_\_\_). There would be continuing friction between Jewish believers and gentile believers (\_\_\_), and eventually a final split and rejection of the Jewish heritage during the time of Constantine and the Council of Nicea (\_\_\_A.D.) A barren woman was a reproach (Is 54:6; Gn 29:31; 1Sm 1:6; Ps 127:3-5). The theme of fertility and barrenness is a common one in Isaiah (Is 7:14, 8:3, 9:6, 26:16-18, 29:23, 37:3, 44:3-5, 45:10-11, 47:8, 54:1-3, 66:9).

<sup>cc</sup> (21) Is 1:8, 3:26, 5:13, 27:10, 29:23, 51:17-20, 52:2, 54:3-8, 60:8, 60:15, 62:4, 64:10, 65:23; Jr 31:15-17, 31:27; Lm 1:1-3; Zec 2:8; Mt 24:29-30; Lk 21:24; Ro 11:11-17, 11:24-31; Gal 3:29 4:26-29