

<u>Isaiah 1-5</u> Introduction How can one be spared judgement and live happily ever after?	<u>Isaiah 6-39</u> New Creation God will rule over a new, perfect and eternal creation	<u>Isaiah 40-55</u> New relationship God will restore his people from exile to a permanent relationship	<u>Isaiah 56-66</u> Who God will choose the humble and reject the proud
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Isaiah 40-55 explained in under 60 seconds:
youtu.be/z-S3q76crLM

Isaiah 40-48
'I'm coming to get you!'
 YHWH tells his people he will act to fix their relationship

Isaiah 49-55
'Here's the plan!'
 YHWH's suffering servant will bear the penalty for sin, permanently fixing their relationship

Isaiah 49:14-51:8 (NIVUK)

Sunday 8 March 2026

¹⁴ But Zion said, 'The LORD has forsaken me, the LORD has forgotten me.'

¹⁵ 'Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!

¹⁶ See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me.

¹⁷ Your children hasten back, and those who laid you waste depart from you.

¹⁸ Lift up your eyes and look around; all your children gather and come to you. As surely as I live,' declares the LORD, 'you will wear them all as ornaments; you will put them on, like a bride.

¹⁹ 'Though you were ruined and made desolate and your land laid waste, now you will be too small for your people, and those who devoured you will be far away.

²⁰ The children born during your bereavement will yet say in your hearing, 'This place is too small for us; give us more space to live in.'

²¹ Then you will say in your heart, "Who bore me these? I was bereaved and barren; I was exiled and rejected. Who brought these up? I was left all alone, but these – where have they come from?"

²² This is what the Sovereign LORD says: 'See, I will beckon to the nations, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their hips.

²³ Kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. They will bow down before you with their faces to the ground; they will lick the dust at your feet.

1a. 'God has forgotten me!' (49:14)

1b. 'No, Judah, I have not!' (49:15-26)

- 'how could I forget you?'

- 'I will make you great again!'

Where does 49:23 belong?
 This binary question is a tool to provoke Bible-handling discussion:

- Part of 49:17-23 as a block** – God making Judah great again
- Part of 49:23-26 as a block** – God fiercely judging Judah's enemies



Isaiah 49-55 'Here's the plan!'

YHWH appoints JC who will bear the penalty for sin,
permanently fixing their relationship
(JC = Jacob's Champion = Jesus Christ)

49:1-13

JC will accomplish
God's global
salvation

49:14-50:3

'I haven't
forgotten you – I
will restore you!'

50:4-11

JC will suffer but
will ultimately be
vindicated

Then you will know that I am the LORD;
those who hope in me will not be disappointed.'

- 'I will fiercely punish your
enemies'

²⁴ Can plunder be taken from warriors,
or captives be rescued from the fierce?^a

²⁵ But this is what the LORD says:

'Yes, captives will be taken from warriors,
and plunder retrieved from the fierce;^a

I will contend with those who contend with you,
and your children I will save.

²⁶ I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh;
they will be drunk on their own blood, as with wine.

Then all mankind will know

that I, the LORD, am your Saviour,
your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.'

1c. 'Judah, you had forgotten me!'
(50:1-3)

- 'let's see who forgot whom!'

- 'you forgot me...'

50 This is what the LORD says:

'Where is your mother's certificate of divorce
with which I sent her away?

Or to which of my creditors did I sell you?

Because of your sins you were sold;

because of your transgressions your mother was sent away.

² When I came, why was there no one?

When I called, why was there no one to answer?

Was my arm too short to deliver you?

Do I lack the strength to rescue you?

By a mere rebuke I dry up the sea,

I turn rivers into a desert;

their fish rot for lack of water and die of thirst.

³ I clothe the heavens with darkness

and make sackcloth its covering.'

- '...even though I have
creator-level power'

2a. Obedient JC will suffer...
(50:4-7)

⁴ The Sovereign LORD has given me a well-instructed tongue,
to know the word that sustains the weary.

He wakens me morning by morning,

wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed.

⁵ The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears;

I have not been rebellious, I have not turned away.

⁶ I offered my back to those who beat me,

my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard;

^a Dead Sea Scrolls, Vulgate and Syriac (see also Septuagint); Masoretic Text *righteous*

<u>51:1-8</u> 'I will restore you permanently!'	<u>51:9-52:12</u> 'I should wake up? No, you should wake up, to your wonderful future!'	<u>52:13-53:12</u> JC will bear God's wrath for the sins of many	<u>54:1-17</u> 'You will flourish in a safe and secure relationship with me!'	<u>55:1-13</u> 'So, will you come back to me?'
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I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.

⁷ Because the Sovereign LORD helps me,

I will not be disgraced.

Therefore have I set my face like flint,
and I know I will not be put to shame.

⁸ He who vindicates me is near.

Who then will bring charges against me?

Let us face each other!

Who is my accuser?

Let him confront me!

⁹ It is the Sovereign LORD who helps me.

Who will condemn me?

They will all wear out like a garment;
the moths will eat them up.

¹⁰ Who among you fears the LORD
and obeys the word of his servant?

Let the one who walks in the dark, who has no light,
trust in the name of the LORD and rely on their God.

¹¹ But now, all you who light fires
and provide yourselves with flaming torches,
go, walk in the light of your fires
and of the torches you have set ablaze.

This is what you shall receive from my hand:
you will lie down in torment.

51 'Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness
and who seek the LORD:

look to the rock from which you were cut
and to the quarry from which you were hewn;

² look to Abraham, your father,
and to Sarah, who gave you birth.

When I called him he was only one man,
and I blessed him and made him many.

³ The LORD will surely comfort Zion
and will look with compassion on all her ruins;
he will make her deserts like Eden,
her wastelands like the garden of the LORD.

Joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the sound of singing.

2b. ...yet God will vindicate JC (50:8-11)

- walking either:

i. in the dark, relying on God

ii. in self-made light

Reflection question #6

How challenging do you find connecting
(a) JC's suffering and vindication, to (b)
how much God cares for and loves you?
What helps you make this connection?

3. 'I will restore you permanently!' (51:1-8)

- 'remember how I blessed
Abraham!'

- 'you will be *delighted* at your
restoration!'

- 'my salvation will be global'

⁴ 'Listen to me, my people;
hear me, my nation:
instruction will go out from me;
my justice will become a light to the nations.
⁵ My righteousness draws near speedily,
my salvation is on the way,
and my arm will bring justice to the nations.
The islands will look to me and wait in hope for my arm.

- 'my salvation will be eternal!'

⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
look at the earth beneath;
the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment
and its inhabitants die like flies.
But my salvation will last for ever,
my righteousness will never fail.
⁷ 'Hear me, you who know what is right,
you people who have taken my instruction to heart:
do not fear the reproach of mere mortals
or be terrified by their insults.
⁸ For the moth will eat them up like a garment;
the worm will devour them like wool.
But my righteousness will last for ever,
my salvation through all generations.'

Matthew 6:19-21 (KJV)

¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: ²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

For reflection on Isaiah 49:14-51:8

- 49:14-50:3
1. To what extent do you feel 49:14, 'YHWH has forsaken me, YHWH has forgotten me'?
 2. How do you feel about the way that God addresses this complaint?
 3. Which parts of God's answer did you like? Why?
 4. Which parts of God's answer do you need help to appreciate?
- 50:4-11
5. How do these verses challenge your intuitive view of Jesus?
 6. How challenging do you find connecting (a) JC's suffering and vindication, to (b) how much God cares for and loves you? What helps you make this connection?
 7. If you believed these things more, what difference would it make in your life?
- 51:1-8
8. Which parts do you find easier to visualise? Why?
 9. Which parts do you need help to visualise?
 10. How does this passage challenge your current worldview?
- Prayer
11. Are there particular areas which you need to repent of or pray for?