

# Israel's Hope

Isaiah 50

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## Isaiah 50:1-3 – The Lord's question to Zion (NIV)

*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. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> I clothe the heavens with darkness and make sackcloth its covering."*

### v1 – Did God ever divorce Himself from Israel?

Essentially, God speaks to a doubting Zion, "You say I don't care about you anymore. You say I have divorced you. Very well then, produce the document. But there is none because I have not divorced you.

- The people of Israel in exile are likening themselves to a divorced wife, forgotten and forsaken of God.
- God cannot divorce those whom He has taken into covenant relationship with Himself.

### Why did it appear to Israel that she had been sold off from God?

It wasn't God that sold her off; her inequities was what estranged her from God. She essentially sold herself off; it was all a matter of due reward of sins.

### v2 – Who was there to intervene on Israel's behalf before God?

No one... there was no one to stand up for Israel contending her case before God.

### Why would no one stand up for Israel before God?

They must have been too distracted by the world and the world's idols. Everyone forgot that it was God who delivered Israel before and that He still was able to do that still with His almighty power.

- Despite the doubts of Zion, the LORD's power and authority are beyond question.

**v3 – Besides drying up the sea and rivers, what else reveals God's almighty power that He mentions here? clothe the heavens with darkness and make sackcloth its covering:** This brings to mind the ultimate judgment of God just prior to the return of the Lord...

*Revelation 6:12-17 – I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. <sup>13</sup> And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. <sup>14</sup> Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. <sup>15</sup> And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, <sup>16</sup> and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!" <sup>17</sup> For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

### What is going on with the sixth seal? Is this supernatural or does it describe nuclear warfare?

It certainly could be supernatural; there will be a lot of supernatural developments during the Tribulation. But God often works through natural means and this sure sounds like nuclear warfare...

- *sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood* – dust in the atmosphere from ground bursts
- *the stars of heaven fell to the earth* – what do ICBM warheads look like when they re-enter the atmosphere at night?
- *sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up* – describes a mushroom cloud
- *every mountain and island was moved out of its place* – ground burst nuke blasts will alter the surface of the earth

The greatest argument that these calamities are supernatural is that the earth dwellers indeed blame God... *hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb*

## **How might Tribulation people blame God for nuclear warfare that requires human agents to happen?**

Because of irrational thinking augmented by “*The Lie*” that is used to deceive the people of the earth following the rapture of the church...

2 Thessalonians 2:11 – *God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie*

Based on what demonic “spirit guides” have revealed to their new age followers, it is likely that “*The Lie*” will be that people are removed using alien technology to help earth dwellers evolve.

- What the spirit guides have not yet revealed but makes sense from clues in Scripture is that the narrative will likely be that the earth is caught up in a galactic war between extraterrestrials who want to help humans evolve and those who want to destroy the earth claiming they represent God.
- It is actually the other way around... those aliens claiming to be looking out for the interests of mankind are demons out to destroy God’s creation.
- Why else would the 3 unclean spirits be able to gather all the nations together for battle at Armageddon thinking they could actually prevail against Almighty God (Revelation 16)?

## **Isaiah 50:4-11 – Obedience of the Messiah (NIV)**

<sup>4</sup> *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.* <sup>5</sup> *The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears; I have not been rebellious, I have not turned away.* <sup>6</sup> *I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.* <sup>7</sup> *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.*

<sup>8</sup> *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!* <sup>9</sup> *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.* <sup>10</sup> *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.*

<sup>11</sup> *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.*

## **v4 – Who is speaking here?**

*The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of the learned:*

The Messiah now prophetically speaks again, explaining that the LORD God has given Him the ability to speak wisely. We know this has to be the Messiah because of the prophetic claims He makes that were fulfilled in Jesus.

Luke 2:47 – *all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.*

Even when Jesus was 12 years old, He had knowledge that amazed the scholars in the temple.

## **Why was it important that Jesus spoke with the wisdom of God?**

Well certainly to show that He was God. And, as mentioned here, to speak a word in season to him who is weary. Jesus always addressed what was important for people to hear.

## **What does it mean that *He awakens Me morning by morning*?**

The Messiah prophetically speaks of His daily, wonderful, deep fellowship with God the Father. It is in these times that Jesus heard from His Father, that He could say He awakens My ear to hear as the learned. The Messiah could speak with the tongue of the learned because He was listening to the Father.

## **v5 – What does it mean that *the Lord God has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious*?**

The Messiah looks back to a custom described in Exodus 21:5-6, where a servant became a willing bondsman to his master. The sign of this willing servant was the ear opened by the piercing of an awl, done against the entry doorway of the master. This speaks of the total submission of the Messiah to the Lord God.

Luke 22:42 – *Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done*

Jesus was a perfect bond-slave to the Father...

Philippians 2:5-7 – *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.*

Jesus was God and He set aside many of His prerogatives as God to perform His mission on earth. He had to do this to fully represent us...

Hebrews 4:15 – *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

#### **v6 – How was this verse fulfilled in Jesus?**

*I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting:* This prophecy speaks in chilling detail of the sufferings of the Messiah.

- Jesus was beaten on the back (Mark 15:15).
  - Jesus was beaten on the face (Luke 22:63-65).
  - Jesus was mocked and spat upon (Mark 15:19-20).
- There is no specific mention in the gospels of Jesus' beard being plucked out, but from this passage we know it happened.
- To pluck out the beard and to cover someone's face with spit was the most humiliating suffering that could be inflicted upon a man in the region at that time.

#### **What was the significance of Jesus saying He gave His back to those who struck Him?**

This means that Jesus did it voluntarily. Can we still think that God does not care for us?

#### **v7 – What confidence characterizes the Messiah?**

*For the Lord GOD will help Me:* In the midst of all this suffering, humiliation, and pain, the Messiah has an unshakable confidence in the help of the Lord GOD.

#### **Can we have the same confidence in God?**

The closer we get the Lord, the more we can have confidence in His promises...

Romans 8:28 – *all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose*

#### **What does it mean that the Messiah would set My face like a flint?**

Despite knowing the agony awaiting Him, the Messiah will have a steadfast determination to obey the Lord GOD and follow His way. His face will be set as hard as a flint, and nothing will turn Him aside.

Luke 9:51 – *Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem*

There are two kinds of courage — the courage of the moment, which requires no previous thought, and a “planned” courage, which sees the difficulty ahead and steadfastly marches towards it.

#### **How was the steadfast resolve of Jesus was tested?**

- By offers from the world.
- By the persuasions of His friends.
- By the unworthiness of His clients.
- By the bitterness of the first few drops of suffering in Gethsemane.
- By the ease at which He could have backed out if He had wished to.

- By the taunts of those who mocked Him.
- By the full stress and agony of the cross.

#### **How was the steadfast resolve of Jesus was sustained?**

- By His divine schooling.
- By His conscious innocence.
- By His unshakable confidence in the help of God.
- By the joy that was set before Him.

#### **How may we imitate the steadfast resolve of Jesus?**

- When there is something right, stand for it.
- When you have a right purpose that glorifies God, carry it out.

#### **Why did the Messiah know He would not be ashamed?**

He understood the reason why He needed to go to the cross. He agreed with the Father that this is the only way that the sin penalty for those He redeemed could be paid.

#### **v8 – What does it mean, He who vindicates me is near?**

God the Son was close to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. We can experience that kind of closeness now if we pursue it because God is omnipresent...

Psalm 139:7-10 – *Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.*

#### **Why don't we experience the closeness of God more?**

We still have a sin nature that gets in the way and we live in a fallen world with many distractions. This will not be the case during the Eternal State. Closeness with God will be a lot more common during the Millennial Kingdom with much of the curse removed to foreshadow the Eternal State...

Isaiah 65:24 – *It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear*

#### **Who is it that brings charges against the Messiah?**

The religious leaders of Israel when He came into our world. The nation of Israel rejected Jesus as the Messiah. But people reject Jesus as God's anointed Son who paid the penalty for their sin today as well considering Him as just some charismatic teacher, or a prophet, or even a myth.

#### **What invitation does the Messiah make to those who bring charges against Him?**

He loves them and desires a personal interaction with them. Those who come to know Him personally will recognize His love for them and cease to be enemies who accuse Him.

**v9 – What is the significance of pointing out that it is the Sovereign Lord who helps the condemned Messiah?**

This is the Messiah's way of anticipating this truth...

Romans 8:31 – *If God is for us, who can be against us?* The reason why Romans 8:31 applies to us is that it first applied to Jesus, and we are in Christ. If Jesus stands in this place of victory, then all those who are in Christ stand there also.

**What would become of those who condemn the Messiah?**

*They will all wear out like a garment; the moths will eat them up:* They would go the way of all mortals... the problem is what would be next for them... destruction. In condemning the Messiah, they are condemning themselves to an eternity separated from Him.

John 3:18 – *He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

**v10 – What does it mean to fear the Lord?**

The fear of God is the fear of the judgment of God and eternal death, which is eternal separation from God (Luke 12:5; Hebrews 10:31). For the believer, the fear of God is something much different...

Hebrews 12:28-29 – *Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.*

This reverence and awe are exactly what the fear of God means for Christians. This is the motivating factor for us to surrender to the Creator of the Universe.

**How is the fear of the Lord the beginning of knowledge?**

Proverbs 1:7 – *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.*

Until we understand who God is and develop a reverential fear of Him, we cannot have true wisdom. And that is a prerequisite for learning from He who is the source of all wisdom.

**What is the word of the Lord's Servant?**

That is the Word of God. To obey the Word of God is to obey the Lord Himself.

John 1:1,14 – *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

**Who is it that walks in the dark?**

The one who does not know the Messiah walks in the dark...

John 1:4-5 – *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it*

**Why does it say we should trust in the name of the Lord?**

Using a person's name expresses familiarity and helps connect one person to another. There is a difference between knowing about God and knowing Him personally. Trusting in the name of the Lord indicates personal interaction and relationship.

- Those who trust in the name of the Lord are those who recognize Him as Savior.
- The name Jesus means "Yahweh saves" or "Yahweh is salvation." Transliterated from Hebrew and Aramaic, the name is Yeshua. This word is a combination of Ya, an abbreviation for Yahweh and the verb yasha, meaning "rescue," "deliver," or "save."

**v11 – Who are those seek to penetrate the darkness with their own flaming torches?**

They are those who reject the light of the Messiah and instead trust in their own way of salvation such as salvation-by-works.

John 14:6 – *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

**What will become of those who seek to make their own way of salvation?**

*You will lie down in torment:* They will spend eternity separated from God in the lake of fire.

**With the serious consequence of eternal punishment, why do so many people reject God's Way of salvation?**

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 – *if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

In their pride, they have embraced the narrative of the enemy of God. Their pride has made them irrational.

Pascal's Wager: If we live as though God exists, and He does indeed exist, we have gained heaven. If He doesn't exist, we have lost nothing. If, on the other hand, we live as though God does not exist and He really does exist, we have gained hell and punishment and have lost heaven and bliss. If one weighs the options, clearly the rational choice to live as if God exists.

**What applications come to mind from our discussion?**

- God stands by His promises; we should as well
- The Tribulation will be terrible; thank God for the Blessed Hope!
- The Lie is being set up today; don't buy into it.
- Jesus fulfilled all the Messianic prophecies in detail; Jesus is God's Anointed!
- Jesus had steadfast resolve to complete the Father mission; so should we.
- Trusting in the name of the Lord involves a personal relationship; He wants us to get personal with Him.
- Believing God's Word is rational; betting against God's Word is deadly