

The Servant's Sure Reward

Isaiah 49:1-13

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Introduction

A couple of weeks ago, I mentioned to you that in coming to Isaiah 49, we begin a section in Isaiah's prophecy that focuses in on Jesus Christ as the agent of our salvation.

- Of course He has been the focus all along, but now more than ever, His person and work is presented to us in order that we may put our trust in Him to the glory of God.
- In chapter 40-48,
 - We saw how God comforted His people after telling them that they would be taken into exile in Babylon...
 - But we also saw that mere deliverance from Babylon would not be enough.
 - The whole reason they were in Babylon was because of their unrighteousness.
 - If they are to have true and lasting peace (shalom), God must make them righteous.
 - More than deliverance from Babylon, they need righteousness.
 - And now with chapter 49-57, we see how God will bring that salvation to them...
 - It will be through Jesus Christ, the one that Isaiah has already introduced to us under the title of "The Servant of the LORD."
 - You can see right here in our text (look at verse 8) that The Servant of the LORD is given to God's people as a covenant by which they are reconciled to God.

I. The Servant of the LORD is presented to us in a most remarkable way in our text today—in Isaiah 49:1-13...

A. The chapter begins with Him addressing the Gentiles.

1. You can see this in verse 1 where the Servant says:
 - "Listen, O coastlands, to Me, And take heed, you peoples from afar!"
 - This is how the nations outside of Israel are often spoken of by Isaiah.
 - They are called "coastlands" because they are across the sea.
 - All nations are included—even those who are far away...
 - These Gentiles are all to listen and take heed to what the Servant has to say to them.
2. The Gentiles, you will remember, are the nations outside of Israel.
 - Let me give you a little background...
 - a. God had chosen the nation of Israel to be His people.

- After the nations had been scattered by God's judgement at Babel,
 - the Lord had come to one man—Abraham—
 - and had promised that He would multiply him and make him a great nation (even though his wife was barren at the time).
 - You can read about that in Genesis 12-17
 - The Lord told Abraham that He would give him and his descendents the land of Palestine...
 - but not until they had first spent 400 years in Egypt where they would be brought under cruel bondage.
 - There they would multiply in number and then He would bring them out and give them the land of promise.
- b. But even more than that, God promised that He would be their God and that they would be His people!
- You see, the whole earth had fallen under the disfavour of God at Babel.
 - The Lord had scattered the nations and confused their languages.
 - but now the Lord came to this one family—or that head of this one future family—Abraham...
 - And through that one family, He promised that salvation would come to that family!
- c. But the Lord also promised something to the Gentiles—to the other nations or families that had been scattered!
- He did not exactly promise it *to* them, but He promised it to Abraham concerning them...
 - that through his seed,
 - all the families or nations of the earth (that had been scattered at Babel) would be blessed!
 - God's salvation would extend to all the nations of the earth from Israel!
 - This was a wonderful promise concerning the nations!
 - They too would be given righteousness and peace from God!
 - They too would know the blessing of salvation through Israel!

B. But surely there was reason to despair of this promise.

1. There was reason to despair of it in Isaiah's day.
 - a. We have already seen that Israel herself was to be delivered into exile.
 - The theocracy was going to be overthrown.

- The sons of David would be made eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon.
 - That is what God had prophesied through Isaiah.
 - b. It might have made sense to suppose that Israel would be God's instrument to bring blessing to the nations a few centuries before—
 - When King Solomon was raised to great power and wisdom among all the nations so that all revered him...
 - but what now?—
 - Israel was just one of many petty nations trembling under the threat of Assyria...
 - and now her doom under the hand of Babylon had been foretold.
 - Surely the nations could not expect to be blessed of God through anything that Israel would bring forth!
2. Indeed, you can see that even the Servant Himself seems to despair.
- a. You can see His words of discouragement in verse 4...
 - Isaiah 49:4: Then I said, 'I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and in vain; Yet surely my just reward is with the LORD, And my work with my God.'
 - b. It is no wonder that He felt this way...
 - As verse 7 shows us.
 - He is despised by men—even His own people abhorred Him.
 - How could He save the world when even His own people rejected Him and sent Him to be crucified?
 - If Israel would not have Him for their saviour, what hope was there for the other nations?
3. Understand what is going on here with this expression of discouragement...
- a. Isaiah the prophet is looking into the future and he is seeing that Jesus, when He came into the world, would be rejected by His own people.
 - And He is seeing that in the middle of all this rejection, Jesus would be tempted to suppose that His labour was in vain.
 - b. Isaiah is connecting this sentiment with the sentiment that surely prevailed among the faithful in His day...
 - He and the few who remained among the faithful had laboured to call their nation to repentance, but they were despised...
 - Israel was headed for destruction rather than for salvation.
 - They were headed into exile rather than freedom!

- It would be very easy for the godly to give up.
 - To suppose that there was no use in serving the Lord.
 - What difference does it make?
- c. I am sure that you who serve Jesus have sometimes felt that way...
 - You get tired of disciplining your children and teaching them day after day—
 - and sometimes it seems like it is all just a big waste of time.
 - And you try to witness to your relatives, and to the people at work...
 - but there never seems to be any fruit.
 - You get tired of doing it and you want to quit—and why shouldn't you?
 - And there are those things you do for others that nobody sees...
 - Perhaps you are caring for a neighbour or visiting an elderly person who is lonely...
 - but they don't even seem to appreciate it and nothing good ever comes of it.
 - And of course there is weariness in prayer...
 - You have been praying, but you don't see in answers...
 - You used to pour your heart out, but now you just don't have a heart for it... it doesn't seem to make any difference anyway.

TRANS> That is something of how Jesus felt when He was rejected and that is how Isaiah and those who loved the Lord felt when they were headed to Babylon.

- Why go on?
 - What good would come of it?
- C. And it is in this context of discouragement that the Servant speaks to the Gentiles in this chapter...
 1. And He tells them in a most marvellous way that God is still going to do what He promised!
 - He makes it clear to them that He Himself understands their doubt...
 - But He also makes it clear that His calling to bring salvation to the nations remains as certain as ever because God has promised it.
 - There are three things that make it certain...
 - First, that He has been sent and called to this work by the Father.
 - Second, that He has been furnished for this work by the Father.
 - And third, that the Father has promised that He will be His salvation to the ends of the earth.

2. And so the Servant is seen to be telling the Gentiles that even though it does not look like it, God is still going to bless the nations through Him.
 - Now of course this was not really written for the Gentiles at the time...
 - It was written for the encouragement of those who lived in Isaiah's day when Israel was sinking into obscurity...
 - and who wanted to see God's salvation advance in the earth.
 - It was written for the encouragement of those who lived in Jesus' day when He came into the world and was despised and rejected by His own...
 - It was even written for His own encouragement when He faced the temptation to despair.
 - And it was written for the encouragement of all of you who hope in Jesus and despair that so many despise Him.
 - And who labour and see no results.
 - Do not despair, but rejoice in hope!
 - Not one promise of God will fail!

TRANS> We are the ones who need to us listen and take heed to what the servant says!

- This is written for our encouragement and admonition!
 - Let's look at the three things that the servant says to assure us that His labour will not be in vain.
 - And let us apply it to ourselves that we might trust in Him and know that our labour in Him will not be in vain either.
 - Oh, and by the way, I am going to assume that you already understand that the Servant is Jesus Christ...
 - We were introduced to Him by this title back in chapter 42...
 - So here is the first assurance...

II. First, that God has sent Jesus His Servant to bring salvation to the world.

A. Salvation by Christ is certain because God called Him from the womb.

- In verse 1 He says:
 - Isaiah 49:1: The LORD has called Me from the womb; From the matrix of My mother He has made mention of My name.
- 1. By these words, Jesus stresses the fact that He was not self-appointed.
 - He constantly emphasised this when He came into the world.
 - Over and over He declared that He had been sent by the Father...
 - that He did not come to do His own will, but the will of the Father...

- That the words He spoke were not His own words, but the words that the Father had given Him.
 - That His doctrine was not His own, but what had been given to Him.
 - That the work He did was none other than the work that the Father had given Him to do.
 - As we read in Hebrews 5:4:
 - Heb 5:4-5: And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He (the Father) who said to Him: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You."
2. This is very important because it means that Jesus is no usurper.
- He came to carry out His Father's business.
 - Because it is the Father's business, it cannot fail.
 - He is a part of the Father's plan from before the foundation of the world to redeem a people for Himself.
 - Those who come in their own name,
 - to do their own will and to speak their own words,
 - are doomed to failure.
 - All the cults, heresies, and aberrations of men will come to nothing.
 - If something is not of God, it will eventually come to nothing, no matter how popular it may be at the time...
 - and vice versa,
 - If something is of God, it will prevail, no matter how unpopular it may be in its day.
 - Therefore it behoves you to see to it that you do the Father's will... that you live according to His calling.
 - If you do not, your labour will indeed be in vain.
 - Think of all the Muslims who pray five times a day—all in vain.
 - Think of the suicide bombers—supposing that their labour will not be in vain.
 - See to it that your faith is founded on the pure word of God and not on the doctrines and commandments of men that come to nothing.
 - God's ways seem foolish to many in this world, but His ways will prevail and the wisdom of the world will come to naught.
3. Note as well that here we see the true humanity of the Servant of the Lord...

- Though Jesus is the Son of God, He was conceived and born in the womb of the Virgin Mary.
 - That is brought very clearly here.
 - He was called from the matrix of His mother's womb.
- He came as a man that He might represent men.
 - In Him, we have a man who truly does the will of God from His mother's womb.
 - The Father fully acknowledges Him and declares that He is pleased with Him.
 - The Father's voice came from heaven declaring that Jesus is His Son and that we are to hear Him..
 - He is the one the Father has sent.

B. But just what is it that Christ is appointed by the Father to do?

1. In verse 3, Jesus says that the Father says to Him:

- "You are my Servant O Israel in whom I will be glorified."
- He calls Him *Israel* because He is all that Israel was called to be.
 - Israel was called, as we saw already, to be God's people.
 - They were called to do His will and to bring salvation to the nations.
 - Jacob's name was changed to Israel when he wrestled in prayer for the salvation of his household according to God's promise...
 - This is what Jesus would do when He came to intercede for us as the true Israel of God.
- But as we have seen all along in Isaiah, Israel sorely failed.
 - They sinned and came short of the glory of God.
 - Even Isaiah was aware of this in himself, for when He saw the glory of God he said,
 - "Woe is me! I am undone! I am a man of unclean lips and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips!"
 - He had to be cleansed!
 - How could he who had to be cleansed be the source of cleansing for others?
 - Yet, this was Israel's calling—to bring salvation into the world!
 - And this is how it was possible...
 - Because it was from Israel that the Servant, Jesus Christ, came forth.
 - In Him, all that Israel was called to be, Israel was in Him!
 - And all that Israel was called to do, Israel does, in Him!

- He is the true Israel who does God's will and brings glory to God!
2. See how Jesus explains His calling in verse 5.
- He says of Himself that the LORD is the one who:
 - Isa 49:5: "Formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel is gathered to Him."
 - His task is to bring God's people back to Him!
 - Not just back to Jerusalem from Babylon—Cyrus will do that...
 - But back to God to be reconciled to Him...
 - to be pardoned and justified and sanctified in truth.
 - Jesus had to begin His work with bringing salvation to Israel so that Israel could bring salvation to the nations.
 - His work began with restoring a remnant among the Jews, and that is the work He focused on when He was on earth.
 - That is the work that He speaks about in verse 5.
3. This verse comes very powerfully right after verse 4 where the Servant despairs that all His work has been carried out in vain...
- He experienced the struggle of being mostly rejected by His own people!
 - He lamented that God seemed to curse His work.
 - But now in verse 5 He considers fully that God has called Him to the work of restoring Jacob and gathering Israel!
 - If God has called Him to do this, He cannot fail!
 - Even though He has been brought to deepest shame in carrying out this work...
 - at the end of verse 5 He affirms that He will be glorious in the eyes of the Lord and that His God will be His strength!
 - The work will not fail because God is in it and God will see that His work succeeds!
 - And brothers, that is true of your labour in the LORD.
 - Even though it seems to fail, even though it seems to accomplish nothing,
 - Stay at it!
 - Your labour is not in vain in the LORD!
 - That Lord has called you to it and He will bless it.

TRANS> That is the first encouragement the Servant mentions...

- Now let's look at the second...

III. Secondly, Jesus describes how the Father has furnished Him for His work.

A. Of course this lies in what we have just seen...

- that the Father sent Him and gave Him a body in which He was able to represent us.
- He was furnished with a body that He might represent us.
- That is one thing...but it is not the main focus here because it was something that was already given...

TRANS> but in verse 2, He speaks of tools that He was furnished with to carry out His work...

B. He says that God has made His mouth like a sharp sword.

1. This shows us the nature of His ministry!

- God did not furnish Him with horses and chariots and great armies by which He would conquer the world!
- He furnished Him with His powerful, all subduing Word!
 - By this Word,
 - He spoke bread and fish into being to feed the 5000...
 - He spoke healing into being for the lame,
 - cleansing for lepers,
 - sight for the blind,
 - and even life to the death.
 - He spoke the storm into a calm.

2. But above all, He speaks life into the souls of sinners by His gospel!

a. His word penetrates into the very soul of man and exposes all that we are so that we see our need of forgiveness before a holy God...

- The Word of His mouth strikes all of God's elect with such conviction of their sin that they cannot go on without a remedy.
- They become desperate to obtain forgiveness and new life.
 - They cry out, "who will deliver me?"
 - Instead of making excuses for their sin, they want a remedy for it!

b. And at the same time that the word brings conviction, it also reveals to us Christ and His saving work.

- His Word comes with power to show us what He did on the cross for us—
 - How He, as the lamb of God bore our iniquities so that we might be pardoned through faith in Him...
 - Once the Word comes to us, we are convinced that there is no other possible way of salvation.
 - We say, "this is it—this is all—all other ways are worthless."

- c. And then His Word calls us in such a way that it produces new life in us—so that we rise up and embrace Christ for salvation,
 - turning from our sins to serve God.
 - It is the most powerful force in all the world—
 - It is the same power that God exercised when He spoke the world into existence by the Word of His power.

TRANS> This is the sword of the Word that God has furnished His Son with!

- And I want you to know that this is the Word that God has given to us also...
 - When you speak the true gospel, it is the very same powerful word that brings life to the dead!
 - You are not wasting your time when you speak the truth!
 - The Word will not return void!
 - And there is more that Jesus says...
3. Not only does He declare to us that God has made His mouth a sword,
- He also declares that God has made Him to be a polished shaft...
 - a polished shaft is an arrow...
 - and arrow that has been polished and well tuned arrow so that it flies straight and true...
 - It hits its mark and accomplishes its purpose.
 - But adding the arrow to the sword, it reminds us that His word travels far and wide.
 - The sword is used to strike the enemy who is near and the arrow to strike the enemy who is at a distance.
 - The Word is not confined only to where Jesus walked when He was on the earth,
 - It goes forth into the world to bring salvation to the most remote nations!
 - He speaks through His servants who preach His word in all the earth.

C. It is interesting to note that this word is said to be hidden in the shadow of God's hand and in His quiver.

1. Until the appointed time when Christ was brought forth and revealed in the world,
 - the gospel was hidden so that the Gentiles did not know God's salvation.
 - Even the Jews who had the oracles of God only had shadows and types of Christ until He was manifested in the fullness of time.

- Eye had not seen or ear heard what God had prepared until He revealed it by the Spirit at the appointed time.
 - He waited until His Son came into the world and did His work.
2. And so it is in individuals whom God has appointed to salvation...
- Until God is pleased to reveal Christ in them, the word is hidden from them.
 - They are unable to receive it until He opens their hearts to believe.
 - but they are by no means faultless in their ignorance...
 - the reason they cannot receive it is because of their obstinacy and rebellion that is native in the hearts of every one of us until God's word breaks through by His gracious power.
 - Jesus encouraged Himself with this truth when He was in the world...
 - For He preached to many who were wise and intelligent, but they did not receive the Word—it offended them.
 - The Word was hidden from them.
 - You may remember when He had been rejected by many people:
 - Matthew 11:25-27: "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

TRANS> Remember that when the word is rejected...

- Don't give up—God had not been pleased to reveal it to all...
 - But He reveals it to babes—so keep at it!
3. What a privilege it is for us to have His precious Word!
- a. Oh my friends, have you received it?
 - Has the gospel penetrated into your heart so that you have believed on Jesus?
 - b. And what a privilege it is for us to carry the gospel to the nations so that Jesus Christ and His salvation may be known in every place!
 - It is the sword of His mouth that we carry when we speak His word!
 - He is the arrow that we shoot and the sword that we wield!
 - In every case, the word reaches its mark...
 - In some, sealing them in death as they rebel against it...
 - And in some, bringing forth new life through faith...
 - Every one of Christ's sheep will hear His voice and come to Him.
 - His powerful word cannot fail!

TRANS> So it is by these two powerful things that Jesus declares that His work will not fail...

- Because the Father has called Him to do this work...
 - And because the Father has furnished Him as a sword and arrow for this work,
- But there is yet another great encouragement given to Him and to us to assure us in the darkest of times that He cannot fail...
 - that His labour and our labour in Him is not in vain...

IV. Third, that God has promised to bring salvation through His Servant.

A. Our dear Lord Jesus takes great comfort in what the Father says to Him here—

1. If He is your Saviour, these words ought to be a great comfort to you also.
 - God cannot lie, and He declares these things to His Son...
 - to His Son whom He sent to be His servant...
 - to His Son whose mouth He has made into a powerful sword.
 - If these words brought encouragement to Him when it seemed as if His labour was in vain,
 - how much more ought they to bring encouragement to you!
 - And if you don't believe, how they ought to strike terror within you until you have come to Him!

TRANS> So what are these words of encouragement from the Father?

2. He tells Him that He is going to give Him *more* than the elect in Israel for His labours!
 - a. Jesus wanted to bring God's salvation...
 - He came with great yearnings to bring glory to God by bringing salvation His people...
 - He came with yearning for the Father to be known by His people who did not know Him...
 - He yearned for them to see the Father's glory and perfection and to love Him even as He had loved Him from all eternity.
 - In John 17, He expressed these yearnings.
 - They were such deep yearnings that He was willing to go to the cross to have them accomplished!
 - He said, "This is eternal life, that they might know the Father and Jesus Christ whom He has sent!"
 - He prayed as He went to the cross...
 - that they may be one as you Father are in Me and I in You."

- that they may be made perfect in one and that the world may know that you have sent Me, and have loved them as you have loved Me.
 - that they may be with me where I am that they may behold My glory which you have given me...
 - that the love with which you have loved me may be in them and I in them.
- What yearnings He had!
 - What pain He was prepared to undergo to bring this about!
 - How distressed He would have been if His work had failed!

TRANS> But see how the Father encourages Him in verse 6 & 7!

b. Not only will He give Him the remnant of Israel for His labours, but the nations as His inheritance!

- Isa 49:6-7: Indeed 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 give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth." Thus says the LORD, The Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One, To Him whom man despises, To Him whom the nation abhors, To the Servant of rulers: "Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship, Because of the LORD who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel; And He has chosen You."

1) Israel alone is not enough for God's Son!

- How it thrills His soul to see the Gentiles come to His salvation...
 - That they might come to know His glorious Father and to love Him too!
 - That by His work they might come to be saved!

2) Even though He was despised and rejected by His own nation—as it says in verse 7, "man despises Him and the nations abhors Him"...

- yet, the promise is sure that kings and princes from the nations will arise and come forth to worship.
- God has chosen His Son for this purpose—
 - to bring the nations to salvation!

3. And you see that the Father promises that He will hear Jesus in an acceptable time.

- Look at verse 8
 - Isa 49:8: Thus says the LORD: "In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You;
- a. The Son needed to see that all this would not happen right away.

- There is need of patience.
 - His whole ministry on earth was fraught with little success.

- b. The Father tells Him here that He will not bring salvation about until the proper time...
 - and that proper time was when Jesus finished His work on the cross!
 - God did not declare Jesus to be Lord and Christ until after He had gone to the cross...
 - Then He brought Him forth from the grave...
 - Then salvation was to be proclaimed in all the earth...
 - Now was the accepted time!
 - Now was the day of salvation!
 - Now the Father had heard His Son.

- 1) This was the great jubilee that Daniel spoke of in Daniel 9.
 - Every seventh year was a Sabbath year, and after seven of these seven year periods, there was the jubilee...
 - Every 49 years...
 - At the jubilee, slaves were set free, debts were forgiven, inheritances were restored.
 - It was a fresh start!

 - In Daniel, we are told of a great Jubilee that is to come after 10 jubilees or 490 years from the time of command to rebuilt Jerusalem.
 - It is the Jubilee at which the church will have:
 - “finished the transgression,
 - made an end of sins,
 - made reconciliation for iniquity,
 - brought in everlasting righteousness,
 - sealed up vision and prophecy,
 - and anointed the Most Holy!
 - This, of course, was accomplished by Jesus work on the cross!
 - And once this was done, it was God’s appointed time to proclaim liberty or salvation to all the world!
 - In Christ there was restoration to God’s blessing and favour!
 - But not until His work was all done!

- 2) You see, Jesus laboured to bring forth salvation for us...
 - But it was not until the acceptable time—the time of Jubilee appointed by the Father, that this salvation came forth.

- God's promise sustained Him as He laboured in this world, being rejected and despised by His own people and delivered up to be crucified.
 - His work would not be in vain!
 - God would hear Him at the acceptable time!
 - Remember this when you pray!
 - God has a time when He will answer you
 - Do not grow weary in your labour, do not despair!
- c. And you can see what the Father promises to do for concerning His Servant at the acceptable time in the second half of verse 8...
- Isa 49:8: I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people,
- 1) Even though it looked like it was the end for Jesus when He endured the cross...
 - The Father promises to preserve Him—His body did not see corruption in the grave...
 - And then to give Him as a covenant to the people!
 - 2) Jesus Himself is the covenant to the people!
 - All that God had promised when He said that He would save them comes to reality in the person and work of Jesus Christ!
 - He is the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the father by through Him!
 - He is the resurrection and the life!
 - His blood is the blood of the New Covenant by which we are reconciled to God, pardoned of all our sins through faith!
 - Pardoned as we could not be pardoned under the Old Covenant.
 - There was pardon then in types and shadows,
 - but real pardon could not come apart from Jesus.
 - He is God's covenant of salvation, fulfilled, and He is the one we proclaim as God's promised of salvation.
 - If you believe in Him, you will be saved.
 - 3) And look what happens—just as in the jubilee, our inheritance is restored!
 - Only now it is the whole earth that is restored.
 - The earth that was cursed because of our sin.
 - The earth that we were made from and given dominion over that we now return to when we die because of our guilt.

- When Jesus is given to us as a covenant—when we receive Him...
 - God restores the earth and causes us to inherit the desolate heritages.
 - What was cursed and barren becomes fruitful again and a blessing to us.
 - Yes brothers and sisters, the meek shall inherit the earth!
 - God will restore to us what was lost by our sin...
 - The whole creation groans, but now in Jesus it awaits the great day when His people will be revealed!
 - Jesus is the beginning of the New Creation and you are raised with Him to walk in new life when you turn to Him for salvation.
 - He restores the earth to us, being Himself already raised up out of the earth where He was buried!

TRANS> And now to comfort His Son and to comfort us even more,

B. The Father spells out for His what this salvation will look like in verses 9-12!

- He makes it tangible and concrete.
 - It is often helpful to us to make what can seem like an impossible promise more real!
 - Just look at what happens after Jesus finishes His work:
 1. Because it is the jubilee, He tells all the prisoners to “go forth.”
 - See v. 9—That you may say to the prisoners, “go forth”
 - That is what Jesus says to us who have been held captive by sin, Satan, and death.
 - They have no hold on us because He has set us free.
 - We struggle in this world with the remnants of sin and death, but all along the way He calls us to “go forth.”
 - And by His grace, we will go forth!
 - Sin, Satan, and death have no more claim on you now that Christ has been given to us a covenant!
 2. Because it is the jubilee, He tells those in the darkness to “show yourselves.”
 - This is also in verse 9...He says to us, “Show yourselves”
 - We who had nothing now come forth clothed with His righteousness, with forgiveness, with wisdom, with love, with eternal life!
 - We who were once darkness are now the light of the world...
 - and He says, come forth from the darkness and show yourselves!

- Show everyone what I have done for you, what I have made you!
 - Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven...
 - Works that you never had until I gave them to you.
3. Because the earth is restored, He commands us to eat in places that had been barren and desolate—
- You see this at the end of verse 9 where it says of Christ’s restored people,
 - “They shall feed along the roads, and their pastures shall be on all desolate heights...”
 - These are places where you would not expect to find food...
 - But now that Jesus come we have Him as the bread of life...
 - We had no nourishment for our souls, no strength to love and to serve, for we were dead in trespasses and sins.
 - But now we have Him to feast upon and as we do, we are nourished up in eternal life.
4. And because there is this an abundance, verse 10 tells us that there is no more hunger or thirst.
- We have so many longings in this world... longings that do not satisfy us.
 - A man will partake of pornography, but soon he is not satisfied and he wants more, and more and more...
 - A man will drink to escape from his troubles—he will take drugs—and soon he wants more.
 - A man will pursue riches or fame, but still he is not satisfied.
 - I don’t mean to see that God has left us no joys in this world...
 - for He has left us many—but they are empty apart from Him and until we are reconciled, we do not understand how empty they are.
 - He is our creator and this world is His world.
 - It can only satisfy us when we receive it from His hand.
5. He also protects us so that the heat and the sun no longer strike us (v. 10).
- We live in a place where this loses its significance, but imagine what it must have been like to cross the desert in chains to go into captivity.
 - The Sun became your enemy, beating upon you as you trudged along, parched and dry with thirst under the cruel guidance of your captors.
 - Instead of leading you water in the desert that you may be refreshed, they leave you to perish with thirst under the scorching sun.

- So it is without Christ...
 - Even the Sun which we given to be a blessing to us, to give us light and warmth and to cause our gardens to grow,
 - becomes a curse when we are cut off from God.
 - Even those things that are in themselves blessings become a curse until we are reconciled by our dear Lord.
 - Under Satan's dominion, our wealth swallows us up and draws us further away from God rather than filling us with gratitude to Him.
 - Our relationships are first idolatrous and then utterly disappointing.
 - But in Christ all that changes...
 - The Sun no longer strikes us but blesses us as we drink the sweet water of God's Spirit.
 - Everything leads us to God instead of destroying us.
6. This same though is continued in verse 11...
- Mountains that used to be barriers to keep us from God now become highways to lead us to Him.
 - What used to make us bitter and hardened, in Christ draws us nearer and nearer to the Father...
 - What, are you becoming bitter because of your trials and disappointments?
 - Come to Jesus in them and He will draw you near to God.
 - He will take the evil from your afflictions and cause them to work good for you.
 - What used to distract us and make us forget God, in Christ causes us to remember Him and commit our way to Him.
 - Are you being caught up with the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches?
 - Come to Jesus and He will draw you near to God...
 - He will fill you with gratitude and teach you to use your riches to do God instead of to waste them away on selfish pursuits.
7. You see the glorious outcome in verse 12 when Jesus removes barriers!
- v. 12: "Surely these shall come from afar; Look! Those from the north and the west, and these from the land of Sinim."
 - The idea is that in His day, disciples come from all over the place—from far away places—from obscure places!
 - People flood into His kingdom because they hear of His grace and salvation!
 - All the barriers are removed.

- His powerful word breaks through to them, His arrows reach them and pierce them so that they can no longer stay away!
 - His love constrains them to come!

Conclusion

My brothers and sisters, what glorious days we live in!

- God's salvation has come to us—His acceptable time has come—His Son has brought salvation into the world.
 - See that you do not miss it!
 - The call goes out to every one to come to Him for salvation!
 - Now is the day of salvation!
 - Do not miss the glorious opportunity!

Enter into the rejoicing that has broken out upon the earth.

- It started with Jesus...
 - In Psalm 22 we are given a prophecy of what he did on the cross...
 - He cried out to God for deliverance—for Himself as our sin bearer...
 - Bearing our sins, He cried out that God would accept His sacrifice.
 - He did not want His work for our salvation to be in vain.
 - And in Psalm 22:21 He suddenly declares that God has heard!
 - God has accepted His offering! It is enough! Redemption is accomplished!
 - The accepted time has come!
 - The day of salvation has dawned!
- And Jesus then joyfully goes out to gather His elect together from all over the world to declare to them what God has done!
 - In Psalm 22:22, He says:
 - Ps 22:22: I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.
 - He tells them (v. 24) that the Father has not despised nor abhorred His affliction but has heard Him when He cried out to Him for us!
 - And He leads them in the worship of God!
 - Psalm 22:25-27 says:
 - Ps 22:25-27: My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever! All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.
 - What a happy Saviour He is!

- This is just what He yearned for when He went to the cross!
 - That people from all over the world would come to the Father!
 - Those who were cut off by sin are brought near by His redeeming blood.
 - And the outcome is glorious worship!

And so it is in Isaiah 49:13 that the earth is summoned to break out in joyful praise!

- Isa 49:13: Sing, O heavens! Be joyful, O earth! And break out in singing, O mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people, And will have mercy on His afflicted.
 - Jesus has come.
 - He has completed the work of our redemption!
 - The day of rejoicing has come.
 - My question for each of you is this...
 - Have you joined in the chorus?
 - If not, it is high time you did!
 - If you have lost your joy, it is for you to look to your Saviour and renew it.
 - Do not miss out on the celebration.
- I fully realise that we do not yet have all the fullness that we will have when our Lord returns.
 - All things are not yet brought under His feet.
 - But don't you see, the work is all done!
 - Your labour is not in vain in the Lord because His labour is not in vain.
 - It is time for rejoicing.