

The Prophecies of Isaiah ⁶⁵
Lesson 31

Previously, in Isaiah 49, the Lord explains Israel's relationship with Him. At some time in the future, Israel will claim that the Lord has forgotten her. However, He adamantly denies His abandonment of Israel. The Lord continues that explanation in chapter 50, when He says, "Where is the certificate of divorce ... ?"

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Because the Jews reject the Servant, He takes salvation to the Gentiles. Isaiah 49-50	A remnant of the Jews will believe in the Servant and be exalted. Isaiah 51:1-52:12	The Servant will suffer and then He will be exalted. Isaiah 52:13-53:12	The Servant will bring salvation to the Jews and the Gentiles. Isaiah 54-57

History/Present Day

CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE

Isaiah 50:1 Thus says the LORD, "Where is the certificate of divorce, By which I have sent your mother away? Or to whom of My creditors did I sell you? Behold, you were sold for your iniquities, And for your transgressions your mother was sent away. ^{2a} "Why was there no man when I came? When I called, *why* was there none to answer? Is My hand so short that it cannot ransom? Or have I no power to deliver?"

The Lord asks two questions of Israel. First, "Where is the certificate of divorce ..." and, second, "... to whom of my creditors did I sell you?" Israel cannot answer either of these questions. The Lord has never divorced Israel nor has He sold her to His creditors. He hates divorce and He has no creditors. However, He has had to chastise Israel. Because of her failure to follow the His instructions, the Lord, from time to time, has disciplined Israel by placing her in bondage. After her entry into the Promised Land, the Lord has allowed the Philistines, Moabites, and Amorites to irritate Israel for various periods. Between 790 BC and 722 BC, the Lord allows Aram and Assyria to pillage and plunder the Northern Kingdom. By 722 BC, the bulk of the people have died because of their failure to call upon the name of the Lord and only a remnant of the Northern Kingdom remains in exile. It is 710 BC and the Southern Kingdom is in the hands of the godly King Hezekiah; later, his son, Manasseh, will turn the hearts of Israel away from the Lord. The iniquities and transgressions of the Southern Kingdom will facilitate the need to send her into exile beginning in 606 BC and culminating in 586 BC. If the Jews of the Southern Kingdom listened to Nahum, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk, they will not be sent to the land of exile in Babylon. The Lord is there for them but they do not answer when He calls. He can redeem and deliver them from their coming fate, yet they choose to blaspheme against Him by worshiping their own creations; they can blame no one but themselves for their misery in captivity.

History/Present Day

POWER OF THE LORD

Isaiah 50:2b Behold, I dry up the sea with My rebuke, I make the rivers a wilderness; Their fish stink for lack of water, And die of thirst. ³ "I clothe the heavens with blackness, And I make sackcloth their covering."

How powerful is the Lord? As Israel reached the Red Sea, did He not dry the land so she could cross? As they reached the Jordan River 40 years later, did He not dry it for her

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crossing? When necessary, He will cover Israel with a dark cloud as black as sackcloth to save her as He foretells in the Revelation.

Revelation 6:12 And I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth *made* of hair, and the whole moon became like blood;

Near Future

LORD'S DISCIPLES

Isaiah 50:4a The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word.

Pushing this vision into the future, the Lord tells of His selection of disciples. Through the tongues of His disciples, His message will sustain the burdens of His people in spite of deplorable conditions.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 50:4	<i>Near Future</i> The Lord will have disciples.	Fulfilled between 27 AD -30 AD

Near Future

LORD'S EAR

Isaiah 50: 4b He awakens *Me* morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple. ⁵ The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not disobedient, Nor did I turn back.

The Lord listens also as a disciple to His own plans for Israel and the future. When He arrives on earth, born of a woman, He will not disobey His plans.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 50:4b-5	<i>Near Future</i> The Lord will not be disobedient.	Fulfilled between 27 AD -30 AD

Near Future

LORD'S BACK AND FACE

Isaiah 50: 6 I gave My back to those who strike *Me*, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting. ⁷ For the Lord GOD helps Me, Therefore, I am not disgraced; Therefore, I have set My face like flint, And I know that I shall not be ashamed.

The Lord's plan includes the redemption and delivery of Israel from her transgressions and iniquity. The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John record the events of the Lord's last days. He is beaten, humiliated and spit upon before He is taken to Calvary to be crucified. He will not shy away from His death that day; He will not be disgraced; like a hard stone, He will accept His fate that He designed.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 50:6-7	<i>Near Future</i> The Lord will face humiliation.	Fulfilled 30 AD

Near Future

LORD'S HELPER

Isaiah 50: 8 He who vindicates Me is near; Who will contend with Me? Let us stand up to each other; Who has a case against Me? Let him draw near to Me. ^{9a} Behold, the Lord GOD helps Me;

As the Servant, the Lord will vindicate Himself. At times, it will seem that He will not overcome those who falsely accuse Him, but He will. They will soon face Him as their judge and they will perish.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 50:8-9a	<i>Near Future</i> The Lord will vindicate Himself.	Fulfilled between 30 AD

Near Future

WHO CONDEMNS THE LORD

Isaiah 50: 9b Who is he who condemns Me? Behold, they will all wear out like a garment; The moth will eat them.

The Lord's enemies will not endure; they will perish, worn out like a moth-eaten garment.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 50:9b	<i>Near Future</i> The Lord's enemies will wear out.	Fulfilled between 30 AD

History/Present Day

WHO FEARS THE LORD

Isaiah 50: 10a Who is among you that fears the LORD, That obeys the voice of His servant, That walks in darkness and has no light?

The Lord directs His attention to the audience of Hezekiah's day. At that time, the days are not as difficult as they will be for Israel in the future. However, even then, there are people who do not walk by faith and in the light of the Savior. No one who fears the Lord will walk in darkness.

History/Present Day

WHO TRUSTS THE LORD

Isaiah 50: 10b Let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God. ¹¹ Behold, all you who kindle a fire, Who encircle yourselves with firebrands, Walk in the light of your fire And among the brands you have set ablaze. This you will have from My hand; And you will lie down in torment.

When a person insists on doing things his own way, in his own light, he will reap the fate that all will reap who choose to reject the Lord. Torment is his fate; the place of eternal suffering is his reward.

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Because the Jews reject the Servant, He takes salvation to the Gentiles. Isaiah 49-50	A remnant of the Jews will believe in the Servant and be exalted. Isaiah 51:1-52:12	The Servant will suffer and then He will be exalted. Isaiah 52:13-53:12	The Servant will bring salvation to the Jews and the Gentiles. Isaiah 54-57

In chapter 51, the Lord begins the second part of His message in this part of vision 22. Here, He promises that a remnant of Jews will believe in the Servant and will be exalted. He builds His case, starting with a reference to Abraham and Sarah.

History/Present Day

WHO PURSUES RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 51:1 " Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, Who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were hewn, And to the quarry from which you were dug. ² "Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain; When *he* was one I called him, Then I blessed him and multiplied him."

The pursuit of righteousness always depends on the seeking of a relationship with the Lord. For Israel, the essence of the Lord's direct relationship with her begins with the Lord's selection of Abraham to be the patriarch of His chosen nation to bring forth the Savior. Abraham was one year old when the Lord selected him. He was born in the village of Ur in modern day Iraq and moved with his family to Haran, in northwest Mesopotamia between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. After the death of his father, the Lord sent Abraham, still called Abram at the time, down into what would become the Promised Land, just outside the village of Ai.

Far Prophecy

THE COMFORT OF ZION

Isaiah 51:3 Indeed, the LORD will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places. And her wilderness He will make like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the LORD; Joy and gladness will be found in her, Thanksgiving and sound of a melody. ⁴ "Pay attention to Me, O My people; And give ear to Me, O My nation; For a Law will go forth from Me, And I will set My justice for a light of the peoples. ⁵ "My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth, And My arms will judge the peoples; The coastlands will wait for Me, And for My arm they will wait expectantly. ⁶ "Lift up your eyes to the sky, Then look to the earth beneath; For the sky will vanish like smoke, And the earth will wear out like a garment, And its inhabitants will die in like manner, But My salvation shall be forever, And My righteousness shall not wane.

Eden is the garden of the Lord which He created on the sixth day. He placed Adam as its caretaker before He created Eve. Zion was the southern section of Jerusalem, so-called because it was the citadel of the Jebusites that David conquered and established as his capital in his seventh year as king of Israel. In Hezekiah's day, it is the capital of the Southern Kingdom and the home of Isaiah. Jerusalem will see no true peace until the King of Peace establishes His throne within her walls. At that time, Zion will be like the garden of the Lord. He gave Israel the law while she was in the wilderness. He provided the prophets to bolster the reality of His presence and as surety that His law will one day bring judgment on her for her sin. He will arrive as a babe to deliver His personal message and die as her Savior. He will return to set up His kingdom and establish her as the premier nation of the world. He will judge the world in justice and righteousness with salvation through Him as its reward. He will offer the same salvation to the people of the coastlands, the Gentiles

and many will put their trust in Him. All will wait for His arrival with great anticipation. Tattered, torn, and worn, the enemies of Israel and the Lord will die on the day of His arrival to provide His everlasting salvation and righteousness.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 51:1-6	<i>Far Prophecy</i> The Lord comfort Zion.	Fulfilled at the Lord's Second Coming

History/Present Day

WHO KNOW RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 51:7 "Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, A people in whose heart is My Law; Do not fear the reproach of man, Neither be dismayed at their revilings. ⁸ "For the moth will eat them like a garment, And the grub will eat them like wool. But My righteousness shall be forever, And My salvation to all generations." ^{9a} Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; Awake as in the days of old, the generations of long ago.

Some of the Southern Kingdom know the righteousness of the Lord in a personal, heartfelt manner; they are not to fear anyone because the Lord will give them the strength to survive all threats.

History/Present Day

LORD'S ACTIONS

Isaiah 51:9b Was it not Thou who cut Rahab in pieces, Who pierced the dragon? ¹⁰ Was it not Thou who dried up the sea, The waters of the great deep; Who made the depths of the sea a pathway For the redeemed to cross over?

Rahab was the personal name a woman who lived Jericho and helped the Israelites as they made their plans to cross the Jordan River to take the city. The name means arrogant, raging, turbulent or afflicter but here it refers to a dragon, not the woman. A psalm mentions the Lord and this same Rahab.

Psalm 89:8 O LORD God of hosts, who is like Thee, O mighty LORD? Thy faithfulness also surrounds Thee. ⁹ Thou dost rule the swelling of the sea; When its waves rise, Thou dost still them. ¹⁰ Thou Thyself didst crush Rahab like one who is slain; Thou didst scatter Thine enemies with Thy mighty arm. ¹¹ The heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine; The world and all it contains, Thou hast founded them.

Whether this dragon is Satan the devil or not, we do not know; however, the context assures that in spite of the Lord's dealing with Rahab, He will provide a way for the redeemed of the Lord to overcome all obstacles safely.

Far Prophecy

LORD'S RANSOM RETURNS

Isaiah 51:11 So the ransomed of the LORD will return, And come with joyful shouting to Zion; And everlasting joy *will be* on their heads. They will obtain gladness and joy, And sorrow and sighing will flee away. ^{12a} "I, even I, am He who comforts you.

The Lord will one day allow all the ransomed Israelites to return to the Promised Land where they will live without fear, comforted by the Lord with every need met and an attitude of everlasting joy.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 51:11-12a	<i>Far Prophecy</i> Zion will be joyful when the Lord returns.	Fulfilled at the Lord's Second Coming

Near Future

FORGOTTEN MAKER – FEAR OF OPPRESSOR

Isaiah 51:12b Who are you that you are afraid of man who dies, And of the son of man who is made like grass; ¹³ That you have forgotten the LORD your Maker, Who stretched out the heavens, And laid the foundations of the earth; That you fear continually all day long because of the fury of the oppressor, As he makes ready to destroy? But where is the fury of the oppressor? ¹⁴ "The exile will soon be set free, and will not die in the dungeon, nor will his bread be lacking.

The Southern Kingdom fears the return of Assyria although Isaiah has promised in his prophecies that Assyria will never return. Yet, he has promised that Babylon will come to overtake her if she strays in her ways, and she will. Apparently, the Southern Kingdom thinks that this prophecy refers to the Northern Kingdom's exile, but it does not. From today's vantage point of having the complete Scripture, we know that the exile of the Southern Kingdom lasted only 70 years. The people of Isaiah's day, had to fear the thought of an oppressor. They knew Egypt was too weak to help them and they had no other allies. This passage assures the people of the Southern Kingdom that their exile will pass quickly in God's timing and they will not suffer as they did under the Egyptian bondage. Why will she go into exile? It will be because she has forgotten the Lord, her Maker.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 51:12b-14	<i>Near Future</i> The exile in Babylon will pass quickly.	Fulfilled between 606 BC and 536 BC

Near Future

FORGOTTEN MAKER – MY PEOPLE

Isaiah 51:15 "For I am the LORD your God, who stirs up the sea and its waves roar (the LORD of hosts is His name). ¹⁶ "And I have put My words in your mouth, and have covered you with the shadow of My hand, to establish the heavens, to found the earth, and to say to Zion, 'You are My people.'"

Israel is without excuse. She has everything she needs to live a righteous life with her Lord, but she will not do so. He, the Lord, will not let her go. He, the Creator of all, will protect her in her rebellion because He chose her as His people.

Far Prophecy

TWO THINGS BEFALL ISRAEL

Isaiah 51:17 Rouse yourself! Rouse yourself! Arise, O Jerusalem, You who have drunk from the LORD'S hand the cup of His anger; The chalice of reeling you have drained to the dregs. ¹⁸ There is none to guide her among all the sons she has borne; Nor is there one to take her by the hand among all the sons she has reared. ¹⁹ These two things have befallen you; Who will mourn for you? The devastation and destruction, famine and sword; How shall I comfort you? ²⁰ Your sons have fainted, They lie *helpless* at the head of every street, Like an antelope in a net, Full of the wrath of the LORD, The rebuke of your God. ²¹ Therefore, please hear this, you afflicted, Who are drunk, but not with wine:

The Lord has every reason to be angry with the people of Jerusalem. They will feel His anger because of their great iniquities and transgressions. The blind leaders of Israel

cannot lead the people to safety. They will suffer because of their sins. First, they will mourn. Second, they will faint. No one can help them with either of these conditions because they are drunk in their alienation from the Lord.

Far Prophecy

CUP REMOVED FROM ISRAEL

Isaiah 51:22 Thus says your Lord, the LORD, even your God Who contends for His people, "Behold, I have taken out of your hand the cup of reeling; The chalice of My anger, You will never drink it again.

When the Lord returns to set up His kingdom on earth, Israel will no longer feel the anger of the Lord. She will have chosen Him and she will never stray from His Law, safety and guidance.

Far Prophecy

CUP GIVEN TO TORMENTORS

Isaiah 51:23 "And I will put it into the hand of your tormentors, Who have said to you, 'Lie down that we may walk over you.' You have even made your back like the ground, And like the street for those who walk over *it*."

The anger of the Lord will transfer from Israel to all the enemies of the Lord and Israel. To be an enemy of Israel is to be an enemy of the Lord. Plainly put, the nations and religions that want to see the destruction of Israel are enemies of the true and only Lord God.

Far Prophecy

ACTION - REDEEMED WITHOUT MONEY

Isaiah 52:1 Awake, awake, Clothe yourself in your strength, O Zion; Clothe yourself in your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. For the uncircumcised and the unclean Will no more come into you. ² Shake yourself from the dust, rise up, O captive Jerusalem; Loose yourself from the chains around your neck, O captive daughter of Zion. ³ For thus says the LORD, "You were sold for nothing and you will be redeemed without money."

By the time of the great tribulation of Israel, just before the second return of the Lord, Jerusalem, or Zion, will be totally in the hands of a leader striving to make it his place of worship of the god Zeus/Jupiter. However, the Lord will bring an end to that ruler, reclaim Jerusalem for Himself and it will once again belong to Israel as the capital of her Savior, the Lord.

Far Prophecy

REASON – EARTH SEES THE SALVATION OF ISRAEL'S GOD

Isaiah 52:4 For thus says the Lord GOD, "My people went down at the first into Egypt to reside there, then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. ⁵ "Now therefore, what do I have here," declares the LORD, "seeing that My people have been taken away without cause?" *Again* the LORD declares, "Those who rule over them howl, and My name is continually blasphemed all day long. ⁶ "Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, 'Here I am.'" ⁷ How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, *And* says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" ⁸ Listen! Your watchmen lift up *their* voices, They shout joyfully together; For they will see with their own eyes When the LORD restores Zion. ⁹ Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰ The LORD has bared His holy arm In the sight of all the nations, That all the ends of the earth may see The salvation of our God.

The exit from Egypt and Assyria will not compare to the return of the Lord to establish His rule on the mountain of Zion. Although it will become a place of continual blasphemy, when He arrives, Israel will finally proclaim, our "God reigns!" At that moment, every eye will see, every ear will hear and every knee will bow to Israel's God. Although not all will be saved, all will bow.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 51:17-52:10	<i>Far Prophecy</i> The Lord will redeem Israel punish her enemies.	Fulfilled at the Lord's Second Coming

Near Future

DEPART TO EXILE

Isaiah 52:11 Depart, depart, go out from there, Touch nothing unclean; Go out of the midst of her, purify yourselves, You who carry the vessels of the LORD. ¹² But you will not go out in haste, Nor will you go as fugitives; For the LORD will go before you, And the God of Israel *will be* your rear guard.

Israel exited the ungodly Egypt and, one day, she will exit ungodly Babylon. Jeremiah says it as follows:

Lamentations 4:13 Because of the sins of her prophets *And* the iniquities of her priests, Who have shed in her midst The blood of the righteous, ¹⁴ They wandered, blind, in the streets; They were defiled with blood So that no one could touch their garments. ¹⁵ "Depart! Unclean!" they cried of themselves. "Depart, depart, do not touch!" So they fled and wandered; *Men* among the nations said, "They shall not continue to dwell *with us.*" ¹⁶ The presence of the LORD has scattered them; He will not continue to regard them. They did not honor the priests, They did not favor the elders.

Soon it will be time for the Southern Kingdom to depart for exile because of her sins. As she leaves, she is not to touch anything unclean. The Lord promises to protect His people while they are in exile for 70 years, and He does. At the end of the first year of exile, the Lord elevates a Jewish noble named Daniel to be the second ruler in the Babylonian Kingdom. With Daniel in place, the Jews are safe through the entire period of the exile.

Israel is not to fear and Hezekiah is to comfort his people with these words. A remnant will survive all the evil cast at them by the nations and the Lord will exalt them above all other when He arrives to set up His kingdom.

Passage	Summary	Time of Fulfillment
Isa. 52:11-12	<i>Near Future</i> The Lord will send the Southern Kingdom into exile.	Fulfilled between 606 BC and 586 BC