

The Song of the Learned Servant

Isaiah's Servant Songs

Isaiah 50:4-11

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42:1-13 *The Elect Servant*
 49:1-13 *The Faithful Servant*
 50:4-11 *The Learned Servant*
 52:13-53:12 *The Suffering Servant*
 61:1-11 *The Joyful Servant*

I. The Necessity of Christian Education

II. Outlandish Promises (49:14 – 50:3)

Through Isaiah's songs, God silences the idols and establishes His divinity by revealing the future. Following the 2nd song, Isaiah answers two objections: God is not interested in saving Israel (49:14-23) or is unable to do so (49:24-50:3). He insists that God will fulfill His promises.

III. The Song of the Learned Servant

Isaiah 50:4-11

⁴"The Lord God has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned. ⁵The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away. ⁶I 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. ⁷"For the Lord God will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed. ⁸He is near who justifies Me; Who will contend with Me? Let us stand together. Who is My adversary? Let him come near Me. ⁹Surely the Lord God will help Me; Who is he who will condemn Me? Indeed they will all grow old like a garment; The moth will eat them up. ¹⁰"[A] Who among you fears the LORD? Who obeys the voice of His Servant? [B] Who walks in darkness And has no light? [A'] Let him trust in the name of the LORD And rely upon his God. ¹¹[B'] Look, all you who kindle a fire, Who encircle yourselves with sparks: Walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks you have kindled— This you shall have from My hand: You shall lie down in torment.

A. The Tongue and Ear of the Learned Servant (4 cf. Lk 2:39-52)

When we think of the word *disciple* we usually think of Jesus' disciples, but Isaiah teaches us that _____ too was a learner. His knowledge and wisdom were not the result of a direct "download" from on high, but the result of *diligent study and inquiry*.

B. The Obedience of the Learned Servant (vv. 5-6)

The Servant acknowledges that the Father gave Him understanding and insists that He, for His part, was obedient. He listened to what Yahweh was calling Him to do – namely, to _____.

C. The Confidence of the Learned Servant (vv. 7-9)

He suffers willingly because He is confident that the Lord God will be with Him and will deliver Him. And if the Lord was for Him, who could be against Him?

D. The Call of the Learned Servant (vv. 10-11 cf. Jn 5:19-23; Heb 9:27)

Finally, the Servant issues a call to _____ to those who trust the Lord and His Servant (A, A') and a warning of _____ to those who worship idols (B, B'). To fear the Lord is to obey the voice of His Servant (cf. Jn 5:19-23).

IV. The Call to be Learned Servants

A. Attention all students! (cf. Ps 119)

First, this song summons us to be learners, _____. In order one day to be able to teach, to contribute, one must first learn. Paul writes:

¹²For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. ¹⁴But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (Heb 4:12-14)

Jesus' life reminds us what it means to be called a disciple – it means to listen and to give heed; to learn; to take the time to understand and to grow; to be eager to listen to His Word and implement it in our lives. Psalm 119 begins:

¹ Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the LORD! ² Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart! ³ They also do no iniquity; They walk in His ways. ⁴ You have commanded us To keep Your precepts diligently. ⁵ Oh, that my ways were directed To keep Your statutes! ⁶ Then I would not be ashamed, When I look into all Your commandments. ⁷ I will praise You with uprightness of heart, When I learn Your righteous judgments. ⁸ I will keep Your statutes; Oh, do not forsake me utterly! ⁹ How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. ¹⁰ With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! ¹¹ Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You. ¹² Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. ¹³ With my lips I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth. ¹⁴ I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. ¹⁵ I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways. ¹⁶ I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word. ¹⁷ Deal bountifully with Your servant, That I may live and keep Your word. ¹⁸ Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law.

B. The Call to Suffer

Second, at the center of Jesus' ministry was _____. He suffered for us that He might restore us to fellowship with God. And He suffered in faith, knowing that God *was with Him* and *would vindicate Him*. Suffering is part of our calling as well. Like Jesus, we can endure that suffering in hope. At the end of that suffering will be glory.

C. Glorious Duty (cf. Rom 8:31ff.)

An intimate acquaintance with God's promises enables us to face whatever obstacles are put in our way with faith. The one who knows the will of God can take on the world because come what may he knows that what he is doing is pleasing the Lord. There is no greater source of energy and conviction than the knowledge that God is with me in the suffering and will reward me at the end of it. Remember Paul's words:

³¹What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." ³⁷Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

V. Conclusion