

Institute 11-8-22— Isaiah 48 & 49: **My Covenant People** (1Nephi 20-21)

Review GOALS

The Lord commands us to study Isaiah, in part because it testifies of him, and when reading we can feel His love. Each class, try to find something meaningful to “Liken” to yourself (1 Nephi 19:23-24). The Book of Mormon quotes about 1/3 of the Isaiah we have canonized in the KJV. Nephi and Jacob offer one of the best commentaries on Isaiah we have available. These prophetic brothers give us interpretations of most of the Isaiah texts they quote.

LOOK for Names of the Lord to better understand the God we worship. How many do you find in this chapter?

OUTLINE of a COVENANT:

- 1) Introduction of the covenant parties, 2) Conditions, 3) Ordinances or sacrificial 4) Consequence, 5) Witnesses

Isaiah 48

Isaiah 48 is the first chp quoted in the BoM, and 1 Nephi 19:23 explains why. It discusses the waywardness of ancient Israel

Isa 2-14 // 2 Ne 1, 12-15, 17-24
Isa 48-54 // 1Ne 20-21; 2Ne7-8;
Mos14; 3 Ne 20-22

which Nephi likens to himself—with family members patterning ancient Israel’s waywardness. Nephi, like Isaiah, calls his people to repentance in order to start his new civilization as covenant Israel. The chp is a chastisement and an invitation to return to their Redeemer; it’s also a summary of Deuteronomy. This block of Isa 48-54 is quoted by Nephi, Jacob, Abinadi, and Jesus—

scattered across 4 books.

1 Nephi 20 or Isaiah 48:1

Nephi shared many of Isaiah’s feelings (lost remnant, need to gather after destruction, etc.) Yet the section also applies beautifully to us. This section is written to those of the covenant (waters of Judah-baptism) who have not kept their covenants (“yet they swear not in truth” 1 Nephi 20:1). They are “obstinate” and they see and know it, but refuse to “declare” it (1 Nephi 20:6). In fact, we live in a generation that is “transgressor from the womb” (20:8).

Nephi said that Isaiah is understood by the Jews “manner of prophesying” (2 Nephi 25:1). In addition to learning Jewish symbolism and geography, the poetic structure may also help us understand the text better. Besides, Isaiah is arguably the best poet who ever lived. Here is the chapter with italics and underlining highlighting the parallelisms. The brackets are when Book of Mormon adds something to the KJV.

JUDAH AND THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION

48:1-2 The Lord begins with an invitation—HEAR! He invites all who will enter into a covenant with God to be called by the name of Israel—both through the blood of Jacob and spirit of the Lord. Isaiah addresses the Israelites—born through the seed of Judah (waters of birth), but Nephi’s opens that up to a more inclusive group to all who covenant to serve God through baptism. In 1840, the prophet Joseph Smith edited his translation of the Book of Mormon and added, “. . . waters of Judah, or out of the waters of baptism” (1 Nephi 20:1). This expands the meaning to include all covenant or spiritual house of Israel. Israel’s problem is hypocrisy. The Israelites hadn’t honored their birthright, yet they still claim to be God’s children—while nothing within them suggests that (Jesus denounced the same thing during his mortal ministry—Matt 6:2, 5, 16, etc.) God invites them to return. Those baptized, have not completely joined themselves to the covenant. They don’t hear God’s counsel. At the end Nephi adds: “*but they do not* stay themselves . . .” which changes the whole meaning to show apostasy!

48:3-6 God denounces *obstinate* Israelites (born or reborn) who don’t accept Him. Even when He foretold, Israel didn’t follow suit.

48:7-8 Ever since God called Israel to follow (*from the womb*), they have had a wicked, disobedient side.

48:9-11 Yet for God’s goodness, for “*my name’s sake*” He will defer his anger. Israel will need refinement through affliction.

48:12 -13 Again we see a companionate, pleading God who is ready to give Israel another try—if will they listen and obey.

48:14 If we/Israel will organize ourselves in obedience, the Lord will bless and *love Israel*. God rebukes and then shows forth love.

48:16-18 God begs Israel to “*come ye near unto me*” so that he can lead us to find “*peace like a river.*”

48:19-22 Now we learn what we have to do to gain the Abrahamic covenant/eternal seed (D&C 132). Isa of being cut off or “destroyed.” The answer comes in vs 20, we must leave Babylon-worldliness & materialism. The wicked will not know peace.

Compare the texts—Nephi changes f every verse from an older text translated than the KJV English; it is not plagiarism by Joseph.

**What significance changes do you see? I find more cause / effect, and inclusive language (and yes, grammar).*

Isaiah 48

1 ¶ HEAR ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, _____ [added by JS in 1840] which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, [but] not in truth, nor in righteousness.

2 For they call themselves of the holy city, _____ and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; _____ The LORD of hosts is his name.

3 _____ I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did _____ them suddenly, **and they came to pass**.

4 _____ Because I knew that thou [art] obstinate, and thy neck [is] an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

5 _____ I have even from the beginning declared [it] to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it _____ thee: _____ lest thou shouldst say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.

6 Thou hast _____ heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? _____ I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

7 They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; _____ lest thou shouldst say, Behold, I knew them.

8 Yea, _____ thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

11 For mine own sake, [even] for mine own sake, will I do [it]: for how should [my name] be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.

12 Harken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I [am] he; I [am] the first, I also [am] the last.

13 Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: [when] I call unto them, they stand up together.

14 All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these [things]? _____ The LORD hath loved him: _____ he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm [shall be on] the Chaldeans.

15 _____ I, [even] I, have spoken; yea, I have called him: _____ I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

16 ¶ Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there [am] I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

1 Nephi 20

HEARKEN and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, **or out of the waters of baptism**, who swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, yet they swear not in truth nor in righteousness.

2 **Nevertheless** they call themselves of the holy city, **but they do not** stay themselves upon the God of Israel, **who is the Lord of Hosts; yea**, the Lord of Hosts is his name.

3 **Behold**, I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them. I did show them suddenly _____.

4 **And I did it** because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

5 And I have even from the beginning declared _____ to thee; before it came to pass I showed them thee; **and I showed them for fear** lest thou shouldst say—mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them

6 Thou hast **seen and** heard all this; and will ye not declare **them?** And that I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

7 They are created now, and not from the beginning, even before the day when thou heardest them not **they were declared unto thee**, lest thou shouldst say—Behold I knew them.

8 Yea, **and** thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time _____ thine ear was not opened; for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

9 ¶ _____ For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain _____ for thee, that I cut thee not off.

10 _____ Behold, I have refined thee, **but not with silver**; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

9 **Nevertheless**, for my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain **from** thee, that I cut thee not off.

10 **For**, behold, I have refined thee, _____ I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

11 For mine own sake, yea, for mine own sake will I do this, for I will not suffer my name to be polluted, and I will not give my glory unto another.

12 Harken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called, for I am he; I am the first, and I am also the last.

13 Mine hand hath also laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens. I call unto them and they stand up together.

14 All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; who among them hath declared these things **unto them?** The Lord hath loved him; yea, and he will fulfil his word which he hath declared by them; and he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall come upon the Chaldeans.

15 Also, saith the Lord; I the Lord, yea, I have spoken; yea, I have called him to declare, I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

16 Come ye near unto me; I have not spoken in secret; from the beginning, from the time that it was declared have I spoken; and the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

ISA 49—SERVANT SONG—is filled with beautiful poetry—note the parallelisms, the metaphors, and flow.

- 49:1 The Lord identifies himself as “me,” which I think fits nicely into Isa 52:6, “my people shall know my name.” The Lord calls even the little known “isles” or coastlands to hear (representing the nether most parts of the earth). 1 Nephi 21:1 adds: “Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel.” Is the prophet the one called from the womb, or all the other Israelites, or both, or more?
- 49:2-3 AGAIN we find verses with dual meaning—for both the Lord and His prophets. Their words help us understand the value of affliction / polishing. Joseph Smith referenced this verse while talking about himself: “I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priest-craft, lawyer-craft, . . . backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women—all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there, thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty, . . . while these smooth-polished stones with which I come in contact become marred (*HC* 5:401; also see *D&C* 6:2; 11:1; 14:2; 15:2; 33:1). In addition to referring to Jesus and his prophets—and all who become Israel (meaning: “one who prevails with God/Elohim”). The lawful heirs of the heavenly kingdom are hid from the powers of the world.
- 49:4 We now have a VOICE CHANGE—God is no longer speaking, but the downtrodden servant or Judah /Israel realizes that they have labored in vain for the wrong cause. The servants don’t feel appreciated.
- 49:5-6 The call to the servants now, MODERN Israelite servants, includes their assignment in vs. 6—1) raise up Israel, 2) restore, 3) light to the gentiles (i.e. share the Gospel to the whole world).
- 49:9 The Servant will also free prisoners (Isa 42:7) which has multiple levels of meaning—this is a huge role of the Lord.
- 49:12 The gathering will include the lost tribes from across the word, even the land of “Sinim / China” or the East.
- 49:13-14 We can rejoice because God will comfort His people, he will provide mercy, and renew his covenant with
- 49:15-16 This precious verse is a sad reality—some parents forget their children in the time of feeding—but not God. This powerful metaphor allows us to feel the tender nurturing feelings that God has for us. This precious verse is a sad reality—some parents forget their children, even in the time of feeding (but a woman’s body quickly remind her of her obligation!), unlike disloyal humans, God will not forget us—He engraved us on “the palms of [His] hands” This image includes the symbolism of his crucifixion as well as His parental role in our re-birth. In this respect, Jesus fulfilled “the suffering servant” prophecies.
- 49:18 When God promises to clothe us in the wedding garments, it refers to the “robes of righteousness.” (Isa 61:10)
- 49:22-25 God promises to prepare and execute a gathering for Israel that extends to the Gentile kings giving aid. Our missionaries and member missionaries are the *standard* or *ensign*. God promises to fight Israel’s battles and save his children if we are not ashamed to wait / serve him. Nephi includes 3 chapters to describe the fulfillment of these promises: 1 Nephi 22, 2 Nephi 6, 10.
- 49:26 Nephi adds “For the Mighty God shall deliver his covenant people, For thus saith the Lord.” Nephi also gave this verse two interpretations: 1) the great and abominable church would war among themselves, and 2) the nations who fight against Zion will “*fall into the pit they digged to ensnare the people of the Lord.*”

TEXT in PARALLELS: 1 Nephi 20:9-16

- 9 [Nevertheless,] *for my name’s sake* will I defer mine anger,
and for my praise will I refrain from thee, that I cut thee not off.
10 [For,] behold, I have refined thee,
I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.
- 11 *For mine own sake*,
[yea,] *for mine own sake* will I do [this,]
for [I will not suffer] my name [to] be polluted,
and I will not give my glory unto another.
- 12 Hearken unto me, *O Jacob*[,]
and Israel my called,
[for] I am he;
I am the first,
[and] I am also the last.
- 13 *Mine hand* [hath also] laid the foundation of the earth,
and *my right hand* hath spanned the heavens...
I call unto them [and] they stand up together.

14 All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; [who] among them hath declared these things [unto them?]
The Lord hath loved him;
[yea, and *he will fulfil his word* which he hath declared by them;]
[and] *he will do his pleasure on Babylon*,
and *his arm shall [come upon] the Chaldeans*.

15 [Also, *saith the Lord*;]

I [the Lord, yea,] ...

I have spoken; yea,

I have called him [to declare,]

I have brought him,

and he shall make his way prosperous.

16 Come ye near unto me; ...

I have not spoken in secret; from the beginning,

from the time that it was [declared

[have I spoken;

and the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me .

PREPARE

NXT WEEK

Isa 50-53

- 1) How do we sell ourselves? How do we rescue one who has sold himself?
- 2) Are we walking in our own kindled sparks or in the Lord's light—50:10-11?
- 3) What does it mean to an LDS to be a descendant of Abraham—51:1-3?

What do you see from different formatting?
What is more enlightening in the text?

TEXT in PARALLELS: 1 Nephi 20:17-22

17 [And] thus saith the *Lord*,
thy *Redeemer*,
the *Holy One of Israel*; [I have sent him,] ...
the *Lord thy God*

[*who*] teacheth thee to profit,
[*who*] leadeth thee by the way thou shouldst go, [hath done it].

God's DESIRES

18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments—
then had *thy peace* been as a river,
and *thy righteousness* as the waves of the sea.

19 *Thy seed* also had been as the sand;
the *offspring of thy bowels* like the gravel thereof;
his name should not have been *cut off*
nor destroyed from before me.

SONG of Babylonian EXILE

20 *Go ye forth* of Babylon,
flee ye from the Chaldeans,

With a voice of singing *declare ye*,
tell this,
utter to the end of the earth;
say ye:

The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.

21 And they thirsted not; ... he led them through the deserts;
he caused the *waters to flow out* of the rock for them;
he clave the rock also and the *waters gushed out*.

22 [And notwithstanding he hath done all this, and greater also,]
there is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked

SONG of the LORD'S SERVANT

[Hearken,
O ye house of Israel,
all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors *of my people*; yea,
all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are *of my people*,
O house of Israel.]

Listen, O isles, unto me,
and *hearken ye* people from far;
the Lord *hath called me* from the womb;
from the [womb/bowels] of my mother hath *he made mention of my name*.

2 And he hath made my mouth like a *sharp sword*; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me,
and made me a *polished shaft*; in his quiver hath he hid me;

3 And said unto me: Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

This SERVANT relationship is interpreted on several levels. —1) Christ is the Servant (as well as the King and Master),
2) Israel is the servant, 3) Isaiah is the servant. 4) The Prophet Joseph Smith likened the verse to himself as he said he was
a rough stone rolling and a shaft in the Lord's hand as His servant.

All those who become Israelites through conversion of the Spirit and the waters of baptism become God's servants.
Interestingly, the name, "Israel," means one who prevails with God, and it often applies to all who prevail with God.