Isaiah 49

“God’s Tattoo!”

1. **Intro:**
   1.1. New section:
      1.1.1. Old – the prophet was concerned to show the supremacy of the God of Israel over the nations & their gods.
      1.1.2. New – Israel’s glorious future.

2. **MESSIAH, HIS SERVANT! (1-13)**
   2.1. A SERVANT! (1-4)
   2.2. (1) Messiah -
   2.3. (2) He is now described as “Israel in whom I will be glorified” –
      2.3.1. In contrast to the nation of Israel, which had so grievously failed.
      2.3.2. Shadow – each of us must go there sometimes.
         2.3.2.1. The photograph of His face can only be developed in the dark room! (F.B.Meyer)
         2.3.2.2. In some realms of nature, shadows & darkness are the places of the greatest growth.
            2.3.2.2.1. The *Evening Primrose* only reveals its beauty as evening comes on.
      2.3.3. A polished shaft – Pebble beach, famous for the beautiful pebbles found there. (tourist from around the world collect them)
         2.3.3.1. Big difference between the rocks pounded by the waves, tossed, rolled, & rubbed together there.
         2.3.3.2. Verses down the coast where a quiet cove protects them from the face of the ocean, they are sheltered from storms…yet those stones are never sought by travelers.
            2.3.3.2.1. They are rough, unpolished, & devoid of beauty.
      2.3.4. Quiver – you are still in His quiver. Safe. Close.
         2.3.4.1. He is only keeping you nearby till the moment comes when he can send you out quickly & confidently on some mission that will bring Him glory! [Are you in a holding pattern?]
         2.3.4.2. Remember oh “shadowed & isolated one” remember how closely the quiver is tied to the warrior.
            2.3.4.2.1. Always w/in easy reach of His hand, & jealously protected!
2.4. (3) My Servant –
   2.4.1. If this is Jesus designation, why do so many Christians buck against serving? (He didn't come to be served, but to serve!)

2.5. (4) His initial un-success! – i.e. “labor in vain”.
   2.5.1. (4b) What is His attitude with this un-success? – as unto the Lord.

2.6. A LIGHT! (5,6)

2.7. His new task – Gentiles!
   2.7.1. Yet really not a “new” task for it was God’s heart from the beginning. [Missionary God]
   2.7.2. Though this is speaking of Messiah, Paul & Barnabus make this for themselves (Acts 13:47)
   2.7.3. Do we have a share in this task?
       2.7.3.1. Jn.20:21 “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

2.8. A COVENANT! (7-12)

2.9. (8) Messiah will fulfill the covenant w/His people – He will restore them to the land.

2.10. (9-12) He will gather them from the nations of the world.
   2.10.1. And will protect & provide for them as he brings them home.

2.11. (10) He will lead you with Shepherd care!

2.12. (11) He will use obstacles in your life to advance his purpose/will!
   2.12.1. [i.e. the mountains]
   2.12.2. Note: they are His mountains! (like His waves in Ps.107:25)
   2.12.3. Q: What are your mountains God has placed in your life presently?

2.13. A COMFORTER! (13)

2.14. All of nature is pictured responding w/joy as Israel is restored to the land.

3. UNFAILING LOVE & CERTAIN DELIVERANCE! (14-26)

3.1. A TATTOO! (14-16)

3.2. (14) Ever feel the Lord has forsaken or forgotten you!
   3.2.1. Does God really care about His me?
   3.2.2. Promise: The Lord cannot forget His own!
   3.2.3. This assurance was given to the chosen race on the eve of their return from Babylon.
3.2.4. Listen to the Lord’s voice take on tones of unusual persuasiveness.
3.2.4.1. Ponder His assurances & compassion & comfort!

3.3. (15) I will not forget! – a Mothers love is “tops”…but not thee top!
3.3.1. A mothers love is awesome!
3.3.1.1. Someone once asked Susanna Wesley which one of her 11 children she loved the most. She wisely replied, "I love the one who's sick until he's well, and the one who’s away until he comes home."
3.3.1.2. Mothers struggle w/being a buffer between their kids & the sidewalk? Them and disappointment? Them and failure? How close they are supposed to get? How far to dare fall behind?

3.3.2. In Catholicism, going to Mary for prayer, or things, is promoted because a mother is known for being more "tender, caring, gentle, and patient, forgiving, & understanding."
3.3.2.1. But God’s love for us supersedes a mother’s love…“They may forget, Yet I will not forget!”
3.3.2.2. The difference could be likened unto the difference of the ray of the sun, verses the sun!

3.4. (16) On which hand? – Oh, both Hands!
3.4.1. (Pulpit) Drawn from the ancient practice of burning or puncturing figures & other mementoes upon the hand, arm etc., then often rubbing henna, indigo, gun powder, or some other color substance.
3.4.2. Inscribed – speaks of not forgetting, permanent, indelibly marked, i.e. constantly present w/Him.
3.4.2.1. Not like man w/tattoo at beach(blacked out).
3.4.3. Inscribed you – not just your name…but you!
3.4.3.1. Your person, your image, your case, your circumstances, your sins, your temptations, your weaknesses, your wants, your works, all your concerns. I have them engraved there!
3.4.3.2. Whichever hand He lifts He sees His people!
3.4.3.3. He treasures the remembrance of you!

3.4.4. Now – He keeps His promise a 1000 times, & yet the next trial we doubt him again!
3.4.4.1. He never fails; He is never a dry well; He is never as a setting sun; He is never as a passing meteor; or a melting vapor; & yet we are vexed with anxieties, overwhelmed with suspicions, & disturbed with fears, as if God were a mirage of a desert.¹

¹ Spurgeon; M & E; Nov.7.
3.4.5. Q: Will you ever say again that God has forsaken you, when He has engraved you on his hands?

3.4.6. Walls – of Jerusalem.
3.4.6.1. Even her broken walls are before his eyes, w/a view of their rebuilding.
3.4.6.2. What's he eyeing in your life, w/a view rebuilding?

3.5. A STANDARD! (17-23)

3.6. (17) Those that destroyed Jerusalem will leave; those rebuilding will return!
3.6.1. He will gather His family & bring them home!

3.7. (18-20) The city that had been desolate, will be thronged with people & w/their own children.
3.7.1. (18) Like ornaments they will crowd the city.
3.7.2. (21) They'll be astonished at their innumerable children/descendants

3.8. (23) Wait for me – in dependence of His promise, a resignation to his will.
3.8.1. Shame? – the shame that comes from disappointment of expectations & hope!
3.8.1.1. “They shall not be ashamed!”

3.9. A CONTENDER! (24-26)
3.10. But the enemy seems too strong!
3.11. (25,26) A love stronger than our strongest enemies!