

# To Serve and to Save



## SABBATH—FEBRUARY 20

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Isaiah 41; Isaiah 42:1–7; Isaiah 44:26 to Isaiah 45:6; Leviticus 26:40–45; Isaiah 49:1–12.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “ ‘Here is my servant, the one I support. He is the one I chose, and I am pleased with him. I will put my Spirit in him. And he will bring justice [show what is right from wrong] to all nations [people groups]’ ” (Isaiah 42:1, ICB).



“The footprints of Jesus are in every place where human hearts need comfort.”

“**MANY PEOPLE** want to visit the places where Jesus was born and lived while He was on this earth. People want to walk where Jesus walked. They want to look at the lake where He loved to teach. They want to see the hills and valleys that He saw. But we do not need to go to Nazareth, to Capernaum, or to Bethany if we want to walk in the steps of Jesus. We will find His footprints next to the bed of the sick. The footprints of Jesus are in the house of the poor. The footprints of Jesus are in the crowded side streets of big cities. The footprints of Jesus are in every place where human hearts need comfort. So, we must do the work that Jesus did. Then we will walk in His footsteps.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 640, adapted.

Isaiah talked about a Servant of the Lord. This Servant shows mercy, the same as Jesus did: “ ‘He will not break a crushed blade of grass. He will not put out even a weak flame. . . . You will help the blind to see. You will free those who are in prison’ ” (Isaiah 42:3, 7, ICB).

Who is this Servant? What work does He do?

## A PEOPLE CHOSEN TO SERVE (Isaiah 41)

In Isaiah 41:8, ERV, God says, “ ‘You, Israel, are my servant.’ ” Then in Isaiah 42:1, ERV, God introduces the One who is “ ‘my servant.’ ” Who is this Servant?

Is this servant Jacob, who was the father of the people of Israel? Or is this servant Israel itself? Or is this Servant the Chosen One of God, who is known as Jesus in the New Testament?

Isaiah talks about two different servants in chapters 41–53. One servant is named “Israel” or “Jacob.” (Read Isaiah 41:8; Isaiah 44:1, 2, 21; Isaiah 45:4; and Isaiah 48:20.) These verses show us that Jacob is a word picture for all the people of Israel. God also makes His “servant Jacob” (Isaiah 48:20, ERV) free from Babylon. So, these verses also show us that Jacob is another name for the people of Israel.

Now let us look at some other examples in Isaiah. Read Isaiah 42:1; Isaiah 50:10; Isaiah 52:13; and Isaiah 53:11. In these verses, the Servant of God is not named. Isaiah first talks about the Servant in Isaiah 42:1. At first, we do not know who Isaiah is talking about. Isaiah tells us a little bit more about this Servant in later verses. Then we can see that this Servant is a special person. He brings Jacob (the people of Israel) back to God (Isaiah 49:5, 6). The Servant also dies as an offering for sinners (Isaiah 52:13 to Isaiah 53:12; read also Isaiah 49:5, 6). So, this Servant cannot be the same as the people of Israel. One servant shows us the people of God. The other Servant is a Person.

**Why does God choose Israel? What does He want them to do? For the answer, read Isaiah 41:8–20.**

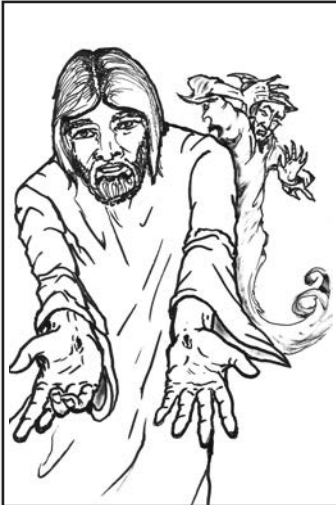
God tells Israel that they will continue to be His people. They are His servant. God says, “ ‘I chose you, and I have not rejected [turned against] you’ ” (Isaiah 41:9, ERV). Then God gives Israel one of the most beautiful and encouraging promises in the whole Bible. He says, “ ‘So don’t worry, because I am with you. Don’t be afraid, because I am your God. I will make you strong and will help you. I will support you with my right hand that saves you’ ” (Isaiah 41:10, ICB). Israel must show that they trust God to save them. King Ahaz did not trust the Lord. Israel must not trust in other gods and their statues as other people do (Isaiah 41:7, 21–24, 28, 29).



**Israel must show that they trust God to save them.**

### THE SERVANT WITH NO NAME (Isaiah 42:1–7)

Read about God’s special Servant in Isaiah 42:1–7. God pours His Spirit on this Person to do important work. What work does God give this Servant to do? Choose the best answer from the list below:



Jesus beats Satan at the cross.

1. The special Servant will show people right from wrong.
2. The special Servant will work with a gentle spirit. But He will be a success.
3. He is a teacher.
4. He serves as a living agreement between God and His people.
5. He gives hope to people by healing the blind and making prisoners free.
6. He is all of the above.

Does this Servant do the same work done by the Person who is shown by the “stump [part left in the ground after the tree is cut down] . . . of Jesse” in Isaiah 11:1, ICB? If yes, how is the work they do the same?

The King in Isaiah 11 does what God asks Him to do. He shows the people right from wrong. He makes the prisoners free. He teaches the people wisdom. He shows them who God is. We learned that this “stump” of Jesse is the Chosen One or Savior. He is the same as the holy Child in Isaiah 9:6, 7. This Child brings peace for the kingdom of David. He also shows the people right from wrong (Isaiah 9:7). Of course, the Servant in Isaiah 42 is the Savior.

**How does the New Testament show us the Servant in Isaiah 42:1–7? For the answer, read Matthew 12:15–21.**

Part of Isaiah 42 is written in Matthew 12. Matthew shows that the verses from Isaiah are about Jesus, the Son of God (Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 3:16, 17; Matthew 17:5). The work of Jesus helps to bring Israel back to God again (Isaiah 42:6; Daniel 9:27).

What did Jesus and His followers do for people? They made them free from suffering and evil spirits (Luke 10:19). Then Jesus died to make the agreement between God and His people sure (Matthew 26:28). Jesus beats Satan at the cross. Satan stole control of this earth from Adam (read John 12:31–33). But Jesus won that control back.

## THE PERSIAN SAVIOR (Isaiah 44:26 to Isaiah 45:6)

**What surprising message about the future do we read in Isaiah 44:26 to Isaiah 45:6?**

Isaiah worked for God from 745 B.C. to about 685 B.C. One of the special messages God gave Isaiah about the future was about a Persian king. First, Isaiah says that a mighty leader will come from the east and from the north (Isaiah 41:2, 3, 25). Next, Isaiah shows that this is good news for Jerusalem (Isaiah 41:27). Then Isaiah tells us that the name of this Persian king is Cyrus. Isaiah also tells us the different things that Cyrus will do. Isaiah is correct. Cyrus came from the north and east of Babylon. Cyrus beat Babylon in 539 B.C. Cyrus served God by making the Jews free from Babylon. Cyrus also gave the Jews permission to start building again the temple in Jerusalem (read Ezra 1). 146 years pass after Isaiah dies and before Cyrus captures Babylon. So, this shows that this message about Cyrus happens almost 150 years ahead of its time!

Many history writers show that the special message about Cyrus is true. Babylonian records from the time of Cyrus give proof. So does a report made by Cyrus himself and other Bible writers too (2 Chronicles 36:22, 23; Ezra 1; Daniel 5; Daniel 6:28; Daniel 10:1). We cannot doubt that God gave Isaiah this special message. The message helps make strong our faith in the Bible. The message shows that God knows the future before it happens.

**Why does God name Cyrus “his chosen king” (Isaiah 45:1, ERV)?**

Do you see in Isaiah 45:1 the word written as “chosen”? The word **Messiah** or **Savior** and the word “chosen” come from the same Hebrew word. Cyrus is a future king. He is sent by God to make His people free. But Cyrus is a special messiah or savior. Why? Because he is not a Jew. He will do some things that the Savior will do. Cyrus will beat the enemies of God. He will make the people of God in Babylon free again. But Cyrus is not the same as the coming Savior. Cyrus does not come from the line of David.

The special message about Cyrus shows us that only God knows the future (Isaiah 41:4, 21–23, 26–28; Isaiah 44:26). God also invites Cyrus to know Him personally. God knows the name of Cyrus before he is born (Isaiah 45:3).



**Cyrus served God by making the Jews free from Babylon.**

## HOPE FOR THE FUTURE (Leviticus 26:40–45)



**There is no second  
“Isaiah.”**

Isaiah shows that God knows the future before it happens. Isaiah names Cyrus almost 150 years before Cyrus is born. This special message upsets some people because they do not want to believe that God gives messages to His people. So, they believe that another man named Isaiah lived during the time of Cyrus. The “second Isaiah” wrote down Isaiah 40–66.

This idea is false. There is no second “Isaiah.” If he lived, why did the Bible not bother to tell us about him? So, we do not see any proof in the Bible that a new writer wrote the rest of Isaiah after chapter 39.

The message of Isaiah is the same in his whole book: trust in God. Believe in the Savior that God will send. Do not trust in other things. Yes, Bible experts are correct when they say chapters 1–39 talk about Assyria. Chapters 40 to the end of the book talk about the time that the people of God will be prisoners in Babylon. We saw that Isaiah 13–14 and Isaiah 39 already show that the people of God will be taken to Babylon. Isaiah 1–39 shows the punishments of God. Isaiah 40–66 shows the comfort God gives His people. But in the chapters before this, God also comforts His people. And in the later chapters of the book, we also read about the future punishments of God against Judah for turning away from Him (Isaiah 42:18–25; Isaiah 43:22–28; and Isaiah 48:1–11).

**Israel suffered awful things because of their sins. But some of the people did not give up hope. They believed the promises of God. Some of these promises are found in Leviticus 26:40–45. Read these verses carefully. Let us say you were alive during the time that Babylon beat Judah. How will these verses give you hope?**

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**What important rule do you see in Leviticus 26:40–45? What is the Lord saying to Israel there? How does the same rule work in our own lives?**

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## A SUFFERING SERVANT WHO FEELS OUR PAIN (Isaiah 49:1–12)

### Who is the Servant of God in Isaiah 49:1–12?

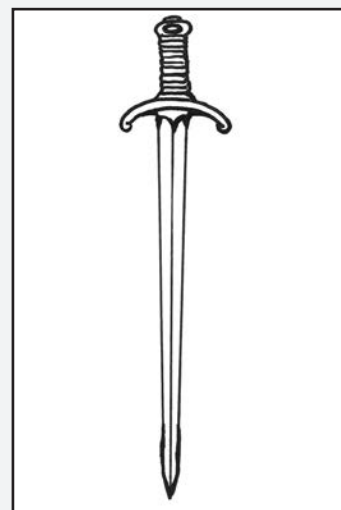
God chooses this Servant and names Him before this person is born. God makes the mouth of His Servant the same as a sword. How? He says words that “cut” lies apart. This Servant will give God glory. God will use the Servant to bring His people back to Himself. Then Israel will be the same as a light. They will show the plan of God to save everyone on earth. The Servant also will make prisoners free. As we can see, this Servant does many of the same things that the Servant does in Isaiah 42. In Isaiah 42, we learn that the Servant is the Chosen One or Savior. The New Testament says that this Savior is Jesus Christ.

### Is this Servant the same Person as the Chosen One or Savior of the New Testament? If yes, why does God name Him “Israel” (Isaiah 49:3)?

Earlier we saw that in this part of Isaiah, the servant of God shows us the people of God or Israel. But in Isaiah 49:3, the name “Israel” shows us a Person. This Servant of God brings the people of God back to Him (Isaiah 49:5). The Servant is a word picture for the plan of God for His people. Sadly, the people of God have failed to follow the plan of God to teach other people about Him.

### What new information does Isaiah 49:4, 7 give us?

We learn that the work that God gives His Servant will not be easy. He feels sad. He feels that He “ ‘worked hard for nothing. I have used all my power, but I did nothing useful’ ” (Isaiah 49:4, ICB). We see this same idea in Daniel 9:26, ERV: “ ‘the chosen one will be killed. He will be gone.’ ” But His heart is filled with faith: “ ‘But the Lord will decide what my work is worth. God will decide my reward’ ” (Isaiah 49:4, ICB). J. Alec Motyer says: “Isaiah saw a Servant who was a real person. He had a real human heart. He was tested the same as we are tested. He showed Himself to be the one who made the way of faith possible. He had a real, personal faith. He shows us how to keep having faith when all hope fails.”—*The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), page 387, adapted.



**God makes the mouth of  
His Servant the same  
as a sword.**

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** Read Ellen G. White, “At Capernaum,” *The Desire of Ages*, pages 252–261.

“When we work to save people, we need wisdom and skill. Jesus never shut His mouth when people needed to hear Bible truth. But Jesus said every word with love. He was always kind to people He worked with and served. Jesus was not mean or nasty to anyone. He did not say anything to cause anyone pain unless He had a good reason. He did not put people down because they were weak. He was not afraid to show people that sin was wrong. Jesus showed people that it was wrong to say you believe in God and not to obey Him. He said it was wrong to have no faith. But Jesus had tears in His voice when He scolded people. He did not share Bible truth in a mean way. Jesus always showed a deep love for people. Every person was precious in His eyes. He behaved the same as a royal king. At the same time, He was kind and loving to every member of the family of God. Jesus saw each person as someone He needed to save.”—Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, page 117, adapted.



“Jesus said every word with love.”

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① In class, read the paragraph from Ellen G. White. What important rules does it teach you about how Jesus worked with other people? How can your church practice these rules?
- ② Do you know someone who is the same as a “‘crushed [broken] blade of grass’” or “‘a weak flame’” (Isaiah 42:3, ICB)? How can you help a person without “crushing [breaking]” him or her? How can you help them know the Lord? What can you tell them to do to get healing and help?
- ③ Some people believe that two different people wrote the book of Isaiah. Where does this idea come from? It comes from hearts filled with doubt. These hearts cannot accept that God showed Isaiah the future. What is wrong with this thinking? Why must we, as Christians, turn away fully from it?

**Summary:** The people of God are not free. They need someone to make them free. The people of God will be made free by two Saviors: first, Cyrus and then, later, a Servant. The Servant has no name. Isaiah shows us that God chose this Servant to save people from sin. This Servant will show people right from wrong. He also will make things right. He will bring the people of God back to Him.

## GARAGE CHURCH

Luis is 10 years old. He and his parents move to a new town named La Apartada. It is in the north part of the country of Colombia. La Apartada has no Seventh-day Adventist church.

Father and Mother want Luis to go to church. Luis wants to go to church too. But the nearest Adventist church is located far away. The pastor for the area comes up with an idea. He tells the family of Luis, "You should start a church."

Father, Mother, and Luis like the idea. But where can people meet? Their house is too small for many visitors. "Let us use our garage," Father says.

This is a good plan. The garage is bigger than the house. The garage is empty, too, because the family does not own a car. Father tells Luis to invite his new school friends to come to the garage on Tuesday for a one-hour meeting.

"Come to my garage to learn something interesting and get some good food," Luis tells his friends.

"Sure, we will come!" his friends tell him.

37 children show up the first Tuesday. These children are between the ages of 5 and 14. Luis tells the children about why it is important to keep promises. He reads to them about why good behavior and the right beliefs are important. After the meeting, Mother gives the children some good food.

Luis invites the children to come back the next week. 65 children come. The garage is not big enough for them all. So, after three months, Father asks town leaders for a new place to meet. The mayor likes that Luis is teaching so many children about good behavior and beliefs. The mayor tells Luis and his family, "You can meet in the old town hall."

With so many children, Father decides to start Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs too.

Father sees an old building that no one is using. This building will be a better place to meet. Father asks the mayor if they may meet there. The mayor says yes. He also gives 1 million pesos of Colombian money to help them fix up the center.

On a July morning, 70 children and adults meet in the fixed-up center for the first time. This happens four months after the group first meets in the garage. Luis is happy. Most of the people who come are children that he invited.

Today, nine months have passed since the garage church first opened. Now 80 children and 20 adults worship at the center every Sabbath. 38 people have been baptized. Luis's town now has an Adventist church.

"I am very happy because I have learned many new things," Luis says. "Most of all, I have learned that I can invite other children to sit at the feet of Jesus."

## INSIDE *Story*

by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



**"Come to my garage to learn something interesting and get some good food," Luis tells his friends.**

