

Readings for Lent 3 – Isaiah chapter 50:-

In this chapter the sinfulness of Israel is contrasted with the obedience of the Servant of the Lord. Verses 5 – 7 speak prophetically of the sublime confidence and majestic calm that our Saviour preserved during his Good Friday sufferings, sustained by his consciousness of being in the will of God and therefore in the right. He was confident that the Father would bring him victoriously through the crucifixion and burial – verses 8 -9.

Verses 1 – 3:- The Lord God speaks to his doubting people. “You say I don’t care about you any more! You say that I have divorced you. Very well then, produce the document. But there is none because I have not divorced you. You will see that for your iniquities you have sold yourselves. It is your own fault and no one else’s.” Remember that in Jewish law divorce was final, there was no possibility for return. See Deuteronomy chapter 24, verses 1 – 4. The Lord had not divorced Israel! She herself had broken the covenant with him through her sin and idolatry.

In verse 2 there is a picture of the Lord coming to his people and finding no one to welcome him. When he called to his people there was no answer. Note again the opening of the Gospel story in John, chapter 1, verse 10. The second half of verse 2 on into verse 3 has echoes of the deliverance of God’s people from Egypt. The crossing of the Red Sea and the plagues.

Verses 4 – 9:- These verses are a prophecy of the sufferings of the Servant who is described as the one who is completely obedient to the Lord God. A contrast to the unfaithful ‘wife’ described in the preceding verses. The Messiah speaks as one to whom God has taught his true message of comfort for those who are weary of sin. Morning by morning the Lord Jesus Christ met with his Father in prayer. (Mark chapter 1, verse 35; Luke chapter 5, verse 16; chapter 6, verse 12; etc.) In verses 5 and following there is a description of the willingness of the Servant to endure humiliation and suffering for the Father’s sake, (See Hebrews chapter 5, verses 7 – 9). The confidence in his ultimate vindication by the Father shown here in Isaiah chapter 50, verses 7 -9, is in complete contrast to the attitude of the people of Israel. There will be a day when the adversaries of the Lord Jesus Christ will be judged and condemned. (Revelation chapter 20, verses 11 – 15).

Verses 10 – 11:- This judgement is confirmed in these verses. Those who bring accusations will themselves be accused. In the words of the Lord Jesus himself, “*For with what judgement you pronounce, you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get.*” (Matthew chapter 7, verse 2).

1) *“Man of Sorrows”, what a name
For the Son of God who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim!
Hallelujah! what a Saviour!*

2) *Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood;
Hallelujah! What a Saviour!*

3) *Guilty, vile, and helpless, we,
Spotless Lamb of God was He;
Full atonement– can it be?
Hallelujah! what a Saviour!*

4) *Lifted up was He to die,
“It is finished!” was His cry;
Now in heaven exalted high;
Hallelujah! what a Saviour!*

5) *When he comes, our glorious King,
All His ransomed home to bring,
Then anew this song we’ll sing
Hallelujah! what a Saviour!*

Philip .P. Bliss 1875