

Isaiah 49:5-9 (NIV)

5 And now the LORD says— he who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD and my God has been my strength— 6 he says: “It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.” 7 This is what the LORD says— the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel— to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers: “Kings will see you and rise up, princes will see and bow down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.” 8 This is what the LORD says: “In the time of my favor I will answer you, and in the day of salvation I will help you; I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people, to restore the land and to reassign its desolate inheritances, 9 to say to the captives, ‘Come out,’ and to those in darkness, ‘Be free!’”

Yesterday’s devotion allowed us to examine a Canaanite woman who wanted simply the crumbs of God’s grace. She was not a daughter of the covenant. She was not one of God’s chosen people of physical Israel. But she was a daughter of Abraham by faith. This portion from Isaiah allows us to see how that is possible.

Isaiah writes the very words of Jesus in this section of his book. *“The Lord says—he who formed me in the womb to be his servant...”* This is Jesus speaking. Jesus was formed in the womb of Mary, conceived by the Holy Spirit, to bring salvation to the children of Abraham. All nations would be blessed through him. But it is too small a thing simply to save the physical children of Abraham. The almighty, all-powerful God can do more than that! He can provide a feast of his grace for the Gentiles as well. Jesus is the light that shines in the darkness. He is the one who opens the eyes of those sitting in darkness. Through his work as God’s servant and our substitute, he has freed the captives. He has restored the inheritance to its rightful recipients.

Now is the day of God’s favor! Now is the day of salvation! Lent is the time where Jesus resolutely journeys toward Jerusalem to carry out the plan of salvation. By faith, all believers, all the children of Abraham are restored to a right status with God. This is what Lent is all about!

What are the problems that you have in your life? Money? Family? Self-worth? What are your concerns that you desire help with? Do you think that they are too trivial for God? Do you think that he has more important things to deal with? If it was too small a thing for Jesus to save the Jews, but he included all people in his salvation, certainly there is no problem that we have in our lives that God can not handle or deal with. Cast all your anxieties on him because he cares for you! He loved you so much as to send his Son to die for you! His love hasn’t stopped! Don’t stop relying on that love! Dear Christian, this is what the Lord says, *“In the time of my favor, I will answer you and in the day of my salvation I will help you.”* That day is here!