

## THE MARRED SERVANT

### A. (Isaiah 52:1, 2, 7, 8)

1. A prophetic announcement of the return of Israel from her captivity in Babylon to build up Jerusalem once again. They were to rebuild the Temple and establish Temple worship once again in an Israel patterned after the prophecies of Moses.

2. Here in ancient America, Jesus used this same prophetic terminology to describe an even greater latter-day work. He spoke of carrying the Gospel to Israel through the preaching of the Gentiles and her final restoration from her long dispersion among the nations of the world. [\(3 Nephi 9:74 - 78\)](#)

3. To Israel, who has endured oppression for centuries comes this message of good tidings, ***“Thy God reigneth!”***

### B. (Isaiah 52:10-12)

1. ***“made bare his holy arm”*** - In those days when Israel was captive in Babylon all the nations of the known world were under the dominion of Babylon, then Persia. They were each aware of, and affected by, the momentous events of the day. So in 539 B. C. when Cyrus, the new Persian ruler of the known world, fulfilled God’s prophetic release of Judah, God’s will, and His power, were surely bared before the nations of the world. [\(Ezra 1:1-4\)](#)

2. ***“touch no unclean thing”***- Judah, and most especially her priesthood, is admonished to leave behind them all the worldly influences of Babylon. They are going to build again God’s holy temple. The Apostle Paul admonished Christian believers in the same manner: [\(2 Corinthians 6:14, 16, 17\)](#)

3. ***“ye shall not go out with haste”*** - They are not fleeing; it is by the king’s command they are leaving, and they go in peace with his blessing and help. Sadly, many of the Jews found wealth and comfort in Babylon and did not choose to return to Israel. The historian, Max I Dimont, writes, ***“Those Jews who ‘wept by the rivers of Babylon’ were but a handful...; the rest of the Jews fell in love with the country, prospered and became cultured. Babylonian trade routes took the Jews to every corner of the known world making them men of commerce and international trade.”***<sup>1</sup> Thus a self-imposed diaspora of Israel continued to grow, even while a nucleus of Jews returned to Israel.

4. Those Jews who remained scattered throughout the Persian Empire were later to fall upon difficult times. Those close to the Persian throne devised a plan, approved by the king, to destroy all Israelites throughout the kingdom on a set day, Their wealth and possessions were to fall to their persecutors. This took place in 485 B. C. ***“Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, (or Xerxes – dem) (this is Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces”*** (Esther 1:1)

5. Because of the prayer and fasting of Queen Esther, her attendants and the Jewish people, King Xerxes was caused to make a decree, and the entire known world was changed in a day!

[\(Esther 8:9-11\)](#)

Certainly the Lord’s strength and influence were bared in the eyes of the nations!

6. This same terminology of Isaiah was used by Christ here in America as He prophesied of events yet in the future. [\(3 Nephi 9:73, 74, 79, 80\)](#)

7. Here the Lord is prophesying about the same events found in an earlier chapter of Isaiah and Chapter 9 of 2 Nephi. [\(Isaiah 11:10-12\)](#)

8. When one considers all that is going on in the Middle East today and the hatred of little Israel by the Muslim nations (and many others) of the world, how could this prophecy possibly be fulfilled? It will

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<sup>1</sup> Dimont, Max I., *Jews, God and History*, 1962, p. 65.

only be accomplished when God's power is revealed; in other words, when He makes **"...bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations."** And so Nephi prophesied, [\(1 Nephi 7:20-24\)](#)

**9.** We see here that Israel cannot be delivered from their captivity until the Gospel is preached to them and they receive Jesus Christ as their Messiah. Nephi, while explaining the words of Isaiah to his people (found in 2 Nephi 12), outlines these events of the future:

**a.** God would speak to the Jews (the Holy Bible), and to the Nephites (the Book of Mormon) and to **"...the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it."** (2 Nephi 12:69)

**b.** When the Book of Mormon comes forth to the Gentiles **"...there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed."** (2 Nephi 12:80) This is also the basis of another important prophecy of Nephi:

[\(Read 1 Nephi 4:16.\)](#)

**c.** **"And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth."** (2 Nephi 12:87)

**10.** The Apostle Paul used terminology similar to that of Isaiah to describe this preaching of the Gospel. In Romans 10:15 we read, **"And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"** In Chapter 11 of the same letter he also foretold that unbelieving Israel would be grafted back into the tame olive tree. [\(Romans 11:23-26\)](#)

**11.** The Book of Mormon clearly showed how this grafting in shall take place in 1 Nephi 4:16, above.

**12.** Concerning Step Two, above, Christ, while speaking to the people here in America about the liberation of Jerusalem, called this carrying of the Gospel to the remnant of those who were listening to Him **"...a sign, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place, that I shall gather in from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel, and shall establish again among them my Zion."** (3 Nephi 9:86) And just fourteen years after the first members of the Church of Christ among the Maya people were baptized, Jerusalem was liberated during the Six-Day War of 1967.

**13.** And now Step Three, above, is rapidly unfolding among various nations, kindreds and tongues of the world. This spreading of the Gospel message is not something the Church has planned out; rather, it is the baring of the arm of the Lord preparing the way before us.

### **C. (Isaiah 52:13-15)**

Jesus used the same terminology as He taught the people in the New World about God's great plan for the redemption of Israel. [\(3 Nephi 9: 81-83\)](#)

**a.** **"Behold, my servant shall deal prudently".** - This servant is Jesus Christ. As Isaiah had previously prophesied: **"Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect..."** (Isaiah 42:1) He shall deal prudently, or wisely, because as the Lord had said, **"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;"** (Isaiah 11:2)

**b.** **"He shall be exalted and extolled".** - That Christ was exalted and extolled can not be questioned. He was resurrected from the dead and rose to occupy the place at the right hand of His Heavenly Father. In heaven He was given great honor. In the book Revelation we read of the honor the Father accorded the Son: [\(Revelation 5:4, 5\)](#)

**c.** **"His visage was so marred more than any man..."** - Most commentators believe this refers to the mistreatment and abuse the Lord received at the hands of the Jews and Romans on His crucifixion

day. But I rather imagine there have been many who have been more disfigured and tortured in a physical sense than was He. So I look at this description from a different point of view.

The term **“visage”**<sup>2</sup> comes from a Hebrew word signifying a **“fair, or favored countenance”**. The fairer the countenance, more apparent would be any disfigurement. I would suppose the inherent dignity and beauty of His nature and appearance, which seemed to attract little children, would make His abuse and suffering all the more noticeable and real. His inward sorrow, the suffering and agony brought on by His rejection and abandonment was certain to mar His countenance. The word, **“marred”**, comes from a Hebrew word meaning **“battered, cast off”**. No more worthy person was ever more cast off, more emotionally and mentally battered than was our Lord. As the prophet foretold, **“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”** (Isaiah 53:3) And what was the reaction of those closest to Him? **“Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.”** (Matthew 26:56) What transpired seems to be a perfect description of what would mar a noble visage.

**d. “So shall he sprinkle many nations.”** - Through the great sufferings and sacrifice of Jesus Christ **“...there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”** (Zechariah 13:1) And not to Israel alone, for the Apostle Peter wrote to the church, **“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”** (1 Peter 1<sup>2</sup>) Peoples of the nations of the world have been spiritually cleansed and purified as they made covenant with Him in the waters of baptism.

**e. “...kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see;”** - These words of the prophet project an image of the fear and astonishment of the world’s leaders as they see the marvelous power of God unfolding in world events that will fulfill His divine will concerning His people, Israel. The prophet Micah expressed it like this: **“The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf.”** (Micah 7:16)

**f.** The fear and astonishment of the world will not really be for lack of having been told. All these things have been written in prophecy for millennia: Today’s leaders, like the ancient kings of Israel, have just refused to believe and understand. America was taken by surprise, shocked, astonished to the very core of her being by the events of **9/11**.

But we had been told! It was a lack of understanding of the prophecies in the Book of Revelation, Chapters 9 and 16 which caught us by surprise. And our eyes are still not open to the remainder of Chapter 16. Great and marvelous things are in the offing.

**(3 Nephi 9:85, 86, 93-95)**

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<sup>2</sup> Strong, James, Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible,