CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 50 — The Obedient Servant of the Lord

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 50 presents a powerful contrast between:

Disobedient Israel.

And:

The obedient Servant of the Lord.

The chapter begins with God answering an accusation that may have been forming in the hearts of His people.

Israel had experienced:

Separation.

Exile.

Defeat.

Loss.

Captivity.

They might have wondered:

Has God abandoned us?

Was He unable to save us?

Did some greater power defeat Him?

God answers:

No.

The problem was not:

God’s weakness.

The problem was:

Israel's sin.

God asks:

"Is My hand too short to redeem you?"

The answer is:

No.

The God who can:

Dry up the sea.

Turn rivers into desert.

Darken the heavens.

Certainly possesses power to:

Redeem.

The issue is not:

Divine inability.

It is:

Human rebellion.

Then beginning in verse 4, another voice appears:

The Servant.

And what a contrast He provides.

Israel had:

Closed ears.

The Servant says:

"He opens My ear to listen like a disciple."

Israel had been:

Rebellious.

The Servant says:

"I was not rebellious."

Israel turned:

Away.

The Servant says:

“Nor did I turn away.”

The Servant willingly gives:

His back to beating.

His cheeks to abuse.

His face to:

Mocking.

Spitting.

The passage points unmistakably toward the suffering experienced by:

Jesus Christ.

The Gospel accounts describe Him being:

Beaten.

Mocked.

Struck.

Spat upon.

Yet the Servant does not retreat.

Why?

Because:

“The Sovereign Lord helps Me.”

Then comes the striking statement:

“I have set My face like flint.”

This is not:

Coldness.

Stubbornness.

Pride.

It is:

Holy determination.

The Servant is committed to:

Obedience.

Even when obedience leads through:

Suffering.

Luke tells us Jesus resolutely set His face toward:

Jerusalem.

He knew what awaited Him.

Yet:

He went.

The Servant's confidence does not come from:

Human approval.

He knows:

God will vindicate Him.

Accusers may:

Speak.

Enemies may:

Mock.

Violence may:

Come.

But the Servant asks:

> **"Who then can condemn Me?"**

His confidence rests in:

The Sovereign Lord.

The chapter closes by presenting two kinds of people.

The first fears the Lord and obeys the voice of:

His Servant.

Yet that person may still walk through:

Darkness.

This is important.

Obedience does not guarantee that every season feels:

Bright.

A faithful believer can experience:

Confusion.

Sorrow.

Uncertainty.

Darkness.

What should he do?

“Trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.”

The second group refuses to trust in:

God’s light.

Instead they create:

Their own fire.

Their own sparks.

Their own torches.

Their own illumination.

God says:

Walk in it.

And see where it leads.

The end is:

Torment.

So Isaiah 50 ultimately gives us a choice:

Trust God in the darkness.

Or create your own light.

Follow the obedient Servant.

Or follow:

Self.

The central truth of Isaiah 50 is:

Israel’s separation resulted from sin rather than any weakness in God’s saving power, while the Servant of the Lord—fulfilled ultimately in Jesus Christ—listens perfectly, obeys without rebellion, willingly endures humiliation and suffering, trusts the Father for vindication, and calls those walking in darkness to rely upon the Lord rather than the self-made fires of human wisdom and independence.

I. ISRAEL’S SEPARATION WAS NOT GOD’S FAILURE

Isaiah 50:1 — Sin Caused the Separation

> **“This is what the Lord says: ‘Where is your mother’s certificate of divorce, with which I sent her away? Or to which of My creditors did I sell you? No, it was because of your sins you were sold, and because of your transgressions your mother was sent away.’”**

God uses two legal and social pictures:

Divorce.

Debt slavery.

But He asks:

Where is the certificate?

Who is My creditor?

The point is that Israel’s condition cannot be explained by:

God being forced into debt.

God losing ownership.

God becoming powerless.

Their sins brought:

Judgment.

Cross References

Jeremiah 3:8

Jeremiah uses marriage and divorce imagery to describe the seriousness of Israel’s persistent covenant unfaithfulness.

Deuteronomy 24:1

The Mosaic law included provisions concerning a certificate of divorce, providing the legal imagery Isaiah uses here.

Isaiah 52:3

God later tells His people that they were sold for nothing and would be redeemed without money, emphasizing that their captivity did not result from God owing a creditor.

Spiritual Principle

Sin has:

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When sin creates distance, do not blame the weakness of the Redeemer.

II. GOD OWES NO CREDITOR

The imagery is important.

God did not sell Israel because:

He needed money.

He was not:

Bankrupt.

Overpowered.

Forced.

Spiritual Principle

God’s sovereignty remained intact even during:

Israel’s exile.

III. “WHEN I CALLED, WHY DID NO ONE ANSWER?”

Isaiah 50:2 — The Problem Was Human Unresponsiveness

> **“When I came, why was there no one to respond? When I called, why was there no one to answer? Is My hand too short to redeem you? Do I lack the power to deliver? By My rebuke I dry up the sea, I turn rivers into desert; their fish rot for lack of water and die of thirst.”**

God had:

Called.

But Israel did not:

Answer.

The issue was not that God failed to:

Come.

Speak.

Call.

The people failed to:

Respond.

Cross References

John 1:11

Christ came to His own people, yet many of His own did not receive Him.

Numbers 11:23

When Moses questioned whether God could provide for the enormous congregation, the Lord asked whether His power had somehow become too limited to fulfill His Word.

Exodus 14:21

God demonstrated His power by driving back the sea and providing a path for Israel through the waters.

Spiritual Principle

Divine invitation requires:

Human response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The problem is never that God’s arm became too short.

The problem is often that our hearts became too hard.

IV. “IS MY HAND TOO SHORT?”

No.

The hand that:

Created.

Delivered.

Opened seas.

Judged Egypt.

Cannot suddenly become:

Powerless.

Spiritual Principle

Present difficulty does not indicate:

Reduced divine ability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never measure God’s arm by the size of your present circumstances.

V. GOD CAN DRY THE SEA

The Exodus stands behind:

The imagery.

The sea that appeared:

Uncrossable.

Became:

A road.

Spiritual Principle

Creation obeys:

The Creator.

VI. GOD CLOTHES THE HEAVENS WITH DARKNESS

Isaiah 50:3 — Cosmic Authority

> **“I clothe the heavens with darkness and cover them with sackcloth.”**

God controls:

Heaven.

Light.

Darkness.

Creation itself.

Cross References

Isaiah 13:10

Isaiah previously used darkened heavenly imagery in connection with divine judgment.

Revelation 6:12

The imagery of cosmic darkness appears again in scenes of divine judgment.

Joel 2:31

The prophet speaks of the sun being darkened in connection with the day of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

The God who governs the heavens is not:

Too weak to redeem.

VII. THE SERVANT SPEAKS

A major transition occurs.

The rebellious people give way to:

The obedient Servant.

Key Contrast

Israel:

Would not listen.

The Servant:

Listens morning by morning.

Israel:

Rebelled.

The Servant:

Was not rebellious.

Israel:

Turned away.

The Servant:

Did not turn away.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where Israel failed as servant, the faithful Servant obeys perfectly.

VIII. THE TONGUE OF ONE WHO IS TAUGHT

Isaiah 50:4 — A Word for the Weary

> **“The Sovereign Lord has given Me the tongue of one who is taught, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning He awakens Me; He opens My ear to listen like a disciple.”**

The Servant has:

A taught tongue.

An opened ear.

Before He speaks:

He listens.

His words sustain:

The weary.

Cross References

Luke 4:22

Those hearing Jesus marveled at the gracious words coming from His mouth.

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit-anointed Servant is commissioned to proclaim good news to the broken and afflicted.

John 7:16

Jesus explains that His teaching is not independent self-invention but comes from the One who sent Him.

Spiritual Principle

The person who speaks for God must first:

Listen to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A taught tongue begins with an opened ear.

IX. THE SERVANT SUSTAINS THE WEARY

Notice the purpose of:

His speech.

Not:

To impress.

To dominate.

To showcase knowledge.

But:

To sustain the weary.

Spiritual Principle

God-given truth should:

Strengthen burdened people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The best Bible teacher is not merely the one who knows many words, but the one who knows how to give the right word to the weary.

X. “MORNING BY MORNING”

The Servant’s listening is:

Regular.

Continual.

Disciplined.

Spiritual Principle

Yesterday’s listening does not replace:

Today’s listening.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A fresh word for weary people grows out of a fresh ear toward God.

XI. THE EAR OF A DISCIPLE

The Servant is:

Teachable.

Attentive.

Responsive.

Spiritual Principle

True obedience begins with:

Listening.

XII. THE SERVANT IS NOT REBELLIOUS

Isaiah 50:5 — Perfect Obedience

> **“The Sovereign Lord has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away.”**

Two negatives:

Not rebellious.

Did not turn away.

This is a direct contrast with:

Israel.

Cross References

John 8:29

Jesus says He always does what pleases the Father.

Hebrews 10:7

Christ is presented as coming to do the will of God according to Scripture.

Philippians 2:8

Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient even to death on a cross.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s obedience is:

Complete.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The faithful Servant does not merely hear God’s will.

He does it.

XIII. HE DID NOT TURN AWAY

The path ahead contained:

Pain.

Rejection.

Humiliation.

Still:

He continued.

Spiritual Principle

True obedience is tested when the road becomes:

Costly.

XIV. THE SUFFERING SERVANT GIVES HIS BACK

Isaiah 50:6 — Mocking, Beating, and Spitting

> **“I gave My back to those who beat Me, and My cheeks to those who pulled out My beard; I did not hide My face from mocking and spitting.”**

The Servant’s obedience leads into:

Suffering.

He does not suffer because:

He rebelled.

He suffers while:

Obeying.

That distinction is crucial.

Cross References

Matthew 26:67

Jesus was spat upon, struck, and mocked during His trial.

Matthew 27:26

Jesus was scourged before being delivered for crucifixion.

Mark 14:65

Jesus was spat upon, blindfolded, struck, and mocked by His captors.

Spiritual Principle

Suffering is not always evidence of:

Disobedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes the hardest suffering comes not because you left God's will, but because you stayed in it.

XV. THE SERVANT VOLUNTARILY SUBMITS

The wording says:

> **"I gave My back."**

He is not pictured merely as:

Helpless.

He willingly submits to:

The path of obedience.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant's suffering is connected with:

Voluntary obedience.

XVI. HIS CHEEKS ARE ABUSED

Humiliation becomes:

Personal.

Physical.

Public.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus understands humiliation not as an observer, but as One who endured it.

XVII. HE DID NOT HIDE HIS FACE

Mocking.

Spitting.

Shame.

Yet:

No retreat.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant does not abandon His mission when:

Despised.

XVIII. THE LORD HELPS THE SERVANT

Isaiah 50:7 — His Face Is Set Like Flint

> **“But the Sovereign Lord helps Me; therefore I will not be disgraced. I have set My face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.”**

This is confidence.

Not:

Self-confidence.

God-confidence.

Because:

The Sovereign Lord helps Me.

Therefore:

I continue.

Cross References

Luke 9:51

As the time approached for His mission to reach its climactic stage, Jesus resolutely set His face toward Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 3:8

God strengthens Ezekiel’s face and resolve against stubborn opposition.

Philippians 1:20

Paul expresses confidence that through courage Christ will be honored and he will not ultimately be put to shame.

Spiritual Principle

Determination rooted in God is different from:

Human stubbornness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Israel had a stiff neck against God.

The Servant has a flint face toward obedience.

XIX. STUBBORNNESS AND STEADFASTNESS ARE NOT THE SAME

Israel's stubbornness says:

I will not obey.

The Servant's steadfastness says:

I will not turn away from obedience.

Spiritual Principle

The same outward firmness can come from:

Rebellion.

Or:

Faithfulness.

XX. "I KNOW I WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME"

The Servant sees beyond:

Immediate humiliation.

To:

Final vindication.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Present shame does not determine God's final verdict.

XXI. THE VINDICATOR IS NEAR

Isaiah 50:8 — The Accusers Are Challenged

> **“He who vindicates Me is near. Who then will bring charges against Me? Let us face each other. Who is My accuser? Let him confront Me.”**

The Servant enters:

Courtroom language.

Accusers exist.

But the Judge who vindicates is:

Near.

Cross References

Romans 8:33

Paul asks who can bring a successful charge against those God has justified.

Romans 8:34

The ultimate condemnation is overturned because Christ died, was raised, and intercedes.

Isaiah 54:17

God promises that accusations raised against His servants will ultimately fail under His vindication.

Spiritual Principle

The verdict that finally matters belongs to:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

An accusation is not the same as a conviction when God is the Judge.

XXII. “LET HIM CONFRONT ME”

The Servant does not:

Fear examination.

Spiritual Principle

Integrity gives courage before:

Accusation.

XXIII. THE SOVEREIGN LORD HELPS HIM

Isaiah 50:9 — Human Opposition Wears Out

> **“See, the Sovereign Lord helps Me. Who then can condemn Me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.”**

Again:

Help.

Again:

Confidence.

His enemies appear:

Strong.

But are:

Temporary.

Cross References

Psalm 102:26

Creation itself will wear out like a garment, while God remains.

Hebrews 1:11

The heavens are described as eventually wearing out like clothing, while the Son remains.

Isaiah 51:8

Human opponents can be consumed like garments by moths, while God’s righteousness and salvation endure.

Spiritual Principle

Opposition is:

Temporary.

God’s vindication is:

Enduring.

XXIV. “WHO CAN CONDEMN ME?”

The Servant’s confidence anticipates the New Testament language of:

Justification.

Vindication.

Resurrection.

Spiritual Principle

God’s final verdict outweighs:

Human condemnation.

XXV. THE MOTH-EATEN GARMENT

The enemy appears:

Impressive.

But time exposes:

Fragility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not fear temporary voices as though they possess eternal authority.

XXVI. THE FAITHFUL MAY STILL WALK IN DARKNESS

Isaiah 50:10 — Trust When You Cannot See

> **“Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the voice of His servant? Though he walks in darkness and has no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.”**

This verse destroys a dangerous assumption.

A person can:

Fear God.

Obey the Servant.

And still experience:

Darkness.

The darkness here is not necessarily:

Wickedness.

It can describe:

Uncertainty.

Distress.

A season without visible answers.

Cross References

John 12:35

Jesus warns about the seriousness of spiritual darkness and calls people to respond to the light while it is present.

Micah 7:8

The prophet says that though he sits in darkness, the Lord will be his light.

Psalm 23:4

Even through the valley of deepest darkness, the believer can refuse fear because God is present.

Spiritual Principle

Faith is sometimes trusting God without:

Visible light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Walking in darkness is not the same as walking without God.

XXVII. FEAR THE LORD AND OBEY THE SERVANT

Notice the connection:

Fear the Lord.

Obey:

His Servant.

Spiritual Principle

The proper response to the Servant is:

Obedience.

XXVIII. DARKNESS DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN DISOBEDIENCE

This is important.

Verse 10 describes a person who:

Fears God.

Obeys.

Yet walks in:

Darkness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not automatically interpret every dark season as proof that you are outside God's will.

XXIX. TRUST THE NAME OF THE LORD

When circumstances provide:

No light.

God's name still reveals:

His character.

Spiritual Principle

Faith rests upon:

Who God is.

XXX. "RELY ON HIS GOD"

Not:

His emotions.

His understanding.

His circumstances.

His own torch.

But:

His God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When you cannot rely on what you see, rely on the One you know.

XXXI. THE DANGER OF SELF-MADE FIRE

Isaiah 50:11 — Human Light Versus Divine Trust

> **“But now, all you who light fires and surround yourselves with sparks, walk in the light of your own fire and of the torches you have set ablaze. This is what you will receive from My hand: you will lie down in torment.”**

Verse 10:

No light.

Trust God.

Verse 11:

Make your own light.

Trust self.

The difference is:

Faith.

Self-reliance.

Cross References

Proverbs 1:31

Those who reject wisdom eventually eat the fruit of their own chosen ways.

Isaiah 65:13

Isaiah contrasts God’s servants with rebels who seek life apart from Him and experience the opposite of what they sought.

Jeremiah 2:13

God condemns His people for abandoning the fountain of living water and digging broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

Spiritual Principle

When God does not provide immediate light, the temptation is to:

Manufacture it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

It is better to walk with God in the dark than to walk away from God carrying your own torch.

XXXII. SELF-MADE LIGHT IS STILL DARKNESS

Human beings can produce:

Plans.

Explanations.

Schemes.

Shortcuts.

But if they replace:

Trust in God.

They become:

False light.

Spiritual Principle

Not everything that glows:

Guides.

XXXIII. “WALK IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR OWN FIRE”

The words carry:

Judicial irony.

God allows them to experience:

The end of their choice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes judgment is God allowing us to discover where our self-made light actually leads.

XXXIV. THE END OF SELF-RELIANCE

The chapter concludes:

Not with comfort for the self-sufficient.

But:

Torment.

Spiritual Principle

Self-salvation fails.

XXXV. THE GREAT CONTRAST: ISRAEL AND THE SERVANT

Israel

Called.

But:

Did not answer.

Stubborn.

Rebellious.

Sinful.

The Servant

Listens.

Obeys.

Does not rebel.

Does not turn away.

Accepts suffering.

Trusts God.

Perseveres.

Key Truth

The obedient Servant succeeds precisely where disobedient Israel failed.

XXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The Servant:

Speaks truth to the weary.

Listens to God.

Perfectly obeys.

Gives His back to beating.

Endures mocking.

Endures spitting.

Sets His face toward His mission.

Trusts God for vindication.

These themes converge powerfully in:

Jesus Christ.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 50 does not merely tell us Christ suffered; it shows us that His suffering took place within perfect obedience.

XXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT SIN

Israel was not separated because:

God became weak.

It was because:

Sin.

Spiritual Principle

Sin is never:

Harmless.

XXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT REDEMPTION

God asks:

> **“Is My hand too short to redeem you?”**

Answer:

No.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No depth of captivity exceeds the reach of the Redeemer’s arm.

XXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT LISTENING

The Servant’s ear is:

Opened.

Spiritual Principle

Obedience begins before action.

It begins with:

Hearing.

XL. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT TEACHING

The Servant receives:

A taught tongue.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

We should never be more eager to speak for God than we are to listen to God.

XLI. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT THE WEARY

The Servant has a word:

For them.

Spiritual Principle

God’s truth is not only:

Correct.

It is:

Strengthening.

XLII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT OBEDIENCE

> **“I was not rebellious.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Perfect obedience does not ask whether God’s will is painless before deciding whether to obey.

XLIII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT SUFFERING

The Servant suffers while:

Faithful.

Spiritual Principle

Not all suffering is:

Punitive.

Some suffering is experienced in the path of:

Obedience.

XLIV. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT SHAME

The Servant experiences:

Mocking.

Spitting.

Yet knows:

Final shame will not be His.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

People may shame the servant publicly while God prepares vindication eternally.

XLV. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT DETERMINATION

> **“My face like flint.”**

Spiritual Principle

Holy determination is:

Obedience refusing to retreat.

XLVI. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT VINDICATION

The Servant entrusts:

His cause.

To:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not have to win every argument when God controls the final verdict.

XLVII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT DARKNESS

A believer may walk:

In darkness.

And still:

Fear the Lord.

Obey.

Trust.

Spiritual Principle

Darkness is sometimes:

A test of faith.

Not:

Evidence of divine rejection.

XLVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT FAITH

Faith relies on:

God.

When eyesight offers:

Nothing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faith is not pretending the darkness is light.

It is trusting God while the darkness is still dark.

XLIX. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT SELF-RELIANCE

Human beings naturally:

Light their own fires.

Spiritual Principle

Self-reliance becomes dangerous when it replaces:

Dependence on God.

L. WHAT ISAIAH 50 TEACHES ABOUT FALSE LIGHT

A torch may:

Glow.

Yet lead:

Wrongly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A bright idea is not automatically divine guidance.

LI. THE CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE

God challenges:

Assumptions.

Spiritual Principle

Before accusing God of abandonment, Israel must examine:

Its own rebellion.

LII. THE CREDITOR THAT DOES NOT EXIST

God owes:

No one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No power purchased Israel from God because God lost control.

LIII. SOLD BECAUSE OF SIN

The responsibility is:

Moral.

Spiritual Principle

God takes human sin:

Seriously.

LIV. “WHEN I CAME”

God had not:

Abandoned communication.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The tragedy was not that God never called.

It was that people refused to answer.

LV. “WHY WAS THERE NO ONE?”

The emptiness reveals:

Unresponsiveness.

Spiritual Principle

Grace may knock and still be:

Rejected.

LVI. THE REDEEMER’S ARM

Not:

Short.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You can be too weak to rescue yourself without being too far away for God to rescue you.

LVII. THE SEA DRIES UP

God controls:

The impossible.

Spiritual Principle

Nature itself yields to:

His command.

LVIII. DARKENED HEAVENS

Cosmic authority.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who can clothe heaven with darkness is not intimidated by human captivity.

LIX. THE TAUGHT TONGUE

Speech shaped by:

God.

Spiritual Principle

Words can become:

Ministry.

LX. A WORD FOR THE WEARY

Not:

Ten thousand unnecessary words.

A:

Word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The weary often need truth they can carry, not another burden of speech.

LXI. MORNING-BY-MORNING DISCIPLESHIP

Daily:

Listening.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness is built:

Repeatedly.

LXII. GOD OPENS THE EAR

Spiritual hearing is:

Grace.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before asking God to use your mouth, ask Him to open your ear.

LXIII. “I WAS NOT REBELLIOUS”

The Servant differs fundamentally from:

Israel.

Spiritual Principle

He fulfills the obedience God’s people failed to render.

LXIV. “NOR DID I TURN AWAY”

Suffering does not:

Reverse His obedience.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The cost of the path does not alter the Servant’s commitment to the Sender.

LXV. THE BACK GIVEN TO BEATING

The suffering becomes:

Physical.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant's obedience enters:

The body.

LXVI. THE CHEEKS OFFERED TO ABUSE

Personal humiliation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christ's suffering included not only pain, but deliberate degradation.

LXVII. MOCKING AND SPITTING

Human contempt reaches:

Its ugly expression.

Spiritual Principle

The sinless Servant knows what it means to be:

Despised.

LXVIII. "BUT THE SOVEREIGN LORD HELPS ME"

One word changes:

Everything.

"But."

Suffering:

Real.

Help:

Also real.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s help does not always prevent the trial; sometimes it enables faithfulness inside it.

LXIX. FACE LIKE FLINT

Jerusalem lies:

Ahead.

Spiritual Principle

Purpose creates:

Resolve.

LXX. JESUS SET HIS FACE TOWARD JERUSALEM

Luke 9:51 strongly resonates with:

Isaiah’s imagery.

Jesus knows His mission moves toward:

Rejection.

Death.

Resurrection.

Yet:

He goes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Calvary was not an accident Jesus stumbled into.

He moved toward His appointed mission in obedience.

LXXI. VINDICATOR NEAR

God is not:

Distant from the Servant’s trial.

Spiritual Principle

Vindication may be delayed without being:

Absent.

LXXII. ACCUSERS COME FORWARD

The Servant is:

Unafraid.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth does not need to fear honest examination.

LXXIII. THE LORD HELPS

Repeated.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant’s confidence has:

One foundation.

LXXIV. ENEMIES WEAR OUT

Garments deteriorate.

God’s verdict:

Does not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never give temporary opposition the weight of eternal judgment.

LXXV. THE FEARER OF GOD IN DARKNESS

This person is:

Faithful.

Yet:

Confused.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual maturity does not remove every season of uncertainty.

LXXVI. NO LIGHT

Sometimes there is:

No immediate explanation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God does not give explanations, He still gives Himself.

LXXVII. TRUST THE NAME

Remember:

Who God is.

Spiritual Principle

Faith builds its footing on:

Character.

LXXVIII. RELY ON GOD

Weight placed upon:

Him.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Reliance means letting God carry the weight your understanding cannot.

LXXIX. PEOPLE LIGHT FIRES

Human response to uncertainty:

Create light.

Control.

Explain.

Fix.

Spiritual Principle

Impatience can produce:

Counterfeit guidance.

LXXX. SPARKS AROUND THEM

Lots of:

Light.

But wrong source.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Many sparks do not equal one ray of divine truth.

LXXXI. TORCHES THEY SET ABLAZE

Self-generated:

Direction.

Spiritual Principle

Not every path we illuminate ourselves is:

God’s path.

LXXXII. WALKING BY YOUR OWN FIRE

Self-sufficiency becomes:

Judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The light of self eventually reveals the limitations of self.

LXXXIII. ISAIAH 49 AND ISAIAH 50

Isaiah 49

The Servant is:

Called.

Light to the nations.

Despised.

Vindicated.

Isaiah 50

The Servant is:

Taught.

Obedient.

Beaten.

Mocked.

Vindicated.

Key Truth

Isaiah is steadily moving the Servant portrait toward suffering, obedience, rejection, and eventual vindication.

LXXXIV. ISAIAH 50 AND ISAIAH 53

Isaiah 50 introduces:

Physical abuse.

Mocking.

Rejection.

Willing suffering.

Isaiah 53 will reveal even more clearly:

Why the Servant suffers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah 50 shows the Servant enduring suffering obediently; Isaiah 53 will explain the redemptive depth of His suffering more fully.

LXXXV. ISRAEL AND JESUS

Israel:

Rebellious servant.

Jesus:

Obedient Servant.

Israel:

Does not answer.

Jesus:

Listens.

Israel:

Turns away.

Jesus:

Sets His face toward obedience.

Spiritual Principle

Christ fulfills what sinful humanity could not.

LXXXVI. TEN GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 50

1. Israel’s Sin → God’s Redeeming Power

2. Closed Response → Open Ear

3. Rebellion → Obedience

4. Turning Away → Face Like Flint

5. Mocking → Divine Help

6. Human Accusation → Divine Vindication

7. Temporary Enemies → Eternal God

8. Darkness → Trust

9. Reliance on God → Self-Made Fire

10. Faith → Torment of Self-Reliance

Key Truth

Isaiah 50 contrasts disobedient Israel with the perfectly obedient Servant and contrasts humble trust in God’s darkness with arrogant dependence on humanity’s self-made light.

LXXXVII. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 50

1. Sin, Not Divine Weakness, Caused Israel’s Judgment

Principle:

God’s power to redeem never failed.

2. God Still Calls

Principle:

The tragedy is when people refuse to answer.

3. The Servant Listens Before He Speaks

Principle:

An opened ear produces a taught tongue.

4. The Servant Sustains the Weary

Principle:

Truth should strengthen exhausted hearts.

5. The Servant Is Perfectly Obedient

Principle:

He refuses rebellion even when obedience becomes costly.

6. The Servant Willingly Suffers

Principle:

His path includes beating, mockery, and humiliation.

7. The Servant Is Determined

Principle:

His face is set like flint because His confidence is in God.

8. God Vindicates His Servant

Principle:

Human accusation cannot overturn the divine verdict.

9. Faithful People May Experience Dark Seasons

Principle:

Darkness is not always evidence of disobedience.

10. Faith Trusts Without Seeing

Principle:

When there is no visible light, rely on God's name.

11. Self-Made Light Is Dangerous

Principle:

Human independence cannot replace divine guidance.

12. Jesus Is the Perfect Pattern of Obedient Servanthood

Principle:

The Gospel accounts vividly fulfill the Servant's suffering and steadfast obedience.

LXXXVIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why had Israel experienced separation and captivity?

Because of sin and transgression, not because God lacked power.

Question 2

Had God become unable to redeem?

No.

His hand was not too short.

Question 3

What does God cite as evidence of His power?

His authority to dry the sea, turn rivers into desert, and darken the heavens.

Question 4

What is the first characteristic of the Servant in verse 4?

He possesses the tongue of one taught by God.

Question 5

What does the Servant do with His words?

He sustains the weary.

Question 6

What happens morning by morning?

God awakens and opens the Servant’s ear to listen.

Question 7

How does the Servant respond to God?

He is not rebellious and does not turn away.

Question 8

What suffering does He willingly endure?

Beating, abuse to His cheeks, mocking, and spitting.

Question 9

How does the New Testament connect with verse 6?

The Gospel accounts describe Jesus being scourged, struck, mocked, and spat upon.

Question 10

Why does the Servant remain confident?

Because the Sovereign Lord helps Him.

Question 11

What does it mean that His face is like flint?

He is resolutely committed to obedience and will not turn from His mission.

Question 12

What New Testament event strongly reflects this?

Jesus setting His face toward Jerusalem.

Question 13

Who vindicates the Servant?

God.

Question 14

Does the Servant fear His accusers?

No.

He confidently challenges their accusations because God is His vindicator.

Question 15

What eventually happens to His opponents?

They wear out like an old garment.

Question 16

Can someone fear God and still walk through darkness?

Yes.

Verse 10 explicitly describes such a person.

Question 17

What should a faithful person do during such darkness?

Trust in the Lord’s name and rely on God.

Question 18

What should he not do?

Manufacture his own substitute light in place of trusting God.

Question 19

What do the fires and sparks of verse 11 represent?

Self-generated guidance, security, and confidence independent of God.

Question 20

What is the end of self-made light?

Sorrow and judgment.

Question 21

What major contrast does the chapter make?

Disobedient Israel is contrasted with the perfectly obedient Servant.

Question 22

Who ultimately fulfills this Servant portrait?

Jesus Christ.

Question 23

Does the Servant suffer because He has sinned?

No.

He suffers while walking in perfect obedience.

Question 24

What does this teach about suffering?

Suffering is not always proof of personal disobedience.

Question 25

What is one of the chapter's strongest lessons for believers?

It is better to trust God in unexplained darkness than to manufacture a path apart from Him.

LXXXIX. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 50 asks several searching questions.

Have I Blamed God for Distance Created by Sin?

Have I asked:

Where is God?

Without asking:

Where have I wandered?

Do I Really Believe God's Arm Is Long Enough to Redeem Me?

My past?

My family?

My situation?

My bondage?

When God Calls, Do I:

Answer?

Is My Ear Open Before My Mouth Is?

Do I spend enough time:

Listening?

Before:

Speaking?

Do My Words Sustain:

The weary?

Or add:

Weight?

Am I teachable:

Morning by morning?

Is there something God has clearly said that I am:

Resisting?

Would I obey if obedience became:

Painful?

Costly?

Unpopular?

Have I confused suffering with:

God’s displeasure?

Can I follow Christ when faithfulness produces:

Mocking?

Rejection?

Is my face set toward:

God’s will?

Or am I always searching for:

An easier path?

Do I trust God to:

Vindicate?

Or do I feel compelled to answer every:

Accusation?

Am I presently walking through:

Darkness?

Can I trust God without:

Understanding everything?

Am I tempted to create:

My own fire?

My own plan?

My own shortcut?

My own explanation?

My own security?

Which is guiding me:

God’s character?

Or:

My sparks?

XC. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“It Is Better to Walk with God in the Dark Than to Walk Without God in Your Own Light”

Verse 10 says:

Trust God in:

Darkness.

Verse 11 says:

Do not substitute:

Your own fire.

Principle:

Faith does not demand that God illuminate the entire road before taking the next step; it rests in the character of the One who leads even when the road remains dark.

XCI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

"An Open Ear Produces an Obedient Life"

The Servant says:

> **"He opens My ear."**

Then:

> **"I was not rebellious."**

Principle:

Spiritual obedience begins with spiritual attentiveness; people who continually listen to God become increasingly prepared to follow God.

XCII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

"The Servant's Face Was Flint Because His Heart Was Surrendered"

His determination was not:

Self-will.

It was:

Submitted will.

Principle:

Holy determination is strongest when the will has already surrendered to God.

XCIII. THE REDEEMER IS NOT WEAK

The first question is settled:

God can:

Save.

Spiritual Principle

Never confuse divine patience with:

Divine inability.

XCIV. SIN EXPLAINS THE EXILE

The Bible does not minimize:

Responsibility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace becomes precious when we stop blaming God for consequences sin created.

XCV. GOD STILL CAME

> **“When I came.”**

Spiritual Principle

God had not stopped:

Seeking.

XCVI. GOD STILL CALLED

> **“When I called.”**

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine calling can continue even after repeated human rebellion.

XCVII. NO ONE ANSWERED

That is the tragedy.

Spiritual Principle

Hearing sound is not the same as:

Answering God.

XCVIII. THE SERVANT ANSWERS

This is the contrast.

Israel:

No answer.

Servant:

Open ear.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where rebellion says “no,” the Servant’s life says “yes.”

XCIX. THE WEARY NEED A WORD

Not merely:

Information.

Spiritual Principle

Truth becomes pastoral when it reaches:

Exhausted people.

C. MORNING BY MORNING

Faithfulness is:

Daily.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Major obedience is often built out of thousands of small mornings of listening.

CI. THE OPEN EAR

A gift from:

The Sovereign Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Spiritual responsiveness depends upon:

Grace.

CII. OBEDIENCE BEFORE SUFFERING

The Servant first:

Listens.

Then:

Suffers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

His suffering is not random tragedy; it occurs on the road of chosen obedience.

CIII. THE SUFFERING BEFORE ISAIAH 53

Isaiah 50 already gives:

Back beaten.

Cheeks abused.

Face mocked.

Spitting.

Later Isaiah 53 will deepen the picture.

Key Truth

The suffering Servant theme is developing progressively toward the great redemptive portrait of Isaiah 53.

CIV. THE SERVANT DOES NOT RETALIATE

The chapter emphasizes:

Submission.

Confidence.

Vindication.

Not:

Personal revenge.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant entrusts judgment to:

God.

CV. GOD HELPS IN SUFFERING

Not necessarily:

By removing it immediately.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes divine help means deliverance from suffering; sometimes it means strength to remain obedient through suffering.

CVI. FACE LIKE FLINT IS NOT HARD HEART

Important distinction.

Hard heart:

Resists God.

Flint face:

Obeys God.

Spiritual Principle

Resolve is righteous only when pointed in:

God’s direction.

CVII. SHAME IS NOT FINAL

Human court:

Mocks.

God’s court:

Vindicates.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not let a temporary courtroom define an eternal verdict.

CVIII. “WHO WILL BRING CHARGES?”

The language anticipates:

Romans 8.

Spiritual Principle

Divine justification silences:

Ultimate accusation.

CIX. MOTH-EATEN OPPOSITION

What looks permanent:

Decays.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Your accuser is temporary.

God’s verdict is not.

CX. THE OBEDIENT PERSON IN DARKNESS

This may be one of the chapter’s most important pastoral truths.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness and clarity do not always arrive:

Together.

CXI. TRUST WITHOUT EXPLANATION

God may give:

Presence.

Before:

Answers.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You do not need to understand the entire plan to trust the character of the Planner.

CXII. RELY ON HIS GOD

Not:

Self.

Spiritual Principle

Dependence is the opposite of:

Self-made fire.

CXIII. SELF-MADE FIRE LOOKS ATTRACTIVE

It offers:

Immediate illumination.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A shortcut is attractive precisely because it promises immediate light where faith requires patient trust.

CXIV. SPARKS DO NOT LAST

They flash.

Then:

Disappear.

Spiritual Principle

Human solutions often have:

Short-lived brilliance.

CXV. GOD’S LIGHT VERSUS OUR FIRE

One is:

Revelation.

The other:

Invention.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not mistake something you manufactured for something God revealed.

CXVI. THE CHOICE OF ISAIAH 50

Listen to:

The Servant.

Or:

Self.

Trust:

God.

Or:

Your own torch.

Key Truth

The crisis of faith is often not whether there will be darkness, but whose light we will trust when darkness comes.

CXVII. ISAIAH 48–50

Isaiah 48

Israel is:

Stubborn.

Isaiah 49

The Servant is:

Called to restore Israel and reach the nations.

Isaiah 50

The Servant is:

Perfectly obedient even through suffering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

As Israel’s failure becomes clearer, the perfection of the Servant becomes brighter.

CXVIII. ISAIAH 49:4 AND ISAIAH 50:7

Isaiah 49:4

The Servant experiences:

Apparent futility.

Isaiah 50:7

The Servant sets His face like:

Flint.

Key Truth

Discouragement does not derail His obedience.

CXIX. ISAIAH 50 AND THE GOSPELS

Isaiah says:

Beating.

Spitting.

Mocking.

Jesus experiences:

Beating.

Spitting.

Mocking.

Isaiah says:

The Servant does not turn away.

Jesus moves willingly toward:

Jerusalem.

Spiritual Principle

The Gospel passion narratives give concrete historical shape to Isaiah's portrait of the obedient suffering Servant.

CXX. NINE GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 50

1. Israel's Sin Is Exposed

Their separation came through rebellion.

2. God's Power Is Defended

His hand is not too short to redeem.

3. The Servant Receives an Open Ear

He listens like a disciple.

4. The Servant Receives a Taught Tongue

He strengthens the weary.

5. The Servant Obeys

He refuses rebellion and does not turn away.

6. The Servant Suffers

He accepts beating, mocking, and spitting.

7. The Servant Perseveres

His face is set like flint.

8. The Servant Trusts God for Vindication

Human accusers cannot overturn the divine verdict.

9. Humanity Faces a Choice

Trust God in darkness or live by the false fire of self-reliance.

Key Truth

Isaiah 50 moves from Israel's rebellious failure to the Servant's perfect obedience and ends by asking every hearer whether they will follow the Servant in trusting God or attempt to illuminate life apart from Him.

CXXI. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 50 begins with:

Questions.

Why are you:

Separated?

Did God become:

Weak?

Did God lose:

Power?

Did someone:

Overcome Him?

The answer:

No.

> **"Is My hand too short to redeem you?"**

No.

The Redeemer is still:

Strong.

The first lesson is:

Do not blame God's weakness for what sin:

Destroyed.

But then Isaiah moves from:

Disobedient Israel.

To:

The obedient Servant.

And suddenly we hear:

“Morning by morning He awakens Me.”

What a picture of:

Jesus.

Listening.

Receiving.

Obeying.

The Servant has:

An open ear.

Therefore He has:

A taught tongue.

And what does He do with:

That tongue?

He sustains:

The weary.

If our words supposedly come from:

God—

Do they strengthen:

Weary people?

Then:

“I was not rebellious.”

Israel was.

The Servant:

Was not.

Then:

“Nor did I turn away.”

Even when the path led toward:

Beating.

Mocking.

Spitting.

He did not:

Turn away.

That points us toward:

Christ.

Jesus did not reach Jerusalem because:

Events trapped Him.

He set His face:

Toward it.

Then the Servant says:

“The Sovereign Lord helps Me.”

Notice:

God’s help did not mean:

No beating.

No mocking.

No pain.

Sometimes we define God’s help as:

Removing difficulty.

Isaiah shows another kind:

God gives strength to remain obedient while passing through:

Difficulty.

Then:

“I have set My face like flint.”

Do you have anything in your life where you need:

Holy resolve?

Not stubbornness against God.

But determination to:

Obey God.

The difference matters.

A stiff neck says:

“I will not obey.”

A flint face says:

“I will not stop obeying.”

Then the accusers come.

But the Servant asks:

Who can condemn?

Why?

God:

Vindicates.

You do not have to spend your whole life:

Defending yourself.

Explaining yourself.

Winning every argument.

If your heart is right and your path obedient:

Trust God with:

The final verdict.

Then verse 10 speaks to anyone walking through:

A dark season.

You fear:

God.

You obey:

His Servant.

Yet you cannot see:

Light.

Isaiah does not say:

You must be wicked.

Instead:

“Trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.”

Maybe you cannot see:

Tomorrow.

Trust:

God.

Maybe you do not understand:

Why.

Trust:

God.

Maybe prayer seems:

Unanswered.

Trust:

God.

Maybe the path is:

Dark.

Trust:

God.

Then comes the temptation.

Light:

Your own fire.

Create:

Your own answer.

Force:

Your own solution.

Take:

Your own shortcut.

Isaiah says:

Do not.

It is better to have:

No visible light.

And:

God.

Than:

A thousand sparks.

Without Him.

That is the challenge of Isaiah 50.

Will you trust:

The Servant?

Will you follow:

His obedience?

Will you listen:

Morning by morning?

Will you remain faithful when:

Obedience hurts?

Will you trust God when:

Accusers speak?

Will you trust Him when:

The road is dark?

Or will you light:

Your own fire?

The obedient Servant shows us:

The better way.

Listen.

Obey.

Endure.

Trust.

Keep going.

Because the Sovereign Lord:

Helps.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that Your hand is not:

Too short.

Thank You that Your power to redeem has never:

Failed.

Forgive us for blaming You for consequences caused by:

Sin.

Give us hearts that:

Answer.

When You call.

Father, thank You for:

The Servant.

Thank You for:

Jesus Christ.

Thank You for His:

Perfect obedience.

Open our ears as You opened:

His.

Teach us:

Morning by morning.

Before we speak:

Teach us to listen.

Before we instruct:

Teach us to learn.

Give us words that:

Sustain the weary.

Not words that:

Crush them.

Father, deliver us from:

Rebellion.

When obedience becomes difficult:

Keep us from turning away.

When faithfulness costs:

Something—

Strengthen us.

Thank You that Jesus endured:

Mocking.

Beating.

Spitting.

Shame.

And remained:

Obedient.

Teach us to set our faces toward:

Your will.

Not with proud stubbornness.

But with:

Holy resolve.

Father, when people accuse:

Help us trust You to vindicate.

When we are misunderstood:

Guard our hearts.

When human voices condemn:

Remind us that Your verdict matters:

Most.

Father, some seasons are:

Dark.

Sometimes we do not understand:

Where You are leading.

Why You allowed something.

When the answer will come.

In those moments:

Teach us to trust Your name.

Teach us to rely on:

You.

Protect us from:

Self-made fires.

Self-created answers.

Shortcuts.

False wisdom.

Human sparks.

Keep us from walking away from Your will simply because we cannot see:

The whole road.

May we remember:

It is better to walk with You in darkness than to walk without You in our own light.

Make us:

Listeners.

Disciples.

Obedient servants.

Faithful followers.

And keep our eyes fixed upon:

Jesus Christ.

The perfectly obedient Servant of the Lord.

In His name,

Amen.

Key Verse

> **“The Sovereign Lord has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away.” — Isaiah 50:5**

Central Truth

Israel's separation resulted from sin rather than any weakness in God's ability to redeem, while the faithful Servant—fulfilled ultimately in Jesus Christ—listens perfectly to the Father, strengthens the weary with His words, obeys without rebellion, willingly endures beating, mocking, and shame, confidently trusts God for vindication, and calls all who walk through darkness to rely upon the Lord rather than the self-made fires of human wisdom and independence.

Isaiah 50 in One Sentence

Isaiah declares that Israel's captivity came through sin rather than weakness in God's redeeming arm, then presents the obedient Servant fulfilled in Jesus Christ, whose opened ear produces perfect obedience, whose taught tongue strengthens the weary, whose willing suffering includes beating, mocking, and spitting, whose face remains set like flint because God will vindicate Him, and whose followers are called to trust the Lord even in darkness rather than attempting to guide themselves by the deceptive fire of human self-reliance.