



Handout for 4/19/18 Mk. 14: 1-15:47 & Is. 50: 4-7

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Is. Is. 50: [4](#) The L-rd GOD hath given me the tongue of them that are taught, that I should know how to sustain with words him that is weary; He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as they that are taught. [5](#) The L-rd GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backward. [6](#) I gave my back to the smiters, and my checks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. [7](#) For the L-rd GOD will help me; therefore have I not been confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

COMMENTARY: [Verse 4](#) begins the words of the Servant: in order to teach God had equipped him with a trained faculty of speech. He says, “The LORD gave me the tongue of them that are taught, in order that I might know how to sustain with words them that are weak.” The meaning of “sustain” is problematic here; some suggest “to answer,” “to revive,” or “to feed.” The Greek reads “how to speak a word in due season.”

The question of who the weary are depends in large measure on who the Servant is. If the Servant is the nation of Israel, or the remnant, then the weary would be the pagan nations (including unbelievers of Israel) who are weary of their darkened existence. If the Servant is typological for the Messiah, then in that case the weary would be any people who were tired of their bondage to sin. Jesus would welcome the weary to Himself, for He could give them rest (Matt. 11:28).

The latter part of the verse says that the LORD wakens his ear, the instrument of hearing and obeying). The LORD gives revelation to him continuously, morning by morning. The [simile](#) is a comparison with those who are taught—the servant is made ready to receive the Word every day of his life.

[Verse 5](#) is, according to some, a needless duplication with only the latter part of it belonging here. But their view misunderstands Hebrew rhetoric. The verse begins with a little different way of saying that the LORD has prepared him to obey—he opened my ear (see Ps. 40). God prepared him to hear and respond. The conclusion is that the Servant was not disobedient to hear the message and to teach it (contra Jonah). “I was not rebellious” (*mariti* [pronounced *mah-ree-tee*]) and did not turn away “backward.”

[Verse 6](#) introduces the second quatrain. The verses do not fit the suffering of the nation as well as one might expect because it presents suffering as an act of loyalty to God. If the immediate reference is to Israel, then the Servant might have to be considered to be the remnant of true believers who suffered on behalf of the whole nation, for the whole nation was far from loyal.

“I gave my back to the smiters” starts the report. The words are those of a martyr who willingly accepted the strokes and the abuse. The image of a man being beaten, his beard plucked out, of being spat upon, figuratively works for Israel or a remnant of Israelites, and perhaps of the prophet, but becomes literally true in Jesus Christ.

[Verse 7](#) introduces us to the major theme of this chapter: the LORD Yahweh will help me (*ya'azor*). This word “help” means that the LORD did for the Servant what he could not do for himself. The result of divine help was that he was not confounded, but set his face like a flint, the [simile](#) indicating his determination was unflinching. There would be no denial or suppression of the truth through the suffering, for God was enabling the Servant to endure triumphantly.

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