

SEPTEMBER 26-OCTOBER 2, 2022

## Isaiah 50–57

“HE HATH BORNE OUR GRIEFS, AND CARRIED OUR SORROWS”

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**Summary:** *Isaiah 50. Isaiah speaks as the Messiah—He will have the tongue of the learned—He will give His back to the smiters—He will not be confounded—Compare 2 Nephi 7.*

*Isaiah 51. In the last days, the Lord will comfort Zion and gather Israel—The redeemed will come to Zion amid great joy—Compare 2 Nephi 8.*

*Isaiah 52. In the last days, Zion will return, and Israel will be redeemed—The Messiah will deal prudently and be exalted.*

*Isaiah 53. Isaiah speaks about the Messiah—His humiliation and sufferings are described—He makes His soul an offering for sin and makes intercession for the transgressors—Compare Mosiah 14.*

*Isaiah 54. In the last days, Zion and her stakes will be established, and Israel will be gathered in mercy and tenderness—Israel will triumph—Compare 3 Nephi 22.*

*Isaiah 55. Come and drink; salvation is free—The Lord will make an everlasting covenant with Israel—Seek the Lord while He is near.*

*Isaiah 56. All who keep the commandments will be exalted—Other people will join Israel—The Lord will gather others to the house of Israel.*

*Isaiah 57. When the righteous die, they enter into peace—Mercy is promised to the penitent—There is no peace for the wicked.*

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### Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

#### What position does God and Satan represent anymore?

As discussed in the first few lessons, the concept of God and Satan has basically disappeared from modern Judaism. That, of course, would be Satan's main goal. Yet the concepts of good and evil are still basic to Jewish life. "Basic to Judaism is the firm belief that all of life is good. The Bible proclaims: "And God saw all that He had made and found it very good" ([Genesis 1:31](#)). Yet how can we fit catastrophe, pain, moral evil, and sin into God's design of Creation? The earlier books of the Bible deal very little with the problem of the

existence of evil. In the later books, however, questions concerning the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the righteous become familiar. The question appears in Jeremiah, in Isaiah, Job and Psalms, and various answers have been given by *talmudists* and philosophers." "The rabbis of the Talmud taught that as good derives from God who is merciful and loving, so does evil. This also removes any idea of separate gods. The rabbis say that just as a man blesses God for the good bestowed upon him, so must he bless Him for evil. To the vexing problem of the seemingly unjust distribution of good and evil the replies are varied. One answer is that it is beyond

the understanding of man's mind.  
([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

### **Whose sins are we responsible for?**

Another opinion states that the righteous, suffering in this world, might be receiving punishments for the sins of their ancestors, while the wicked may be prospering because of *zekhut avot*, (the merit of pious ancestors). The most widespread explanation is that the righteous receive their punishment for any small transgression so they can then enjoy their full reward in the world to come. The wicked are rewarded in this world for the slightest good deed but in the next world they will reap the full measure of punishment they deserve. The sufferings of the righteous are also a sort of test, "afflictions of love" which develop in them patience and complete faith. The Book of Job and other biblical sources support this view. Evil initiated by man himself is considered the product of his evil inclination, the *yezer ha-ra* (evil influence), a distinct part of man's nature. Yet, it is within man's power to restrain and redirect his evil inclination with the guidance of Torah and its teachings, the only proven antidote. This self-control enables man to serve God with both his good and evil inclinations, helping him to live a good life, and to grow in holiness."  
([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

### **How important is hospitality?**

The teaching that God's hand is always outstretched is reflected in basic Israelite virtue: "Hospitality is considered by Judaism to be one of the most important virtues that a person can develop. This has been true since the time of ancient Israel, when hospitality was not merely a question of good manners, but a moral institution which grew out of the harsh desert and nomadic existence of the people of Israel. The biblical customs of welcoming the weary traveler and receiving the stranger in one's midst

developed into an important Jewish virtue. Isaiah states that one of the duties of the pious is to "deal thy bread to the hungry" and to "bring the poor that are cast out to thy house." "The Bible is full of examples of hospitality. Abraham, for example, broke off a conversation with God Himself in order to receive guests (the three angels), and though weak in health, ran out to meet them, personally washed their feet, served them food, and made them feel welcomed and honored. Rebekah, Abraham's future daughter-in-law, showed hospitality not only to his servant but to his thirsty camels as well, thus proving herself worthy of marrying Isaac. Jethro was angry that his daughters had not invited Moses to their home, and the prophet Elijah was a permanent guest in the home of the Shunammite woman. Job, like Abraham, had open doors on all four sides of his house so that strangers might have easy access. Breaches of hospitality, on the other hand, were considered punishable offenses."  
([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

### **How is hospitality both a commandment as well as a blessing, (a mitzvah)?**

"In Talmudic literature, hospitality is a great *mitzvah* (commandment as well as blessing), and is even more important, according to some rabbis, than prayer. The guest should be shown his room on arrival, so that he will enjoy his meal and not have to worry about where he will sleep later. The host is forbidden to make his guest uncomfortable by appearing miserable or sad, or by watching him too closely when he eats. The guest too, has responsibilities, including showing gratitude to his host, and complying with his host's wishes. Guests must not accept hospitality if they think that doing so will impoverish the host." "Rabbi Levi Isaac of Berdichev always served his guests personally and made up their beds for them. When asked why he did not leave

these duties to his servants, he replied: "Hospitality is an excellent deed when performed without pay. The servant would do it for pay, and the intrinsic kindness of the good deed would be lost."

(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

### **How can I make hospitality part of my personal life?**

Jewish tradition tells us that Abraham's life and dwelling were also the personification of hospitality; (as mentioned) his tent was open on all four sides. He himself waited on guests and taught them after meals to teach them faith in God. When Jews marry, since they do not have a temple, a 'huppah' is used. It is a remnant of the ancient temple garments, a tallith, supported by four poles or stakes! "Today, the term huppah refers to the decorative canopy under which the wedding ceremony is performed. Originally, however, it referred to the actual bridal chamber, the tent or room of the groom to which the bride was brought in festive procession for the marital union...the Talmud relates that there was an ancient custom to make staves of the huppah from a cedar and a pine tree planted specifically for this purpose at the birth of a male and female child respectively. In medieval France, it was customary for the groom to cover the bride's head with his tallith as a symbol of sheltering her; and in modern-day Israel, for weddings of soldiers on active duty, it is not unusual to see a huppah constructed of a tallith supported by four rifles held by friends of the bride and groom...among Orthodox Jews, the preferred custom is to erect the huppah outside, or at least in a spot open to the sky, underneath the stars, because of God's assurance to Abraham that He would make his descendants 'as

numerous as the stars of the heavens' (Genesis 22:17)." (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

### **How unusual are the "everlasting Hills?"**

The lesson title evokes a unique geographical consideration. In this case, geography lends its testimony of the Lord. In ancient times, the word of the Lord came from the "tops of the mountains" in Jerusalem, where the tribe of Judah and the prophets of Israel lived. These mountains create a backbone of the country of Israel. In fact, the land of Israel has mountains from its northern to its southern borders. It is a mountain range that is "everlasting." In latter times, the word of the Lord comes from the "tops of the mountains," Salt Lake City, where the prophets and leadership of the Lord's kingdom and the tribe of Joseph are presently situated. The Ute Indians used the word Utah to denote the tops of the mountains. It is also the only other range of mountains that extends from the northern to the southern borders of the land. It is also the "land of everlasting hills." Judah and Utah even sound linguistically similar. There is an Arab village close to Hebron that is called Yatta. An old synagogue of the first century was found there with characteristics of Levitical use. Some even suggest it to be the wilderness area of Judah where John the Baptist (a Levite) might have lived. The blessings of the "everlasting hills" have affected, are affecting, and will continue to affect all the world. "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." (Genesis 49:26) "And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence." (Doctrine & Covenants 133:31) "Everlasting is also used to signify the

eternal, lasting, and enduring nature of some particular thing. For instance: the “everlasting covenant” (**Doctrine & Covenants 1:15**), “the everlasting gospel” (**Doctrine & Covenants 36:5**), “songs of everlasting joy” (**Doctrine & Covenants 45:71**), “an everlasting inheritance” (**Doctrine & Covenants 57:5**), “the everlasting hills.” (**Doctrine & Covenants 133:31.**) (**Mormon Doctrine, Bruce R. McConkie, Pg.243**)

### **Which mountain in the “Everlasting Hills” do I focus on?**

Isaiah, who knew the mountains of Judah, also knew the Lord and combined the majesty of both in teaching us about the Savior. “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” (**Isaiah 52:7**) The sacred event that redeemed us from the sins of life, bruises of experience, captivity of conscience, blindness of bigotry, hurt of hearts broken, poverty of stinginess and the imprisonment of self pity, draws us to the Mount of Olives. Two thousand years ago, He sank below all things, experiencing deeper depths than we would ever reach so that we would never have to. Bleeding from every pore of His body, he was stained for us. How beautiful upon the Mount of Olives are the feet of Him who brings good tidings. Good tidings are the “good news,” the gospel of joy. Isaiah wrote the words of the Savior’s testimony, seven hundred years before the Savior would speak them. “The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;” (**Isaiah 61:1**) “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to

heal the broken- hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” (**Luke 4:18**)

### **How do Jews remember the “Day of Atonement,” Yom Kippur?**

Although the principle of “one atoning for our sins” in Judaism has diminished over the years, one day every year is set aside as the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur. “The tenth of the Hebrew month of *Tishrei* is *Yom Kippur*, a day of fasting and prayer for all Israel, a day which has been significant to Jews throughout the ages. The Day of Atonement is the last of the Ten Days of Penitence which begin with *Rosh Ha-Shanah*, and is the climax of the repentance and soul-searching incumbent on every Jew during this period.” “The essence of the day and the reasons for its special prayers and ceremony are expressed in the *Torah*: “For on this day will atonements be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins shall ye be clean before the Lord” The *Torah* commands that on the tenth of *Tishrei* every Jew must “afflict his soul,” which is understood to mean that eating, drinking, wearing shoes made of leather, washing, anointing the body and marital relations are forbidden. All these laws take effect at sunset on the ninth of *Tishrei* and last until nightfall of the tenth. As important as the *mitzvah* of fasting on *Yom Kippur* is the *mitzvah* of eating on the day before the fast. So important is Yom Kippur that it is the only fast day which may be observed on the Sabbath and is never postponed until the next day. Moreover, the *Torah* describes the holiness of *Yom Kippur* by calling it the “Sabbath of Sabbaths.”

### **What symbolism is imbedded in Yom Kippur?**

“In the times of the Temple in Jerusalem, the ritual performed by the high priest was the central feature of the Day of Atonement. The high priest,

representative of the people, carried out the special service known as *avodah*. He took two identical goats and cast lots to see which would be sacrificed and which would be sent to (the wilderness) *Azazel*. After sacrificing one of them, he sprinkled its blood on the altar and then confessed the sins of the people while placing his hands on the head of the live goat. Then the goat was sent into the wilderness (to die on its own) ...this ceremony represented the purification of the entire people, for the goat sent to *Azazel* was a symbolic way of showing that the people were cleansed of their sins. After the destruction of the Second Temple (70 C.E.) when this ritual could no longer be carried out, the day of *Yom Kippur* itself was assumed to atone for Israel's sins. However, the sages emphasized that *Yom Kippur* alone is not enough; each man must repent for his wrongdoings in order for the Day of Atonement to have its purifying effect. Accordingly, the theme of the prayers of *Yom Kippur* revolves around the confessing of sins and the resolve to mend one's ways both between man and man, and man and God.

"Perhaps the most beloved ritual of the Day of Atonement, *Kol Nidrei* is...chanted before sunset as the...worshippers are wrapped in *tallitot* (prayer garment) and some even robed in white gowns (*kitels*)."

"The next morning people rise early to go to the synagogue where they spend most of the day in prayer and confession." "The *Torah* and *haftarah* (scripture) readings of the day also contain the themes of the Day of Atonement. The morning service contains the *Torah* reading...(and) the Book of Jonah which tells the story of how the whole town of Nineveh repented after they were warned by the prophet and were forgiven for their sins." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

### How did *Yom Kippur* seal-in the atonement?

"The prayers of *Yom Kippur* are concluded with the service known as *Ne'ilat She'arim*...the closing of the Temple gates which was done at sunset, on the Day of Atonement...associated with the symbolic closing of the heavenly gates. The divine judgment...is now finally sealed and all those who have truly repented have been forgiven and accepted by God. Throughout this service the Ark of the Law remains open, and the worshipers remain standing. The service begins at twilight and is concluded at nightfall when...declarations of faith are recited aloud and a single blast of the shofar is blown to announce the end of the Day of Atonement. The congregants respond "Next year in Jerusalem," and return home to break their fast, confident that their sins have been forgiven."

(**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) Since 1967, when Jerusalem became open for Jews, the congregant's response is "Next year is Jerusalem-rebuilt." This is an expression of rebuilding the temple in the everlasting hills of Judah. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

(**Isaiah 2:3**) "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts." (**Malachi 3:1**) "I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God; wherefore, gird up your loins and I will suddenly come to my temple. Even so. Amen." (**Doctrine and**

**Covenants 36:8**) How beautiful upon the mountains of Judah and Joseph are the feet of Him who brought salvation to all of us! How beautiful are the garments of them that are worthy to bow at His feet. Jews use garments to remind them of ancient temple rituals. The garment is called a '*tallith*' (garment) and it has four sets of *Zizit* (strings), with knots that are reminders of the binding covenants. "According to the Bible, God commanded the Jews to wear fringes on the corners of their garments as a reminder of the Lord's commandments: "And it shall be unto you for a fringe that ye may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord." (**Numbers 15:39**) This fringe is called *zizit*." "The *tallith* is usually white and made either of wool, cotton, or silk...Although the ordinary *tallith* is worn only in the synagogue, strictly observant Jews wear the *tallith katan* (small tallith) under their upper garments the whole day." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) In many Jewish weddings, a special white robe-like garment is worn called the *Kitel*. "In Ashkenazi tradition it is not just the bride who wears white on her wedding day. The groom, too, stands under the canopy wearing his white *kitel*, or robe, over his wedding finery. The day of their marriage is a solemn one for the bride and groom. They pray that their past sins will be forgiven, and they can start their life together afresh. The white of their clothing symbolizes the purity and the forgiveness of sin for which they are hoping. For this reason a similar garment is used to clothe the dead for burial. The *kitel* therefore also serves to remind the wearer of how brief life is, and of the necessity for atonement." "The *kitel* is traditionally worn on those important occasions when the Jew is concerned with such thoughts. It is worn during prayer services on *Rosh Ha-Shanah* and *Yom Kippur*; at the *seder* on Passover eve; by the *hazzan* (cantor) on the eighth day of Sukkot when the prayer for rain is recited and the first day of

Passover during the prayer for dew." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

### **How important is repentance?**

One of the most important theological doctrines of repentance from both the Bible and the *Talmud* is that if a sinner repents of his bad deeds, God will forgive him. "Repentance consists of several stages— firstly the sinner must reflect on his actions and realize that he has indeed done the wrong thing. He must then make up his mind never to do it again, and confess his sin. This confession is not made to any other human being but is made by the sinner directly to God. On this basis the two confessions *Ashamnu* and *Al-Het* were introduced into the prayers for the Day of Atonement which is a special occasion for repentance and forgiveness. However, even when a sinner has done all these things, his repentance is still not final until he has been exposed to the same temptation and withstood it. Of course, he should not deliberately put himself on that spot again." "Repentance in Hebrew is known as *teshuvah*, which literally means "return," and signifies a return to God. A person who repents his sins is known as a *ba'al teshuvah*. Many rabbis of the Talmud believed that the real *ba'al teshuvah* is greater even than a person who has never sinned and they furthermore said that when a person repents out of love of God (and not just out of fear of divine punishment), all the sins he had committed are considered to be *mitzvot* (blessings as well as commandments). This is perhaps the most comforting doctrine that Judaism has given to the world." (**Encyclopedia Jucaica Jr.**)

### **What are some more thoughts for sacrifice?**

"The Hebrew term for sacrifice, *korban*, is from a root meaning "to draw near," and originally denoted that which was brought

near, or offered, to God. It is also possible that the term signified “that which brings man near to God” and, indeed, a late *aggadic* (legendary) source interprets

sacrifices in this sense.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) Where would be more beautiful than going to the mountain of the Lord’s house and drawing near to Him?