

Why Did Jesus Come to Earth?

International Bible Lessons

Isaiah 49:1-6

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“The LORD says, ‘It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth’” (Isaiah 49:6—NRSV).

“He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth’” (Isaiah 49:6—NASB-U).

“And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6—KJV).

As Isaiah predicted, God sent His Son and called him “Emmanuel,” which means, “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23). Before His birth, God told Joseph to name him “Jesus,” because “he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:22). Jesus desires to save His people from false beliefs that can lead to destructive behaviors and their consequences. But who are Jesus’ people? God answered that question through Isaiah when He said that saving only those from the twelve tribes of Israel was too small a task for His Servant Son. Rather, God the Father sent Jesus not only as Israel’s long-expected Messiah, but also “as a light to the nations” (Isaiah 49:6).

The word “light” in the Bible sometimes means “truth.” Among other things, God sent the Messiah to teach truths that would show everyone how to live in a right relationship with God and others, and even within themselves. Anyone from anywhere can become one of Jesus’ people by trusting and following Him, for Jesus promised, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). Throughout the Bible, we see God expressing love for all people in every nation. God sent Jesus, not just to preach in Judea, but so people everywhere could eventually learn from His followers the truth about God as the only Creator and Savior of the world.

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Thinking Further

1. Do you find Biblical prophecy difficult or easy to understand? Why is some prophecy only truly understood after the predicted event takes place? What does that tell us about the fulfillment of prophecies not yet fulfilled as far as we know?
2. Why do you think some of these verses describe parts of Isaiah’s ministry and also parts of Jesus’ ministry.
3. Which truths in general in these verses might apply to any sincere follower of Jesus Christ today? How might some of these truths encourage a believer if he thinks his work is not successful?
4. How might you explain the fact that God had a plan for Isaiah and Jesus before they were born and when He formed them in the womb; yet, it appeared to some that their ministry in the name of God was a failure during their lifetime?
5. Why does the Bible (and why do believers today) emphasize that Jesus the Messiah came to save people from every nation on Earth? Why is this important? How might taking this truth seriously impact our relationships with people of other nationalities? Pray today for more people to come to know the Lord and for His protection of His people everywhere.

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