

Isaiah 50 & 51 — The Servant Who Listens

KING'S WAY CHAPEL · STUDY NOTES · SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2026

Before Sunday

These notes are prepared ahead of our discussion. Read both chapters once straight through, then come with whatever stood out to you. After Sunday we'll add the recording, the transcript, and notes from what the group saw in the text.

Key verses

The Lord Yahweh has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with words him who is weary. He awakens morning by morning, he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught.

Isaiah 50:4

Who among you fears Yahweh and obeys the voice of his servant? He who walks in darkness and has no light, let him trust in Yahweh's name, and rely on his God.

Isaiah 50:10

I, even I, am he who comforts you. Who are you, that you are afraid of man who shall die, and of the son of man who will be made as grass?

Isaiah 51:12

Outline of the passage

- 1 50:1–3 — Where is the bill of divorce?** The exiles assume Yahweh has put them away. He answers that they were sold for their own iniquities: "Is my hand shortened at all, that it can't redeem?"
- 2 50:4–9 — The Servant speaks.** An ear opened morning by morning. A back given to those who beat him, and a face not hidden "from shame and spitting." A face set like a flint, because "he who justifies me is near."
- 3 50:10–11 — Two ways to walk in the dark.** Trust in Yahweh's name and rely on him, or walk "in the flame of your fire, and among the torches that you have kindled."
- 4 51:1–3 — Look to the rock you were cut from.** Abraham and Sarah: "when he was but one I called him, I blessed him, and made him many." Yahweh has comforted Zion and made her wilderness like Eden.
- 5 51:4–8 — My salvation will be forever.** The heavens will vanish like smoke and the earth wear out like a garment, but his righteousness will not be abolished. "Don't fear the reproach of men."
- 6 51:9–11 — Awake, arm of Yahweh.** A cry recalling the sea dried up "for the redeemed to pass over," and a promise that the ransomed will come with singing to Zion.

- 7 51:12–16 — I, even I, am he who comforts you.** Why fear a man who will die? Yahweh puts his words in his people's mouth and covers them "in the shadow of my hand."
- 8 51:17–23 — Awake, Jerusalem.** The cup of staggering, "the bowl of the cup of my wrath," is taken out of her hand and given to those who afflicted her.

Questions for discussion

- 1** In 50:1 Yahweh asks, "Where is the bill of your mother's divorce?" What were the exiles assuming about why they were in Babylon, and how does he answer them?
- 2** The Servant's ear is opened "morning by morning" before he sustains the weary with words (50:4–5). What does listening first look like for us?
- 3** Isaiah 50:6 describes the Servant being beaten and spat upon. Where do the Gospel writers echo this? (Compare Matthew 26:67 and 27:30.)
- 4** Verses 50:10–11 set trusting Yahweh in the dark against walking by torches we have kindled ourselves. What torches do we reach for when we can't see the way?
- 5** In 51:2 Yahweh reminds a small, discouraged people that Abraham was "but one" when he called him. Why would that matter to them? Why might it matter to a small fellowship like ours?
- 6** The cup of staggering is taken out of Jerusalem's hand (51:22). How does this image connect with Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane, "let this cup pass away from me" (Matthew 26:39)?

Read the chapters

Isaiah 50–51 (World English Bible) on Bible Gateway

(<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+50-51&version=WEB>)

Scripture quotations are from the World English Bible, which is in the public domain.

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