

The Light of the World is Jesus!

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Isaiah 49:1-7

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*"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." Isaiah 49:6*

Have you ever read a help wanted ad so detailed you wondered if anybody could meet all the requirements? Years ago, my brother applied for that kind of job. The qualifications and experience required were so detailed nobody could meet them but him. And that was exactly the way they wanted it. The employer already had him picked out. But according to the rules, the job had to be advertised, so they did. And when nobody but my brother qualified, he was hired.

In today's lesson from Isaiah, God is giving us the job description of the Savior. The job of the Savior is to *bring back to God all the exiled and scattered Israelites*. Not only that, he's supposed to *be a light to the nations* and *bring salvation to the ends of the earth*. And he's to do that all the while being *deeply despised and abhorred*.

But who qualifies for this job? And who would want it? There are really just three candidates. One is *Israel*. But when Isaiah was writing this almost 800 years before Christ, Israel was a miserable failure. For centuries Israel had *known the LORD*. They had been *called from the womb* to be *God's covenant people*. They'd been *given God's commandments by Moses*.

Their only job was to be faithful. But they weren't. They served other gods. They broke all the commandments, all the time, They refused to listen to the prophets. So, the Savior who brings back the people to God and shines the light of salvation to the nations can't possibly be Israel.

Another possibility is *Isaiah* himself. In the text, it almost sounds as though God is calling Isaiah to be the Savior. Some of it seems to fit.