

Called Together

Isaiah 49:1-7

All That I Am

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Meditative Prayer

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Today's Bible Reading

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Additional Bible Readings

Psalm 40:1-11

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

John 1:29-42

**Faithful God, you call,
claim, and send believers
into the world with your
radiant love.**

**Help us to live
as ones who are called,
claimed, and sent with
your blessing, journeying
to the places and spaces
we are called to share our
light and your love. Amen.**

The prophet of Isaiah 49:1-7 grabs our attention with the summons, "listen to me...pay attention." Written following the defeat of the Southern Kingdom, Judah, by the Babylonians in 587 BCE, Isaiah 40-50 is commonly referred to as Second Isaiah. This section of the book of Isaiah has four passages identified as Servant Songs. They tell about the call of God's servant and chosen one.

The servant here is the prophet, or perhaps Israel itself, called to spend their strength for the important task of doing God's will. God calls the prophet to proclaim to a people in exile in Babylon that God is faithful and will restore them. The Hebrew people begin to see a glimmer of hope after long years away from Judah and Jerusalem.

The prophet describes his vocation – God knew him before his birth and has given him powerful words to proclaim God's message. The story follows a pattern common to Hebrew prophets: there is a strong sense of a task God wants the prophet to fulfill, and there is a point when the prophet feels vulnerable. Brené Brown explains how vulnerability is at the core of emotions such as fear, self-doubt, comparison, anxiety, uncertainty, grief, disappointment. Still, vulnerability is also the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, trust, empathy, creativity, innovation. So it is for this prophet and Israel.

The call is repeated as God promises to do even greater works. This is a story of a call – being called and known, experiencing failure to live up to the call, hope remaining strong, and being called with a greater purpose. God's light is to shine on all. Regardless of the people's early success or failure, God is faithful. The servant maintains hope in God.