

Grace and peace to you from God our Father, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, and has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds. (Hebrews 1:1-2)
Amen.

Isaiah 49:6-13 (NKJV) — 6 Indeed 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 give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.' " 7 Thus says the Lord, The Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One, To Him whom man despises, To Him whom the nation abhors, To the Servant of rulers: "Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship, Because of the Lord who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel; And He has chosen You." 8 Thus says the Lord: "In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages; 9 That You may say to the prisoners, 'Go forth,' To those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.' "They shall feed along the roads, And their pastures shall be on all desolate heights. 10 They shall neither hunger nor thirst, Neither heat nor sun shall strike them; For He who has mercy on them will lead them, Even by the springs of water He will guide them. 11 I will make each of My mountains a road, And My highways shall be elevated. 12 Surely these shall come from afar; Look! Those from the north and the west, And these from the land of Sinim." 13 Sing, O heavens! Be joyful, O earth! And break out in singing, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted His people, And will have mercy on His afflicted.

This is the word of the Lord.

Let us pray, Lord open Thou my lips, and My mouth will show forth Thy praise! Amen.

Too small a thing...

1. Too small for Him the be Savior to only some.
2. Too small for Him to be a servant of rulers.
3. Too small for me to be silent.

In Jesus name, who is, who was, and who is to come, our Savior in flesh and in glory, dear elect of God and all who are redeemed by the universal atonement of Jesus Christ,

Such a small baby. This baby in the arms of Simeon is not yet 2 months old. Take a look at Elijah Cameron next time you see him and you'll have an idea of the humble coming of our Lord Jesus. So small. He comes, a Servant.

However, as the songs we have been pondering in our midweek services have shown us, God's deeds are anything but small. Mary, Zacharias, and Simeon all sing of this Child in terms that are bigger than life itself.

It is too small, literally "too trivial," for God to be limited. In fact that is the basic definition of God: the Unlimited One. Isaiah sings a song of salvation that echoes unto the ends of the earth. It is too small a thing for Him to be Savior to only some. It is too small a thing for this King to forever remain a Servant. And as things so big echo among us, it is indeed too small a thing for us remain silent. **TOO SMALL ...**

1. Too small for Him to be Savior to only some.

Salvation comes as a gift of His grace. It is universal. This teaching is central to the foundation of faith itself. It removes the idea that salvation has anything to do with me, with who I am. Indeed who would be saved if it did? *1 John 2:2, He Himself is the satisfactory payment for our sins, and not ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* Christ's payment for sin knows no limits. It depends not in how dedicated you are or are not. It doesn't even depend on whether believe in Him or not. Whether a soul goes to heaven or hell, does not change the fact that Christ gave Himself and paid for that person's sins. It is too small a thing to think that the number of sinners nor the size of your sins bigger than the death of God's Son. Jesus is and will always be the Savior of the whole world, from the least to the greatest, from Judas to Peter, from the serial killer to the pious, work righteous Pharisee. You who believe receive this gift. Those who do not remain in their sins. Either way, it is to the ends of the earth.

6 Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob.'

Why is the LORD called the Redeemer in v.7? Because we are in need of redemption. This is universal. We hear it in our conscience. We see it in our works. Yet how often do we limit the extent of this great need?

So many of the Jews at the time of our Savior's birth had done just that – limited God, as if He were Savior to only the Jews. When John the Baptist was preparing the way for the coming of Christ, he spoke sternly to the people: *... do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. (Luke 3:8).*

The Jews claimed their father Abraham as a ticket to heaven. To think that the basis for God's salvation is our outward church membership is to bring God down to our level ... to think that God's salvation is only to those who are in the CLC or to those who are Lutheran is to make God's great work into our empty work. It is too small a thing that He be Savior only to some.

6 ... I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.' "

The fact that God chose to extend this salvation beyond the tribes of Jacob (beyond the Jews) shows that His salvation will not be contingent on our church membership, our church attendance, or our church heritage.

As Simeon said with the baby Jesus in his arms, *...my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples. (Luke 2:30–31)*

As Paul puts it in Ephesians 2, He has made BOTH ONE. God has brought together Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles) into the One Body of Christ.

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. (Ephesians 2:14–16)

The universal promise that has come out of the OT has been given to us Gentiles. *12 Surely these shall come from afar; Look! Those from the north and the west. Or as Paul says: But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (Ephesians 2:13)*

It is too small for Jesus to be Savior to some only. He is Savior to the ends of the earth.

2. Too small for Him to be a Servant of Rulers.

A Servant of Rulers. A Ruler of Kings. Isaiah brings out this “Servant” theme, depicting the Messiah as a Servant of subjection. In the famous chapter 53, Isaiah describes Him as a Man of no splendor or grand appearance. His coming is despised and rejected and we consider Him of no value. His lowly appearance is due to the fact that He bears our ugliness. Our guilt is upon Him. Chosen to suffer.

v.7 ...To Him whom man despises, To Him whom the nation abhors, To the Servant of rulers...

How lowly was His coming! Barns and feed troughs. Yet how glorious that God had Chosen Him for this very thing. From Isaiah 42, *“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him;*

Suffering to glory; glory through suffering – this is the way of the LORD. This Servant who is despised and abhorred to the point of death on the cross is also the One God has highly exalted. As Paul writes in Philippians 2, Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should

bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, (Philippians 2:9–10). This Servant of rulers has become the Ruler of kings.

7 ...“Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship [“bow down”], Because of the Lord who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel; And He has chosen You.”

A better translation would be “they bow down.” It says not whether this is willingly in worship or not. Kings are normally the ones who remains seated while all others rise. Yet here, the lofty rulers are said to rise and bow low for this despised Servant. The LORD is faithful. It is too small a thing that He should remain a Servant of Rulers.

The Father has seen the work of His Servant. He has preserved Him through death to rise not just from the grave, but from death itself, to be given not just life, but the highest throne in heaven.

This is a season where it more often becomes about me getting stuff than God giving salvation. In fact, every season our flesh is concerned about getting bigger – the bigger car, the bigger TV, the bigger good deed. However we are never bigger enough. No earthly thing will be bigger enough to get us to heaven. No matter how bigger we get, whether king, a prince, or just a good person, we will be able to rise above death. All will face the same judgment eventually. Every knee will bow.

It is the “acceptable time.” These words from v.8 are quoted by Paul in 2 Corinthians, *“In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:2)*

Literally, this is “the time of God’s favor.” We call this time of our lives before death and the final judgment “a time of grace.” That God has accepted the work of this Servant and exalted Him above every name means now all things are complete. Now is the time for all to bow before the glorious salvation that has come to earth. And this is just what we do. Our confession of sins each Sunday is a bowing of the knee to the Servant of rulers who has become the Ruler of kings. We stand in the grace of God even now. As His WORD dwells among us it declares the day of God’s aid and forgiveness. The WORD preached among us brings the covenant of Christ to you. It give you the inheritance God has prepared for you. You are the prisoners to whom He cries, “Go forth!”

In ch. 61 of Isaiah, this Servant says, *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; (Isaiah 61:1) ... To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, (Isaiah 61:2).*

What the Servant proclaims is both a day of favor and the day of vengeance. His coming is a day of favor. It is peace on earth and God's good will to all people. At the same time, it is not a day to take for granted. Now is not a time to put off to tomorrow what lays before us today.

To those who bigger themselves by self made works, this is a day of vengeance. In the end, Jesus will be revealed before all the world as the One God chose to take away the sins of the world, the only salvation.

But to us who believe, this is the acceptable year. Rather than biggerring ourselves through our own works, we are set free to things bigger than life itself. We have been given the desolate heritage. You are brought in the kingdom of God's Son where heaven itself and all its treasures are yours. We bow our knee in this time of favor before the One who has saved, the One whom we love.

It is too small a thing that He would remain a Servant to rulers, for He is the Ruler of kings.

3. Too small for me to be silent.

Now is the acceptable time. "Go forth!" He says. It is no small thing that this has come to you in this acceptable time. It is no small thing that the Holy Spirit has caused you to believe. **This is too small a thing for you to remain silent!**

Did you know the FCC is trying to place a ban on commercials that are excessively loud? Have you ever noticed how marketing reps design commercials to be louder than the regular program you watch. They want them to be bigger so they can get your attention. The regular shows you are used to tuning in to have your attention already. The commercials have to speak up if they want to grab you.

You live in a world where people are used to tuning into one way of thinking. They are so used to only listening to messages that encourage them to do better, to do what feels good, to make a name for yourself. When a commercial comes on, if it is loud enough, appealing enough, they'll pay attention. The world is full of commercials raising their voice, shouting at people for attention, claiming the right answers to life's problems.

Unlike TV commercials, we are not in the business of being more flashy, louder, and appealing to people's attention spans. The effectiveness of God's message is the content. It is big things in small packages. It is a still small voice of the WORD that tears at our heart, strips us of self-reliance, and changes our heart forever.

13 Sing, O heavens! Be joyful, O earth! And break out in singing, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted His people, And will have mercy on His afflicted.

Sing by example. The heavens declare the glory of God by simply living in the splendor He intended. You too live in the splendor of God. Jesus calls this “letting your light shine.” He says, “No one hides a lamp under a basket,” ... that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. The whole spectrum of God’s saving work is alive in you. Break forth!

v.9 ... say to ... those who are in darkness, ‘Show yourselves.’

Step out of the darkness by casting off those sins that imprison you, lay them before the light of Jesus. The confession and absolution we’ve been using in our Wednesday services comes from 1 John: ... *if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)*

Step into the light where the fellowship we share is in the blood of Jesus Christ. Step into the light where we share a faith that believes and confesses the glory of what God has declared. For He has declared all of you righteous for Jesus sake. Together, with one another, we are walking a path that is illumined by heaven itself. Nothing could be bigger. Nothing could be more worth sharing with others.

Such a small baby. Simeon held something not much bigger than his two hands. Something so small to our eyes has become so big in our heart. The Word has revealed a salvation that is simply too small to be contained. It will not be contained within a certain time or place; it is to the ends of the earth. It will not be contained in a Servant who only suffers, but in a Servant risen and reigning eternally. It will not be contained within these walls either; it goes with you today and is the song of your life, bigger than anything else that comes your way.

Let us pray, Lord open Thou my lips, and My mouth will show forth Thy praise! Amen.