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The ministry of suffering, 1955.

THE MINISTRY OF SUFFERING

Concluding the discussion
of
"The Prophet"
by
Sholem Asch

November 20, 1955

The Prophet, concerning whom Sholem Asch wrote his latest book, is as we learned last week, the Prophet of the Babylonian Exile, Deutero-Isaiah, whose prophecies are contained in Chapters Forty through Fifty-five of the Book of Isaiah. He is the Prophet who announced the fall of Babylon, the Restoration of Judea, and the Return of the Exiles to Judea. All this took place in the middle of the Sixth Century before the Common Era.

I spoke last week about the teachings of this second Isaiah, as he is sometimes called, and drew your attention to the fact that he, more than any of the other great prophets, presented a conception of monotheism, the most purified and the most exalted, as well as a conception of the universalism of Judaism. And that, far more than any of the prophets who preceded him, it was this second Isaiah who defined, and expatiated upon, the idea of the Mission of Israel and the economy of the world. This prophet saw, in Cyrus, the ruler of Persia who was to conquer the great Empire of Babylon, the servant of God, the servant of the God of Israel and of the world, who though he, Cyrus himself did not yet recognize this God of Israel, was, nevertheless, designated by God to be his instrument to achieve, not only the return of the Exiles from Babylon, but the extension of monotheism throughout the world. The Prophet called Cyrus the *Messiach Adonai* - the anointed of the Lord. He, who was to overthrow Babylon, was, according to this prophet, also destined to overthrow all the false Gods of Babylon - to put an end to polytheism and idolatry in the world. Cyrus was to prepare the way for the spread of the one true faith throughout the world. And Cyrus, by his conquests, would make it possible for Israel the witness of the one true faith, to carry out

its mission, to become (the light unto the nations of the world); and through Cyrus, the purposes of God would be fulfilled in the world. From its restored national base in Palestine, and from the rebuilt sanctuary in Jerusalem, "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together". The time will come when, "to him every knee will bend low and every tongue will swear". This was the vision of the prophet: the Restoration of Israel -- the spread of the faith of Israel throughout the world.

Now the first part of this prophecy soon came true. Cyrus conquered Babylon and soon after the year 539 he gave permission to the Exiles in Babylon to return to Judea.

Whoever among you wishes it, may his God be with him. Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judea, and let him rebuild the Temple of God - the God of Israel. And he restored to the returning Exiles the sacred vessels of the Temple of Jerusalem which had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar when he conquered Jerusalem in 586 and had brought them to Babylon. These sacred vessels, without which the services and ritual in the temple could not be performed were restored by Cyrus to the returning Exiles. And so now those who sat by the waters of Babylon and wept when they remembered Zion, now jubilantly prepared to return. Not all of them of course. Many of them chose to remain in Babylon. They had become reconciled to their exile in the foreign land and some of them had prospered. A new generation had been born during these fifty years of exile and they were fairly well assimilated to their environment and chose to remain there. Some of them, I assume, did not think it wise to rebuild Judea. Some members of the Babylonian Council for Judaism, I suppose, looked upon it as unpatriotic to return to Judea. But enough of them did return to insure the national rebirth of Israel in its Homeland, and insure the rebuilding of the Second Temple. And because of them there followed a great creative era in Jewish history known as the Era of the Second Commonwealth - between the First Temple and the Second Temple - a period of nearly six hundred years, one of the most creative and most glorious periods in Jewish history. Had there been no return the

whole character of Jewish history and world history would have been radically different. Judaism, as we know it today, would probably have disappeared. Christianity would never have been born. The period of the Second Commonwealth, next to the prophetic period of the eighth through the sixth centuries, was the most important one in Jewish history. It was during this period that many of the books of the Bible were written. It was during this period that the Torah, in its present form, was finally edited. It was the period that produced the Scribes and the Sages and many of the great Rabbis whose teachings we have in the Mishna. It is during this period that the spiritual and ethical concepts of Judaism were deepened and developed. It was also in this period that the Maccabees fought their great fight against Hellenism and the whole struggle between Hellenism and Judaism took place which resulted in the victory of Judaism.

So that with the return from the Babylonian Exile, the national and the religious history of the Jewish people resumed its interrupted course and the prophecy of the Second Isaiah did come true.

"Fear not for I am with you, I will bring your offspring from the East and from the West. I will gather you...bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth.

"Go forth from Babylon, Flee from Chaldea; declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it, send it forth to the ends of the earth; say, "The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob."

And I assume the exaltation in those days, and the part of the returning refugees is very much like the exaltation which transpired a few years ago when refugees began to return to the rebuilt Israel from all parts of Europe and Asia and Africa. Things which we beheld and are beholding with our own eyes.

And so this part of the vision of the Prophet Isaiah came true. But what of the other part? The hope of converting the world to the one true faith.

So that they may know, from the East unto the West that there is none besides Me.

I am God

There is no other. Cyrus gave no hint of any intention to universalize the faith of Israel. He did not destroy the idols or the idolatrous worship of the Babylonians or of any other people. Nor did he abandon his own dualistic faith - the Zoroastrian faith - the power of light as against the power of darkness, against Ahriman.

And the prophet who had hoped that this would take place came to feel that he had prophesied falsely because his prophecy did not come true.

"He, the prophet, alone was to blame; he and no other. His eyes had deceived him, his ears had misled him. The hope of the redemption had dazzled him, had led him astray, fostered delusions in him, and made him utter words which God had not spoken. It was just as Daniel had warned him. He had seen a worm crawling upon one leaf of the cabbage and had imagined the leaf was the whole world and the worm the Messiah of God. If so, then he had come to Israel as a false prophet. He had set the image of the king of Persia before them like an idol of gold or silver. He had crowned him with the title of Messiah; he had robed him in the array of the redeemer and proclaimed him the servant of God...."

And the Prophet was tortured in his spirit because he believed he had brought a false prophecy to the people. And now another grave doubt assailed him. If the world was to remain for a long unknown stretch of time steeped in superstition and idolatry and Polytheism, then the role of Israel, who had been summoned by God to become the spokesman of the one true faith - to become a holy people

a kingdom of priests - that role was now fraught with extreme danger for the people of Israel. In carrying out its mission, Israel would become hated and persecuted in bringing this different and challenging and non-conforming faith in defiance of the whole world. Israel was destined to become despised. Is God restoring Israel to its land only that Israel may become bound upon the altar of suffering for the sins and iniquities of the world? Why should Israel be summoned to such a yoke and to such suffering? Why should the iniquity of the whole world be laid upon him? And why should he suffer for the transgressions of others? Is this justice? Should anyone be punished for the sins of another? Had it not been declared by the prophets of former times: no one shall die for the sins of another - "the soul that sinneth, it shall die - the son will not bear the iniquity of the father, nor the father the iniquity of the son".

And there was a terrible problem confronting the Prophet and he agonized over the problem and could find no solution for it, until there comes to him a vision - his final vision - amidst the ruins of the old temple - at the very gates of mercy; a vision which resolves these doubts and perplexities in the mind of the Prophet. And

this vision is perhaps the finest part of this book of Sholem Asch. He sees his namesake, the first Isaiah, who had lived some two hundred years before him, in this vision. The first Isaiah whose prophecies are found in the first forty chapters of the Book of Isaiah, had prophesied a glorious time for mankind

in the end of days. He said that time would come when the mountain of the Lord would be exalted as the top of the mountains and all nations would stream to it and all people would come and say let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob -- that he may teach us of his ways so that we may learn. Out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

This first Isaiah envisioned the time when in the end of days, nations shall beat their swords into plowshares and their knives into pruning hooks; they shall not lift up sword any more, one against another, nor learn war any more". The second Isaiah of the Exiled, in this vision, meets up with this first Isaiah. And in that vision he also comes upon the shadowy forms of two of the matriarchs, Rachel the beloved wife of Jacob, who died in giving birth to Benjamin, of whom Jeremiah prophesied "Thus says the Lord; a voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted for her children because they are not -- they are in exile." Thus says the Lord: "Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded," says the Lord. "And they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope for your future", says the Lord, "and your children shall come back to their own country". And in this vision Rachel pleads for the people of Israel.

And the other womanly shadow, which the Prophet sees in his vision, is Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, who had given birth to twins, as you will recall - twin brothers - Jacob and Esau, who were destined to become two nations at war with each other - two parts of humanity in eternal enmity. And Rebecca pleads not only for Jacob but also for Esau. And these three, Isaiah, Rachel and Rebecca read the riddle of Israel's destiny for our distraught Prophet. The Prophet says to the First Isaiah,

" 'Teach me, O my father, to know when will the words you spoke in God's name be fulfilled. When will come the end of days that you foresaw?' "

"This is not in my power to tell you. It is hidden in God's mind. I sit here and every moment and second expect that the root of the redemption will spring forth, that the prince of peace will appear, that nation will no longer lift up sword against nation, and the whole earth will be filled with the knowledge of God. It is not I alone who sit thus and wait. All the prayers for the redemption gather into this place. All the hot tears that are shed in agony for the redemption are gathered here, all the chastisements that the sons of men suffer on account of it are treasured here. All are counted and registered. Arise and sit beside me, but what you see and hear must be sealed away from the living within your heart until 'the day cometh.' "

"As he spoke thus, the aged prophet stretched forth his hand, lifted up the young prophet from the ground, and sat him by his side.

"At first, all the prophet heard was the breathing of the silence that seemed to lie in ambush like a lion in the clouds. Suddenly, a thunderclap sounded, rolling mightily over mountain and valley, echoing and reverberating, increasing in force until it reached the height.

" 'For you are a holy people to the Lord thy God. God has chosen you to be His peculiar people out of all the peoples on the face of the earth.' "

" 'The thunder was the voice of Moses,' said the old prophet. 'It is lifted up every day over all lands beneath heaven to remind the children of Israel of the yoke and obligation placed upon them.' "

"Once more silence reigned: a twilight silence, the silence of the realm of neither-day-nor-night. A bright, golden halo coruscated on beams of twilight iridescence, a crown of rays shining with the light hidden away at creation. The shadowy form of a woman floating with a beat of wings appeared beyond the halo. A curtain seemed to rest in the air and hide her shape from sight as with a veil. And just as a bird falls plummeting when pierced by an arrow in flight, so the shade of the woman fell to the earth. The curtain parted. The shining halo seemed lit by the radiance of the Divine presence. A voice was heard on high; it was that of a moaning dove.

" 'Alas, God of Mercy! Unto Thee do I come, whose mercies are spread out over all created things. Unto Thee I come, who placed in the heart of every mother Thy grace of mercy which makes her feel compassion for her children. Unto Thee I come to seek mercy for my children. Other peoples are also the work of Thy hands and Thou endowest them with a life of plenty and tranquillity on the lands Thou has given them. Only my children hast Thou forsaken. How long will Thy people be a target for the darts of the gentiles? When shalt Thou yield them rest for their tired feet? Have mercy and pity upon the children of Abraham who loved Thee and fulfill the promise which Thou didst make him in the covenant between the pieces. They are Thy inheritance. They call upon Thy name. The gates of mercy are closed before them. Let justice be done if not mercy.' "

"The moving entreaty trembled through the whole of space with a sound of muted thunder. A voice was heard from the midst of the halo of fire over the woman's head:

" 'Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears, for there will be a reward to thy work, saith Jehovah, and return from the land of the enemy.' "

"The voice was still; the shade of Rachel vanished and from another corner of the horizon another womanly shadow drew closer. She was also draped in black. Her head was bowed. Slowly she floated near, alone

and solitary.

"As Rachel had done, so she too fell prostrate upon the ground and lifted her hand to the ring of light that sent down its radiance from above; she called in a voice bitter with weeping:

" 'Alas, Father of all created things. Two sons there were who struggled within me and two nations were separated from my flesh. They suckled at one breast and in spite of this Thou didst sow eternal enmity between them. I also bore my share of their war. I loved Jacob and for his sake I deceived his firstborn brother. Esau is also my son, and if Thou didst drive him away from Thy presence, Thou didst drive me also with him. My blood streams in the veins of Esau as much as it does in those of Jacob. As Jacob is my flesh, so also is Esau. In their sufferings I suffer; and when they are in pain I, too, am in pain. I am both the sacrifice and the one who offers it. My compassion for Esau is as great as is my love for Jacob and between them both my heart is rent in twain. O God, I pray Thee, will the sword make bereavement for me forever? Who will bring healing to the wound of my torn heart; who will close up the rent in my heart? I pray Thee, Father of all creatures, I Pray Thee who chose me to be the mother of them both, have mercy upon my son Esau. Open up his eyes so that he should see Thy light. Put understanding in his heart to know Thee and recognize Thy way. I beseech Thee, father him under the shade of Thy compassion. Receive him into Thy covenant just as You took his brother Jacob, for they were both born from one seed, that of Abraham who loved Thee. I pray Thee, O God, do it so that they may both live as brothers in the spirit even as they are brothers in the flesh.' "

" 'That is Rebecca, offering up her prayer to the Lord of all. Every day she rises up from her grave and comes here to the gates of mercy, to pray for her son, Esau, just as Rachel prays for her son, the people of Israel,' so whispered the old prophet into the young man's ear.

" 'I hear no voice answering her prayer, as Rachel's was answered.' "

" 'When the promise made to Rachel is fulfilled, then too shall Rebecca's prayer be answered. For both prayers are one, the supplication of a mother in Israel to the Holy One of Israel. God made a condition, the one shall not be redeemed without the other. Neither can have complete redemption by himself. It will come at the end of days, when the word of God, that came to me, shall be fulfilled: 'They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.' "

" 'God also opened my ears: 'I put my spirit upon him. Judgment shall He bring forth to the gentiles...He shall not fail nor be discouraged until He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law...I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the peoples...for a light of the gentiles...to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.' "

" 'Thy prophecy and mine are one.' "

" 'But tell me, until the end of days, until the last day, what then will be? ' "

" 'Small salvations will come from time to time. They will illumine the face of the earth for a moment like a flash and pass away. Then again the powers of the spirit will gather themselves and attempt to bring a new victory. These will be small salvations, but every one of them will be a rung in the ladder of the great redemption. Every victory will demand its price and none will be purchased except through sorrow and chastisement.' "

* * *

And again the young prophet says to the older prophet:

" 'Enlighten mine eyes to know the reason for the chastisements by which the redemption must be purchased. And why should Israel alone bear the burden of the iniquities of the nations and atone for them with her blood? Why should Israel be the goat sent to Azazel for the transgressions of the gentiles? ' "

* * * " 'My son and my young prophet, let it be known to you that the chastisement of the scourge is sweet; and pleasant is the thrust of the sword on the mission of the God Jehovah and for the sake of His glory. Just as gold is melted by fire, so is the heart reduced and made obedient in the furnace of chastisement. All suffering and pain endured for the sake of God are but a step towards Him. He will wrap you around in the cloak of His grace and will heal you with the balm of His love. Only the chosen ones are selected to feel the burning pains of punishment, the light that shines from Him. This selfsame light will cure your pain, just as the tender love a mother soothes the ~~heart~~ hurt of ~~a~~ the child that takes refuge in ~~her~~ bosom. You have already tasted of the honey of the love of God which came with the bitterness of infliction. Your beard was plucked out and the skin of your cheeks seared, your face was covered with the spittle of filthy men. What taste did you taste then? ' "

says the old Isaiah to the young Isaiah.

" 'Every drop of spittle that touched me purified me as though I had bathed in the waters of the Paradise and every weal of chastisement clothed my flesh with a garment of honor and crowned my hair with the diadem of God's choice,' answered the young prophet."

" ' So shall all be who are hurt for the glory of the Creator of all things. They put on the garment of glory and are crowned with the diadem of choice. I, also, ' "

says the old Isaiah

" 'tasted in my flesh the bittersweet pain of torture that burned my body. Three years as the servant of God did I walk barefoot and naked upon the stones of Jerusalem. In summer, the heat consumed me, and the frost in winter. When my time came to change over into the next world, Manasseh in his fury sawed through my flesh as he cut down the oak in the forest in which I had been hidden. He was enraged because I had spoken censure of him on account of the image he had brought into the Temple. God wove me a garment from the mists of the clouds; in the chastisements that I suffered I was purified and cured. God will still send more and more messengers after us to the sons of man and every one of them will have the same lot as ours. Thus man shall fight a great war for the sake of God; for the triumph of good over evil; for the victory of order over chaos.' "

So the young Prophet says to his older teacher, mentor, guide:

" 'O my father and teacher, you have opened my eyes so that I understand the sufferings of the righteous. Now I would further inquire: why has Israel been sentenced to endure nine measures of sorrow and chastisement that the Creator of all things has brought down upon the world? Why should Jacob by himself pay the full penalty for the iniquities of his brother Esau?' "

" 'You have asked a weighty question. Be it known to you that Israel among the nations is like the righteous man among the peoples. It was of his own free will that Jacob took over the birthright that Esau yielded him in return for a mess of pottage. Since he took over the birthright, Jacob also took over the privileges that were given to the patriarchs. Esau was left outside, and having lost his privileges did not even share in the covenant God made with Abraham. Since all the responsibilities and all the yoke of the statutes and judgments were placed upon Jacob's neck, so his redemption could come only when Esau had been brought into the covenant that had been made equal with Jacob and not before. Jacob would be chastised for Esau's iniquities until the redemption came. Despised, ashamed, and confounded among the peoples of the earth he might be; but if these peoples thought that Jacob would be in darkness forever and would never see light...' the prophet suddenly raised his voice and proclaimed...'the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon them that walked in the shadow of death, a light hath shone.' "

" 'How will Israel be able to endure their sufferings? They are but flesh and blood! ' "

" 'Each and every one of Israel is but flesh and blood, but the whole of Israel is a spirit of the spirit of God. Jacob will die a hundred strange deaths, but from every one he will arise and live again. The people of Israel cannot pass away and disappear from the world. Whenever the nations think they have cut down the tree completely, there springs up from the last twigs a noble tree which strikes deep roots in divine soil. Its branches spread out and multiply and many nations gather in its shade and enjoy its fruits. The God Jehovah has lifted up His right arm and sworn that Israel will not be blotted out from the face of the earth. 'I shall chastise Israel in judgment but I shall never utterly make an end.' For the people of Israel is the root of the redemption which God has caused to spring forth so that there may be hope for the whole world.' "

And so this, my dear friends, is the light which comes to the distraught prophet.

Mankind is steeped in ignorance, in superstition, in hate in wars. Mankind can only rise from this chaos to order, from darkness to light, through the labors and struggles of men of the spirit, of idealists, of dreamers, pathfinders, among them. But every victory which these idealists achieve for mankind demands its price. None can be purchased except through sorrow and chastisement. And those who achieve these victories for mankind must be prepared to endure these chastisements of love, which our rabbis call the the sufferings of love. They are made nobler because of it, just as spices and herbs do not hold up their sweet fragrance until they are broken and crushed. And through their suffering they themselves are brought nearer to God. And by that very fact of being brought nearer to God are they comforted. And Israel among the nations, just like this idealist, the pathfinder, this righteous man among the peoples. Israel was first to recognize the unity and the spirituality of God. He is therefore the first-born. He possesses a spiritual

birthright and as such he must be prepared for the yokes and the responsibilities of spiritual leadership. The idealist choses his way voluntarily -- the pathfinder must bear the sorrows that go with his role -- to pay the price of the victories of the spirit which he helps to bring to mankind. And frequently he must be prepared to have his soul become a trodden threshold for all the cruel and booted arrogance of the world. It isn't that he is suffering for the sins of others, really, it is because he has chosen a course in life -- a pathfinding course in life, which inevitably involves frustrations and defeats and misunderstandings, and the hate and the persecution of others. He has done that voluntarily because he believes in his ideal and finds his complete compensation in this great ideal which he is serving, in the God he serves.

In the end of days the final victory will come. Justice, peace, brotherhood to the whole of mankind and it will come only because of the sacrificial labors of these dreamers and idealists of the world. In the end of time Jacob and Esau will be reconciled. Israel and mankind together will be redeemed. Israel has been chosen by God to be the spiritual pathfinder - the religious guide - the moral teacher of mankind.

And then, in the end of days, the mission of this chosen people will have been completed. And this is the meaning of the suffering servant of God.

This is the meaning of the suffering Messiah. Not an individual, unique by his suffering, redeems the whole of mankind, but everyman, who suffers for an ideal, and every people who dedicates itself to an ideal becomes a composite element of this total symbol of redemption and the price which must be paid for redemption, the symbol of the Messiah.

There is much in this very noble book of Sholem Asch which is not easy reading, but which in many of its passages, is very profound, moving and elevating which will fully compensate you for reading it. And when you are through reading Sholem Asch's "The Prophet" go to the Bible itself and read the prophecies of the second Isaiah, which begins with the words, "

"Comfortye, Comfort ye, my people."

Amen.

Had there been no Return - the whole character of Jewish and (2)
 world history would have been radically different. Judaism
 as we know it to-day, would probably have disappeared. Christianity
 would never have been born. The period, the 2nd millennium
 was next to the prophetic age (8-6th) the most important and
 creative age in J. history. It was the age during which many
 of the books of the Bible were written, and during which it was
 the 3rd or 4th time finally edited. Produced Isaiah's Serbs Songs -
 and the Great Rubric. During which the Sp-ethical
thought / J. was ~~not~~ deepened and developed. - It was the age
 of the Maccabees - which witnessed the chance / the struggle but
Hellenism & Judaism.

3/ With the return from the B. Exile the background of the history
 of the J. people resumed its interrupted course. that part of the
prophecy came true. "Fear not, for I am with you, I will
 bring you from among the Gentiles and from the West I will
 gather you... bring my ones from afar and my daughters from
 the end of the earth."

"So forth from Babylon, far from Chaldea; declare this with
 a shout of joy, proclaim it, send it forth to the end of the earth;
 say, "The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob!"

(Exaltation like Return in our own day)

4/ But what of the other part: the help / converting the world -
 to the one True faith - 13th 14th 15th 16th 17th 18th 19th 20th / 21st
 22nd 23rd 24th 25th 26th 27th 28th 29th 30th / 31st
 Cyrus saw no hint of any such intention. He did not
 destroy the idolatrous Ishtar Prophet / B - nor did he

to be comforted for her children, because they are not."

Thus says the Lord: "Keep your voices from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the Lord. - and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope for you future, says the Lord."

And your children shall come back to their own country. Rachel weeps for the Israelites the people, Israel.

And then another womanly shoulder drew close - Rebecca wife of Isaac - who had given birth to twins - two brothers - Jacob & Esau - who became two nations & two parts of humanity - in eternal enmity & ~~where~~ ^{at last}

These 3 - Isaac - Rachel - & Rebecca - read the riddle of Israel's destiny for the ^{at last} ~~dark~~ ^{bright} Prophet -

310-320

7. This then is the light that came to the darkest Prophet. Mankind is steeped in war and hate, in if anyone and superstition.

It can only arise from darkness to order, from darkness to light, ^{seemingly} by the labor and struggle of men, the spirit.

"Each victory demands its price. None can be purchased bright through straw and chortisement."

Those who achieve these victories for mankind must be prepared to endure their chortisement, ^{dark} ^{secret} ^{Spices & Herbs do not give out their secret} They are much nobler for it - and are not more of od because of it - and are comforted by the lost the man and crushed.

Israel among the nations is light the righter man
among the people. Israel was first to recognize the unity
of God. He is the father-born. He paces the life
besting it. As such he must be prepared for the work
and responsibility of his leadership.

He must bear the cross which is his path and
pay the price for the victory, the spirit which he
brings to mankind. ^{Travels through Israel for all the cruel and}
^{booked cruelties of the world}
In the End / Day the final victory will
be won. - Justice - Peace - Brotherhood will be universally
established. Then Jacob & Esau - Israel and Mankind
will be redeemed - and the Messianic, the chosen
people will have been completed.

This is the meaning of the suffering servant -
the suffering Messiah - the symbol of redemption -
and the suffering which must precede it.