

## Isaiah 49:1-7<sup>ii</sup> The Servant's Mission

<sup>1</sup> Listen to me, O coastlands, and hearken, you peoples from afar. The Lord called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name.

<sup>2</sup> He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away.

<sup>3</sup> And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

<sup>4</sup> But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my right is with the Lord, and my recompense with my God."

<sup>5</sup> And now the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength—

<sup>6</sup> he says: "*It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.*"

<sup>7</sup> Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the servant of rulers: "***Kings shall see and arise; princes and they shall prostrate themselves; because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.***"

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### <sup>ii</sup> About the First Reading: Isaiah 49:1-7

Today's reading is the second of the four servant songs. In this song, the servant is the speaker. He testifies that his vocation was established before birth, and that his mission is not to Israel alone, but to

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the Gentile nations as well. This sense of the new Israel was appropriated by the Church (Acts 13:47, 26:23).