

## Isaiah Lesson 42

Isaiah Chapter 42

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**Introduction:** We discussed how Isaiah addressed Israel with their idolatry in Chapter 41 last week. All idols of the world will come to nothing. Chapter 42 contains a beautiful description of Christ as God's servant; a view of restored Israel glorifying God, and a warning of chastening against unrepentant Israel.

### I. The Lord's Chosen Servant

*Isa 42:1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*

*Isa 42:2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.*

*Isa 42:3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.*

*Isa 42:4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.*

As you continue to read the text, it becomes clear that the servant is none other than God's Messiah, Jesus Christ. Notice how our Lord is referred to as God's "elect" and He "in whom my soul delighteth." Though King of kings and Lord of lords, nevertheless, He is God's servant. Matthew 12:17-18 further clarifies the matter.

*Mat 12:17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,*

*Mat 12:18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.*

He has been chosen by God for the task of redemption of His people. Accordingly, God delighted in Him. Therefore, God made clear His delight in His son when He said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). The reference to God putting His Spirit upon Him very well

may refer to the anointing of Jesus by the Holy Spirit at His baptism as noted in Matthew 3:16. Jesus Christ will someday bring forth judgment to the gentiles.) That will take place at Armageddon. It will be accomplished in the valley of Jehoshaphat. See Joel 3:2,12.

*Joe 3:2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.*

*Joe 3:12 Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.*

Judgment will continue to be fulfilled throughout the Millennium as He governs the nations in righteousness. One of the clearest prophecies of our Lord's greater ministry is at hand, both in His first as well as His second coming. The meekness and humility of our Lord, particularly in His first coming, are in view in verse 2. Though certainly a public teacher in His earthly ministry, at no time did Jesus seek to incite an uprising. The tenderness and gentleness of our Lord, particularly in His first advent, are in view. No violence, even to breaking off a torn reed or broken branch, was part of His character.

Smoking flax refers to a dim candlewick. Our Lord would not suppress light. The point here altogether is how that Jesus would not snub out light in any form. His gentle character will continue until the day when He returns in judgment. Matthew quoted this very passage in Matthew 12:17-20, applying it directly to Jesus.

*Mat 12:17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,*

*Mat 12:18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.*

*Mat 12:19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.*

*Mat 12:20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.*

The first and second comings of Christ are evident in this blessed prophecy. The fulness of the ministry of the Messiah is in view. At no point will He fail in His mission nor will He ever be discouraged. He cannot and will not be thwarted as His planned purpose is fulfilled. The day is coming when He will establish righteous justice in all the earth. Moreover, the day is coming when the isles (the nations) will wait (trust) in His Law. In Matthew 12:21, this verse is summarized

as “and in his name shall the Gentiles trust.” In short, the greater ministry and work of the Messiah are set forth in these first four verses of Isaiah 42.

*Isa 42:5 Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:*

*Isa 42:6 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 people, for a light of the Gentiles;*

*Isa 42:7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*

In preparing to make promises concerning His Messiah, God first reminds us who He is. It is He who created the heavens and the earth and the fullness thereof. God announced that it is He who sent forth His Messiah in righteousness. Moreover, as an encouragement to His Son in His humanity on this earth, He promised to help Him.

Jesus Christ would be the embodiment of a new covenant for His people. The shedding of the blood of the innocent would become the symbol of the new testament that God would make with mankind. Our Lord would become a light to a dark world. See John 8:12, 9:5.

*Joh 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*

*Joh 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*

He is the light of the world and the Redeemer of all who believe the gospel and call upon the Lord.

*Isa 42:8 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.*

*Isa 42:9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.*

Jehovah is His name. His glory will not be shared with another, certainly not with pagan idols. The focus now shifts back to Israel and her spiritual condition. To Israel, God proclaims, “Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.” The former things

have come to pass. That which God had promised Abraham was in the process of being fulfilled. There was new truth Israel needed to learn. God promised to foretell Israel things to come as they pertained to them.

## **II. Sing to the Lord a New Song**

*Isa 42:10 Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.*

*Isa 42:11 Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.*

*Isa 42:12 Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands.*

Israel is told to praise their God. They will sing a new song unto the LORD. The prospect undoubtedly looks ahead to the time when Israel has finally turned to Christ during the Tribulation. They are directed to sing a new song. That song unquestionably will be that of praise to Jesus Christ as their redeemer, Lord, and King.

The sea is a typification of the world, particularly in prophesy. The islands represent the nations. Israel's praise of the LORD will be for His glory and a witness to the inhabitants of all the nations of the world.

The entire earth on that day is enjoined to so praise their Savior. Even the Arab nations are enjoined to sing praise to Jesus Christ on that day. He will be King over all the earth then. When Christ returns, the collective nations of the world will join in praise to Him in the Millennium.

*Isa 42:13 The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies.*

*Isa 42:14 I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once.*

*Isa 42:15 I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.*

*Isa 42:16 And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.*

*Isa 42:17 They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods.*

The focus now turns to God's chastening of idolatrous Israel (i.e., Judah). Though having withheld His judgment, now like a woman in labor, He was about to cry out. The object of His wrath was the idolatry in the midst of His people. God warns of the extent of His impending judgment. It will be catastrophic.

Though God would judge His people, the purpose was to turn them to the truth. The blind spoken of here is Israel. In due season, God will open their eyes to the truth. He will guide them from crooked paths to straight ones.

He again promises to not forsake His covenant people. God foretells that the day was coming when Israel would be ashamed that they had trusted in graven idols. The day is coming when they will repent thereof.

### **III. Israel's Failure to Hear and See**

*Isa 42:18 Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see.*

*Isa 42:19 Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD'S servant?*

*Isa 42:20 Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.*

Spiritually blind and deaf Israel is called to listen and see. The servant of God here clearly is Israel. They had become blind and deaf to things spiritual. Though they thought themselves perfect, they were blind and deaf to the truth. Similar to that in Isaiah 6:9-10, God restates the spiritual curse of His people.

*Isa 42:21 The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.*

*Isa 42:22 But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore.*

In contrast to the spiritual blindness of Israel, God nevertheless was well pleased with the righteousness of His Messiah. It was Jesus Christ who would magnify God's Word, exalting it as honorable. The thought returns to the deplorable

spiritual condition of Israel of their infidelity to their God and their blatant idolatry, Israel was a mess. They were like those who had been robbed and forced to hide in caves. They were like prisoners and victims to whom no one cared. No one would help them and no one advised restoration to them.

*Isa 42:23 Who among you will give ear to this? who will hearken and hear for the time to come?*

*Isa 42:24 Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law.*

*Isa 42:25 Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.*

God confronted Israel for their spiritual dullness. Who among them would listen? Who would pay any attention? Lest there be any question as to who was responsible for the chastening of Israel, God made clear it was He who had done so. It was Israel who had sinned against Him and had ignored His ways and disobeyed His law. Therefore, God had judged them.

Though God had severely chastened His people and made clear why they had been judged, amazingly, they laid it not to heart. With tragic irony, the prophet ends this chapter by noting that with no remorse, continued to ignore why they were in the fix they were in.

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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