

AM Isaiah 42:1-17

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- [0 : 0 0] of Isaiah and chapter 42 and we'll read verses 1 to 17 there. Isaiah 42 verses 1 to 17.
- Behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations.
- He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice or make it heard in the street. A bruise reed he will not break and a faintly burning wick he will not quench.
- He will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth and the coastlands wait for his law.
- Thus says God the Lord who created the heavens and stretched them out. Who spread out the earth and what comes from it. Who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it.
- [1 : 1 0] I am the Lord. I have called you in righteousness. I will take you by the hand and keep you. I will give you as a covenant for the people a light for the nations.
- To open the eyes that are blind. To bring out the prisoners from the dungeon. From the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord. That is my name.
- My glory I give to no other. Nor my praise to carved idols. Behold the former things have come to pass. And new things I now declare.
- Before the spring forth. I tell you of them. Sing to the Lord a new song. His praise from the end of the earth. You who go down to the sea and all that fills it.
- The coastlands and their inhabitants. Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice. The villages that cater inhabitants. Let the inhabitants of Selah sing for joy.
- [2 : 1 4] Let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory to the Lord. And declare his praise in the coastlands. The Lord goes out like a mighty man.
- Like a man of war. He stirs up his seal. He cries out. He shouts aloud. He shows himself mighty against his foes. For a long time I have held my peace.
- I have kept still and restrained myself. Now I will cry out like a woman in labour. I will gasp and pant. I will lay waste mountains and hills.
- And dry up all the vegetation. I will turn the rivers into islands. And dry up the pools. And I will lead the blind in a way they do not know.
- In paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light. The rough places into level ground. These are the things I do.
- [3 : 1 3] And I do not forsake them. They are turned back and utterly put to shame. Who trust in carved idols. Who say to metal images.
- You are our gods. Amen. And may the Lord bless to us. That reading of his own holy inspired word. Let's turn again now to Isaiah chapter 42.
- Isaiah chapter 42. Behold my servant whom I uphold.
- My chosen in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations.

Jesus is the most important human being ever. His work.

[4 : 14] His passion. Was planned before creation. It was promised for millennia. It was completed in stages.

It was marked by the unexpected. But never ever an anticlimax. The prophets like Isaiah.

They didn't speak to a perfect world. They spoke to a world messed up by sin. A world that had rejected God. And a world which was experiencing.

Divine judgments in history. And yet they also spoke. Of a promise from this God. That there would be not only judgment.

But wonderful salvation. I'm currently reading through Jeremiah. In one of my own readings. Isaiah. Like Jeremiah.

[5 : 14] Speaks of both judgment. And salvation. But Isaiah perhaps more than any other book. Of the Old Testament. Really sets forth the passion.

And work of Jesus. In a way that is absolutely superb. He presents the passion and work of Jesus. Once sin.

Disillusionment. And repeated failures. Have been written over humanity. In general. And over God's professed people. In particular.

In that context. God through Isaiah. Reveals. This servant. Whom we come to know.

As Jesus Christ. And you might think. That the best place. In the whole of Holy Scripture. To go. To find out about Jesus.

[6 : 11] His passion. And his work. Past. Present. And future. You might think. That the best place to go. Is the pages of the New Testament.

And you probably are right. Nevertheless. There are sections of the Old Testament. That give you. As it were. Binoculars.

Telescopes. Periscopes. To allow you to see. Up and above. What you see in the New Testament. They give you a lens. That enable you to understand things.

The Old Testament. Is not a section of the Bible. That you shut away. Once the New Testament. Is written. God never meant for that.

To be the case. It's a worrying sign. When Christians. Profess people. Who follow the Lord Jesus. It's a worrying sign. If they are less.

[7 : 07] In the Old Testament. Than they are in the New. God did not intend. That to be the case. You don't dispense. With the Old. When the New Testament.

Comes. And there are several. Seven passages. To this morning. We are going to look at one. And this evening. We will begin to look at the other. This morning.

I want to look. Briefly. At verses. One to seven. Here. And especially. Thinking. Of the ministry. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ.

I want us to think. Of five things. The commission. Of this servant. The Lord Jesus. The mission. Of this servant.

The Lord Jesus. The character. Of this servant. The Lord Jesus. The success. Promised. To this servant.

[8 : 02] The Lord Jesus. And the assurance. Given. To this servant. The Lord Jesus. Jesus. Behold.

My servant. Says Isaiah here. Look at him. Look at him. You have no right. To live your Christian life. Without having your attention.

Directed. Towards. This servant. God speaks of him. The prophet speaks of him. The church speaks of him. Scripture speaks of him.

And you and I. Have the privilege. In a world. Where we can. Open our phones. Look at the BBC news app. And look at everything.

Is happening. We have the privilege. In that kind of world. Where so much is going on. To hear God saying. Look at my servant. Behold my servant.

[8 : 57] Look at what he is. And look at what he's done. And what he's doing. And what he will yet do. First of all. Then the commission. Of this servant.

Behold my servant. Whom I uphold. My chosen. In whom my soul delights. See. This person. This servant.

Is chosen. By God himself. He's committed. To God. But God is committed. To him. He is the servant.

Of God. And he will look to God. And he will serve God. And I wouldn't like the church. In the 21st century.

To be singing more about Jesus. Than they do about God. Jesus. Is the servant of God. And he wants to honour him.

[9 : 53] Obey him. Build his kingdom. And then give it back to him. As an act of worship. So we must. Speak of God. Praise God.

And Jesus. He is God. Of course he is. But he is a servant. Of God. He is committed. To God.

He is upheld. By God. He's chosen. By God. He's absolutely. Delightful. To God. Look at what. Is said here.

He's my chosen. In whom my soul delights. Of no other human being. Can this be said. That God. Delights in him.

To this extent. There is no fault. That God finds. In this servant. I don't know how long. You've been a Christian. I have a fair idea. How long.

[10 : 47] I've been a Christian. And I'm at the stage. When I'm looking back. And I'm ashamed. Of things that I've thought. Things I've said. And things that I've done. I look back.

I can understand. What the psalmist said there. Remember not. The sins of my youth. The trouble is. The sins of your youth. Become the sins of your middle age.

And they follow you. All the way through. And that's a sad thing. But the reality is. That God's people. They know. That however much. They profess to be God's servant.

They often fail. To be that perfect servant. Yeah. But he doesn't. He doesn't. He is commissioned.

To be the servant. He is the perfect servant. And God. Is absolutely. Delighted with him.

[11 : 45] Of course. In him. You and I. Can become God's servants. And all godly people. Are those who are accepted. In the beloved.

All those who are elders and deacons. Set apart to serve. God. They can be accepted. In the beloved. How very true. So God commissions this servant.

But you see. The way God commissions. He never just sends somebody. In a task. He says. Before you go. I am going to equip you.

I am going to equip you. Just like David. When he went to face this. Goliath. He needed the five stones. He needed the spirit of God.

Upon him. So that he could use these stones. In a sling. God equipped him. And God equips. Jesus. How does he equip him?

[12 : 43] We are told here. I have put my spirit upon him. So God doesn't just say. He is my servant. I delight in him.

He says. I have already put my spirit upon him. Now. Of course. This is written. At least a thousand years. Before Jesus came into the world.

Jesus comes into the world though. And it is absolutely certain. That the Holy Spirit. Will come upon him. As he did on the day of his baptism. And equip him.

To be the perfect speaker. The perfect prophet. The perfect worker. Of every act of obedience. To serve him as prophet.

Priest and king. The spirit of God. Equips him. To serve. God himself. The spirit will help him.

[13 : 40] To know. The will of God. To proclaim. The will of God. The spirit will help him. To save. And to judge.

So when God says. Behold my servant. Whom I uphold. We could say to God. How are you upholding him? I have put my spirit upon him.

God's spirit. God's spirit. God's spirit. Is that which Jesus Christ. Needed. The public ministry of Jesus.

That began at his baptism. Could not have progressed. Unless the Holy Spirit. Had come down. From a torn open heaven. The spirit came down upon him.

He was baptized. He was equipped. So that he could then go out. And engage in the great commission.

[14 : 38] That God had given to him. Human power. Is never enough. Human power. Is not enough.

For the church of Jesus Christ. Either. That's why on the day of Pentecost. We were equipped. By the Holy Spirit. To go out.

With the mission of the gospel. We need. As much as Jesus needed. The spirit of God. And the spirit of God. Is just as willing.

To come upon us. As he came upon Jesus. The commission of the servant. But what's his mission. Secondly. He will bring forth.

Justice. To the nation. Literally. He will bring. Judgment. To the nations. Now I guess. In our.

[15 : 34] Strange view. Of the world. Judgment. If I were to ask you. Is that positive. Or negative. Does that give you. Warm vibes. Or do you sometimes.

Just feel. The kind of dark bitterness. Judgment. Would you like a world. Without judgment. A world.

Without rule. A world. Where there is only. Anarchy. Where everybody. Does what is right. In their own eyes. Read the book.

Of just judges. Look at what. The professed people. Of God. Did. Doing things. That were right. In their own eyes. It was horrendous.

And the world. Far worse. In that kind of world. They would take children. The ages of what we have here. And offer them as sacrifices.

[16 : 29] To their gods. And sometimes. Even. To the true God. They thought. This is what God would want. How terrible. But you see.

Judgment. Rule. When it's under God's rule. Things are right. Under God's rule. There is that perfect peace.

There is that sense of knowing. That you are safe. Because God. Is in control. So here. What's the mission of the servant?

He is going to bring judgment. Justice. Justice. Not just to the nation of Israel. But to all. The nations. How on earth.

Is he going to do that? On earth. How is he going to do that? How will he do it? I mean. You take the world.

[17 : 27] As you have it today. Is this world. At the moment. Under. God's. Rule. Does this world. At the moment.

Look to God. For guidance. Do they open the pages. Of this book. To find out. How to live. How to raise their children. How to teach their young.

Do they go to this book. To find. A way of educating. This generation. Do they go to this book. To find out. Who they are. Biologically.

And who they should marry. Do they go to this book. To know. How to prepare for. Life. And to prepare. For death. Do they go to God's.

Ruling. Will. Proclaimed. And written down. Here in scripture. The answer is. By and large. No. How many Christians.

[18 : 21] Are there in Dumfries. One question. How many people. Do not. Look. To the Lord. God. For guidance. Who do not.

Wish. To live under. His will. How many. One way or another. Say. No. To God. I would assume.

Maybe wrongly. It's the vast majority. And we could say that. Through all the. The towns. That I went past. As I drove. Down here. This morning. Multiply that. By the nations.

It's colossal. The rejection of God. In this world. Even at this moment. It's terrible. I was saying to.

One of my own loved ones. Last night. Sometimes you have to look over the abyss. You have to look down into the pit. See how bad things really are.

[19 : 18] Because the world has a way of inoculating us. So we don't feel the pain. Of what's out there. God wants us to feel that pain. He wants us to see.

The dishonor done to him. He wants us to feel. The rejection of his name. Jesus. When he was riding down to Jerusalem. Or walking down to Jerusalem.

He looked and he wept. When he saw. The people. How often would I have gathered you under my wings. But you would not. And he wept when he said that.

He felt that kind of pain. And there's a danger you see. That you and I can get so cozy with the world. The globalized world.

Filtered to us through our apps and our technology. That somehow it shapes us. Cushions us. So that we don't feel the utter rejection. And dishonor done to God.

[20 : 15] At this very moment. And that's why God says to us. Look over the app. Look down to the app. See how bad things are. But then.

Remember. I. Through the servant. I am going to bring judgment. I am going to bring people. Under my rule.

I am going to bring the kingdom of God. I am going to change people. From the inside out. So that instead of saying no to God.

They are going to start accepting his rule. Acknowledging him. Praying to him. Bowing the knee to him. They are going to say. How can I raise my children for you Lord.

How can I serve you. Not only when I am young. But now that I am approaching retirement. Or in retirement. I want to give my life to you Lord. Every stage of my life.

- [21 : 13] How can I do it. See. That's people living under. The government of God. Under God as judge. Under God as ruler.
- The servant is going to make that possible. Jesus makes that possible. Only he can do it. At the moment. When there is no judgment.
- When there is no living under the rule of God. Our God word relationships. Are absolutely destroyed. And our man word relationships.
- They become terrifying. And scary. To look at. And experience. We are ungrateful towards God. We are unfaithful towards him.
- We practice idolatry. And then towards people. We are so self-centered. So hypocritical. We have our favorites.
- [22 : 16] We are greedy. We are arrogant. There are family breakups. There are all sorts of sexual deviants. There is oppression. Bribery.
- And so on. All of that is happening. But then the servant says. Yes. I have looked down the abyss.
- I see what is down in the abyss. I see how terrible things are. And you know what. I desire to come.
- And do your will oh Lord. I desire to serve you. Oh God. I desire to do everything. So that this world will once again.
- Bow before you. How wonderful. He does it through individuals. He takes somebody like yourself.
- [23 : 16] And changes you from the inside out. He takes your heart. So self-centered. And then he changes it in such a way.
- That you begin to look out from yourself. Up towards God. And then out towards others. You have been changed from the inside out.
- There is no mention here. About how he is going to do it. But he will do it through individuals. He will do it through the church. He will do it through the preaching of the gospel.
- He will do it. In the turning of nations to himself. Of course he can do all of that. It is not going to happen in one moment. This text doesn't say that.
- All it just says is. I have put my spirit upon him. He will. He will bring forth judgment to the nations. He will bring this world to be aware of my standards.
- [24 : 16] Yes there will be judgment. In a negative sense. But there will also. Beautifully. Beautifully. Be this awareness of coming under God's rule.
- You take Psalm 2. Have you bowed the knee before him? Have you called him Lord? Well that's you coming under the judgment of God.
- That's you saying. I don't want to do what is right in my eyes. I want to come under the judgment of God. Through Christ. That's the mission of the servant.
- Then thirdly. The character of the servant. There's so much we could say on this. I preached on this several months.
- A couple of months ago. In our own congregation. Then last week. I began listening to an audio book. I've always wanted to read again Richard Sippes.
- [25 : 19] A bruised reed. He will not break. And I'm loving it. Absolutely loving it. It is so rich. In terms of experience.
- If you want a Puritan. That you can relate to. Read Richard Sippes. And if you want a book to start with. A bruised reed.

He will not break. He will just take. Verses 3 and 4 there. And he will spend a long time on these. Exploring.

What does it mean. To be under God's rule. It's wonderful stuff. We won't be able to focus on that depth. But look at the character of the servant here.

He will not cry aloud. Or lift up his voice. Or make it heard. In the street. Poof. You mean here's somebody.

[26 : 21] That's going to change the world. Bring it under the rule of God. And yet when he comes on the scene. There's no pomp.

No ceremony. No crying aloud. No lifting up his voice in the street. There's a sense here of utter beautiful modesty.

You know what it's like when somebody blows their own trumpet. You don't like to be in the presence of somebody that blows their own trumpet. That sets themselves up as great and grand.

You'd be scared to be in their presence. But this servant. I wouldn't be scared to be near him. He will not cry aloud.

Or lift up his voice. He's so approachable. Even children. Ran up to Jesus. Jesus had a yes face.

[27 : 23] He didn't frighten the children. And he was ready to have them on his knee. Just to bless them. He was so, so approachable.

And his church must be approachable too. But more than that. He's so calm and patient. He's so calm and patient.

See what it says. He will not cry aloud. He will not lift up his voice. Maybe some would say. He will never be frustrated. He will never be exasperated.

He will never lose control. Despite how difficult the task. Despite how problematic the people. Despite how powerful the enemy. He will never express frustration.

He will be patient. He will be humble. He will be steadfast. Even in the greatest of difficulties. Now you might say.

[28 : 26] Well. Garden of Gethsemane. Was he really that? Quiet? Answer. Yes he was. Yes he was.

Even there. It wasn't a cry of frustration. Or exasperation. It was a cry of worship. It was a cry of obedience.

Don't ever finish his sentences for him. He can finish his sentences for himself. Take this cup from me. Not my will but thine be done.

You have no right to stop mid-sentence. He knew what was ahead of him. And he had never been there before.

And he felt that. But he is also caring and compassionate. This is what Sibb focuses on. A bruised reed he will not break. A faintly burning wick he will not quench.

[29 : 33] You know. Here you find people who are. You know. I grew up in Lewis. And in my younger day. We didn't have electricity in the house. So we had the tilly lamps.

And the tilly lamps. You would put paraffin in them. And then there would be a wick. And you would light it. And then a time would come when the wick would burn down a bit. Well.

Here we have it. A faintly burning wick he will not quench. Even when there is just a little, little light there. And not much more. Nah.

He will be so tender with that. And it is the same with the bruised reed. This reed that is just almost fracturing. And seems unable to stand or to cope.

The broken. The weak. The abused. The worthless. The kind of people that the leaders of the day. Would just trample upon with their horses as they rode into the town.

[30 : 33] They didn't care about people who were ready to be. Extinguished. They didn't care about those who were fragile and weak and poor. No.

They maybe wanted to deal with the elite one way or another. But the poor, the abused, the worthless. No. But Jesus.

There is nobody too fragile for him to work with. There is nobody whose sins are troubling that person, that man, that woman.

There is nobody that he says, sorry. Sorry, you are too weak. You are too worthless. You are too far gone.

Can't do a thing for you. No, no. He comes near. And through his spirit he is able to cherish those who feel absolutely worthless.

[31 : 36] Feel as if they are so fragile. Have you ever asked yourself, am I ready to make it? Can I make it to heaven? Can I raise my children for the Lord?

Can I really serve him? Can I live out my days to his honour and glory? Have you looked at the abyss in yourself and thought, this is crazy.

I know how fragile I am. Yes. And so does the Lord Jesus, the servant. And he promises.

He will not break the bruised reed. He will not quench the faintly burning weak. He won't do it. When Jesus was baptised, the dove came down from heaven.

Not a lion, but a dove. That was a symbol. He was equipped by the spirit to be the most powerful Lord the world has ever known.

[32 : 50] And yet the most compassionate, caring, insightful leader, ruler, everlasting father.

You couldn't have somebody better. Couldn't have somebody better. Now, his character is more than that.

We read there. We read there. He will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged. Till he has established justice in the earth and the coastlands wait for his law.

You'll notice here. You'll notice here. He will not grow faint or be discouraged. It's not that he will travel high above suffering.

It's not that he will somehow go through the world and he will feel no pain. We know that that's not what God the Father had planned for God the Son, this servant, the Lord Jesus.

[33 : 56] No. He wasn't high above it. He wasn't. He was somebody who would go through difficulties himself.

And literally, in the Hebrew, he will not fall apart like a reed. He will not die out like a wick. It's not only that he knows how to handle others who are in weakness.

He himself knows his own weakness. He himself knows what it's like to be at the edge. And that's why he has such insight into your weakness.

He's able to sympathize with you in everything apart from sin. And it's because of that that he's able to help you every day of every month of every year from now till you reach perfection and glory.

He will be with you. He will not faint. He will not be discouraged. There's nothing half-hearted in this servant, clearly. That's his character.

[35 : 17] He is somebody who doesn't want pomp or ceremony for its own sake. He wants to be approachable. He's calm and he's patient. He's caring. He's compassionate.

He doesn't rise above suffering. No, he suffers. And because he suffers, he's able to bring forth justice to the nations. And he's not half-hearted.

He will manfully rule for the father. He will manfully rule. The character of the servant.

I mean, you couldn't have a better savior. If you're not a Christian today, I'll tell you, this, this is the kind of servant.

This is the kind of ruler. This is the kind of person you need to be saved by. Then, the success of the servant.

[36 : 18] The success of the servant. He will not pass over evil. There will be a time of judgment.

But people will hear his teaching. The coastlands will wait for his law. So, he will establish justice in the earth. The coastlands will wait for his teaching.

Wait for his instruction. Wait for his law. It's going to happen. Yes, his character is part of that. He's equipped by the spirit for that.

Yes, he will persevere through suffering to ensure that will happen. But, this is what God says. He will establish justice in the earth.

The coastlands will wait for his law. And, he will not faint or be discouraged till that happens. And, here's the servant.

[37 : 19] He knows that that will happen. People will hear his teaching. They will hear his law. They will change their views. They will accept God's standards of justice and holiness.

They will be forgiven their own sins. And, live out their lives seeking to please a holy God.

If you're a Christian, you're in verse 4 here. He's brought you under his just rule.

And, you're waiting for his law. You don't run ahead of Christ. You wait for Christ. You're like the sheep following the shepherd.

You don't run ahead. You wait on him. Do you remember the time when he called you to himself? And, from that moment, you began to wait on him.

[38 : 24] Yes, there may have been times of backsliding in your life. But, the Lord has drawn you back. And, you're waiting upon him. Waiting on his law.

You want to read his word. You want to commune with him in prayer through the Spirit. This is the success that the servant has promised.

It's happening right now. It's happening through the church over which Jesus Christ, the servant, is Lord.

The fact that there's a church in Dumfries means that in Dumfries, there are a group of people who are under God's rule in Christ.

It means there are people in Dumfries who wait for his law. And, some of them may be very young.

[39 : 27] Some of them may be much older. Finally, the assurance of the servant. And, this is what we have in verse 6.

I am the Lord. I have called you, singular, in righteousness. I will take you by the hand and keep you. I will give you as a covenant for the people.

A light for the nations. To open the eyes that are blind. To bring out the prisoners from the dungeon. From the prison, those who sit in darkness.

This is God addressing the servant. And, he says, I have called you. Now, God does this because the servant needs to hear it.

God never wastes his words. So, when he says here, I am the Lord. I have called you in righteousness. I will take you by the hand and keep you.

[40 : 31] I will give you as a covenant to the people. I will give you as a light to the nations. Through you, I will open the eyes that are blind.

I will bring out the prisoners from the dungeon. From the prison, those who are in darkness. This is what you need to hear from me. I will do this through you.

Jesus needed to be assured. That this would actually happen. It's the creator who speaks to him. God the Lord who created the heavens and the earth.

Stretched them out. Spreaded out the earth and what comes from it. Gives breath to the people on it. The spirit to those who walk in it. And then he says, Now, the creator, the life giver, the spirit giver.

I'm addressing you, Jesus. I'm addressing you, my son. I'm addressing you and I want to assure you. Not only have I called you.

[41 : 37] I will take you and I will keep you by the hand. And he says, Through you, I will bring people to salvation.

I will give you as a covenant for the people. In other words, through you, my commitment to save people from sin.

From hell. From death. From darkness. From captivity. Through you, this will happen. You, in person, in your work, are my covenant.

You, personally, are the one through whom I will do this. And I'll not just do it for the people of Israel.

You'll be a light to the nations. You'll bring my knowledge, my guidance, my blessing, my peace. So that people's eyes are opened and people are set free from the darkness and the dungeon.

[42 : 53] People's lives are going to be utterly changed. And I assure you of that. Jesus, as a human being, needs the assurance of God himself.

Of course he does. He's truly human. And what God says to him can also, of course, apply to us.

As we seek to serve him. The commission of the servant. The mission of the servant. The character of the servant.

The success of the servant. The assurance of the servant. I love being in a world under the rule of this kind of servant.

It keeps me positive. Living through horrendous times in the world, my own family, in health and all sorts of things.

[43 : 58] But it's good to be under the rule of this kind of servant. We have hope. We have hope.

And the Lord can work wonderfully. This is written for us. Let us pray. Our Heavenly Father, as we bow in your presence, we realize, Lord, that we need to behold him.

We need to look at him. We need to be reminded of what you are actually doing in the world. What you've already done through Christ.

Through his life. Through his death. Through his resurrection. Through the spirit. Through the church. You are so powerfully at work. Lord, we couldn't improve you in any way.

You are perfect. You're perfect as ruler. Perfect as king. You're so kind. You're so gracious. You are so loving.

[45 : 05] And we know, Lord, that your power. You are able to change so much from the inside out. Lord, we don't look around in despair.

We look up to you, Lord. Beholding your servant. And we want to trust you. Keep us, Lord, we would pray. In the strength of this.

