

The majority of the people never even recognized the promises of deliverance because they refused to believe the predictions of judgment in the first place. And when one looked toward the pagan gods and prophets one could find no intimation whatsoever of this great deliverance. There is only stupid silence. They do not know the future. So they are nothing. They are powerless. They are just wind. Finis! The contest is over—God is victor. Jehovah conquers all for His people.

QUIZ

1. Why did the Jews listen to pagan prophets?
2. Why does God give proof and evidence for His omniscience?
3. Why are those who choose idols an "abomination"?
4. Why did the Mesopotamian armies come from the north?
5. How much did the pagan oracles say about Israel's deliverance?
6. What is the conclusion of the contest between God and idols?

3. COVENANT, CHAPTER 42

a. SEE MY SERVANT

TEXT: 42:1-9

- 1 Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.
- 2 He will not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street.
- 3 A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench: he will bring forth justice in truth.
- 4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.

- 5 Thus saith God Jehovah, he that created the heavens, and stretched them forth; he that spread abroad 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:
- 6 I Jehovah have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;
- 7 to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.
- 8 I am Jehovah, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise unto graven images.
- 9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and the new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.

QUERIES

- a. Who is the "servant"?
- b. What is meant by "he will not cry, nor lift up his voice . . ." etc.?
- c. What does the name "Jehovah" mean?

PARAPHRASE

Look! by faith see My Servant-Messiah whom I shall give My full support. He shall be sent as My chosen One, and My delight in Him shall be made manifest. I will demonstrate that I have put My Spirit upon Him. He will accomplish justice for the people of all nations. He will not be loud and boisterous. He will be gentle, meek and humble and will not practice self-seeking methods. He will not crush and exploit the helpless nor extinguish hope and faith. He will establish real justice and real truth. He Himself will not be quenched or bruised until He accomplishes His mission to establish justice for all

mankind. All mankind waits for His truth. This is what Almighty God, Creator of the heavens, Creator of the earth and the green grass, Creator of life, breath and spirit in all men who live upon the earth affirms: I Am Jehovah, Covenant-God, and I have called You, My Servant, to a covenant of righteousness. I have made solemn promise to You to clasp Your hand in Mine and to protect You. It is My purpose to give You for a covenant of Mine for all peoples—even a light to the pagans. I, Jehovah, am giving you to open the “eyes” of men’s minds which have been blinded by sin, to deliver all men who are imprisoned and enslaved in the dungeon of unbelief. I am Jehovah, Faithful-Promiser, that is My express nature; I share this glory with no other, least of all gods of wood and stone. Everything I, Jehovah, foretold in the past came to pass just as I said it would. These new things I tell you about My Servant will just as surely come to pass even though I tell you before they happen.

COMMENTS

V. 1-4 CHARACTER OF THE SERVANT: The word *'avediy* is the Hebrew word for bond servant. There is another word, *sakiyr*, meaning hired servant. This is the Messiah! That is evident from Matthew 12:17-21. When the Incarnate God came to man, He came as a servant—the lowliest of servants—a slave (cf. Phil. 2:7 *doulou*, Gr. for slave). *Bekhiyriy* means “choice one” and *ratsethah* means “willing acceptance” (or “delight”). Of all the servants at Jehovah’s disposal, this One was the only acceptable One and so God chose Him. This Servant stands in peculiar relationship to Jehovah, He is the Son (cf. Jn. 1:18, etc.). This makes His servanthood astounding. Many servants have been elevated to sonship—but no father wants his son to suffer the indignities of servanthood (cf. Phil 2:5ff; Lk. 15:19ff). This Servant will be sustained by the Spirit of the Living God upon Him. He will have God’s Spirit without measure (Jn. 3:31-36) and in Him will all the

fulness of God dwell (Col. 1:19; 2:9). The Son is the only servant fit to establish the Father's covenant. He will come with all authority and faithfulness of the Father to deliver judgment, *mishphat*, in this instance meaning justice, to the *goiym* (Gentiles).

The nature of the Servant of Jehovah will be diametrically opposed to all human concepts of saviourhood or messiahship. He will not put on a huge show and make a lot of noise. He will not advertise nor hire a public relations man to create for Him a popular image. He will not call attention to Himself merely for His own satisfaction. He will not seek His own glory (cf. Jn. 5:41; 8:50). He comes humbly (cf. Zech. 9:9). He comes to save, not to win the acclaim of men. He comes to serve, not to be served. Most human saviours and deliverers reach their positions of power by exploitation, to one degree or another, of those less talented, poorer, or weaker than they. The world expects its messiahs to be ruthless, proud, indulgent and patronizing. Nietzsche's "Superman" was to be the result of elimination of all the weak people of the world. Nietzsche advocated breaking and crushing all the "bruised reeds" and quenching all the "dimly burning wicks." His philosophy declared all Jews and Christians weak. Adolph Hitler believed Nietzsche. Hitler was the self-acclaimed messiah of the German people. There have been politicians in our own country subscribing to the same philosophy. Their idea is that the masses are too ignorant to know what is best for them; break them, quench them; then patronize them with all-encompassing government. But the Servant of Jehovah comes to be a servant of the bruised and dimly-burning. He comes to heal and help. He will be a King who serves His subjects—even to die for them. He will search their hearts and personalities and find any spark of good and fan it, if possible, into a flame of faith and holiness. He will pour Himself into them to give them a power to reach their highest potential. He does not befriend them to take from them, but to give to them. This servant will be a suffering Servant (Isa. 53:1-12); He will be a shepherd-ing Servant who tenderly feeds the sheep, not one who devours

the flock (Ezek. 34:1-31). The Servant of Jehovah will establish what is right (justice) by what is true (in truth). He will not be fooled by appearances; He will not judge by partiality; He will not accept or practice falsehood. He will personify absolute truth.

There is an interesting play-on-words between verses 4 and 3. In verse 3 the verbs *ratsuts* (bruised) and *kehah* (growing dim) are used again in different form *yikeheh* (He will not grow dim) and *yaruts* (He will not be crushed) in verse 4. He will, in the flesh, in servant-form, be victorious and able to help the crushed and quenched! (cf. Heb. 4:14-16).

v. 5-9 COMMISSION OF THE SERVANT: God's Servant will come (a) with all the power of the Almighty Creator, (b) in divine righteousness, (c) in divine fellowship, (d) as the covenant of God personified, (e) to deliver, (f) and to fulfill the promises of Jehovah and thus to glorify Him.

This Servant will be sent with all the authority and power of Jehovah. He will have creative power resident in Him. He will do the work of the One and Only True God. The implication of verses 5 and 6 are that the Servant will have all the power to create matter and life that Jehovah has. But the most important mission of the Servant will be "righteousness" and "for a covenant." The Servant's primary objective will be to involve the Gentiles! This is no covenant of commandments, only, but a covenant whose terms and relationships are in a Person, a Life, the Son of God. The Servant Himself will come as Man to accomplish and earn the covenant relationship with Jehovah by suffering the penalty of man's breaking covenant (cf. Mt. 26:26-29; Mt. 20:28; Lk. 24:44-49; Heb. 10:1-25, etc.). Men may enter into that covenant by a relationship of personal faith in Him and His redemptive work, allowing that faith to produce His character in them. The Servant furnishes the righteousness—the covenant-members receive it by faith and obedience. The main thrust of Jesus' ministry was to persuade His people that He was equal with the Creator and that the Covenant of Jehovah was to be Personified in Him. Both of these concepts were rejected and despised by

the main body of Jewish people in Jesus' day, not because Jesus failed to demonstrate evidence to substantiate His claims, but because they did not have the love of God in their hearts (cf. John, ch. 7, 8, 9).

To understand the primary meaning of the prediction that the Servant will "open the blind eyes," and "bring out the prisoners," etc., one must compare Isaiah 61:1-2 with Luke 4:16f. Jesus did not do many mighty works in Nazareth, and yet He declared the "release of captives," and "recovering of sight to the blind," was being fulfilled in the very act of "preaching the good news to the poor" there in Nazareth. So, this mission of the Messiah-Servant is not to find its ultimate fulfillment in physical healing alone.

The people of Isaiah's day may as well stop worshipping idols for the glory of Jehovah will be manifested in only one, Himself, Incarnate in the Servant-Son. This is final, absolute and certain to come to pass. Just as surely as the former things God predicted through previous prophets (Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Elijah, et al.) so these "new things" which Jehovah predicts through Isaiah, as incredible as they are, will certainly come to pass. The indication is that the people must surrender to the will of God that their salvation is not in national or ethnic relationship but relationship to Him and the Servant whom He shall send, (cf. Jn. 5:23, 38; 6:29).

QUIZ

1. This Servant is the Messiah. Does the N.T. substantiate Jesus as the Servant of Jehovah? Where?
2. What is to be the nature of this Servant?
3. How does this nature compare with that of human saviorhood?
4. How does the Servant become Jehovah's covenant?
5. What is the primary fulfillment of the Servant's opening the eyes of the blind?
6. Why the warning that Jehovah will not give His glory to another?

b. SING A SONG OF PRAISE

TEXT: 42:10-17

- 10 Sing unto Jehovah 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.
- 11 Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit; let the inhabitants of Sela sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.
- 12 Let them give glory unto Jehovah, and declare his praise in the islands.
- 13 Jehovah will go forth as a mighty man; he will stir up his zeal like a man of war: he will cry, yea, he will shout aloud; he will do mightily against his enemies.
- 14 I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry out like a travailing woman; I will gasp and pant together.
- 15 I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and will dry up the pools.
- 16 And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; in paths that they know not will I lead them; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things will I do, and I will not forsake them.
- 17 They shall be turned back, they shall be utterly put to shame, that trust in graven images, that say unto molten images, Ye are our gods.

QUERIES

- a. Who is to sing to Jehovah?
- b. Why a "new" song?

PARAPHRASE

Sing to Jehovah a new song appropriate to the new thing He will do. Sing His praises all over the whole earth. Let all who travel over the world by sea and every creature in the sea sing to Jehovah. Let all the coastlands around the sea, the islands, and all who inhabit them sing to the Lord. Let the inhabitants of the desert cities and villages of Arabia and Edom shout loud praises from their mountain tops. Let all the Gentiles in the far off western islands praise and glorify Jehovah as God. The reason the whole earth should sing and shout the praises of Jehovah is that Jehovah is going forth as a mighty warrior to win a decisive and complete victory over His enemies and all who oppose His redemptive work for man. Jehovah says He has held Himself in restraint against His enemies long enough. Now, like the great inhalations and expirations of a woman gasping in child-delivery, that which I have so long concealed in Myself shall be accomplished. I will make the land of My enemies a waste land; its hills and mountains I will level; its vegetation I will kill with drought; I will dry up its rivers and pools until they are dry land. I am going to devastate My enemies. The ones My enemies have captured and made blind I will deliver by a deliverance known only to Me. I will lead them along a Way they can never discover. I will turn their darkness into light and all the rugged hindrances and crooked places will be straightened out by Me. These are the things I will do, says Jehovah, and I will not forsake all these blind ones. When I accomplish this great, magnificent victory, it will reveal the utter shame of idolatry and cause those who worship idols to recognize the impotence of idols.

COMMENTS

v. 10-12 SING TO JEHOVAH: God's people are invited to sing. The motive for this is the promise of the coming Servant and the great victory He will win and the deliverance He will

accomplish. The work of the Servant will be so unique (spiritual deliverance) that it will be a *NEW* song. The subject matter for the lyrics of this song has never been available before (the redemption of the Christ). God's people have always been able to sing praises for God's love, power, deliverance (cf. Ps. 40:3; 42:8; 96:1; 98:1; 149:1; Isa. 30:29, etc.). But this *new* song will be one unknown to angels for it will be known only to the redeemed (cf. Rev. 14:3; 15:3-4). It will be a song to be sung by the universal kingdom of God—people from the western isles (Gentile regions) will sing it (Eph. 5:18-20; Col. 3:12-17). No area is to be excluded from the invitation to sing this new song—not even those who dwell in wilderness (sparsely inhabited) regions. Of course, one must believe and appropriate the Life the Servant provides before one may sing the song—but all are invited.

This passage, and the many others about songs of believers, would lead us to think that the lyrics of Christian music should be restricted primarily to the objective deeds of God and Christ in the great work of redemption and much less (than in the current fad) to the subjective experience of the song writers. The great redemptive acts of God do not vary and are not dependent upon the vascillating fickleness of human emotions and feelings for their apologetic or persuasive value. Human "religious experiences" are dependent upon feelings. Not everyone feels the same way all the time. But God's deeds are always true, no matter how anyone feels. "Let them give glory unto Jehovah . . ."

v. 13-17 SONG OF JUSTICE: The song will be about God's long awaited defeat of His enemies having finally been completed. God has, for good reasons of his own, held back in sending the Servant to defeat His enemies once and for all. It has not even been easy for Jehovah to refrain from doing battle and winning the victory. Many prophets and godly men have questioned and will continue (e.g., Habakkuk; the apostles, Acts 1:6) to question God's time-table of kingdom establishment. But God will do things when the time is right (cf. Gal. 4:4; Heb. 1:1, etc.). And so the time came for God

to “disarm the principalities and powers and make a public example of them, triumphing over them in him” (Col. 2:15). That was when He destroyed the power of the devil (Heb. 2:14-18). All this will cost God pain and travail. The great Creator will agonize and hurt because in accomplishing the work of redemption He will make Himself vulnerable by loving through the Incarnate Son as He has never loved before. The agony and pain of God will be manifested physically in the Son and His blood-stained cross.

All the things men have depended upon before will be “dried up” and the “blind” will be delivered from the enemies of Jehovah by the Servant’s leading in a way no one knows. It was very apparent when Jesus began to teach concerning the Kingdom of God that no one knew God’s way. Men had to have it revealed to them. So Jesus revealed it—in the Sermon on the Mount, in the Sermon on Parables. Only the humble and penitent were able to recognize the Way (cf. Harold Fowler’s comments, *Matthew, Vol. I & II*, College Press, on the above sermons). The blind in the passage before us refers to the spiritually blind (cf. Isa. 9:2; 61:1-2; Mt. 4:12-17; Lk. 4:16-30; Jn. 9:35-41; Rev. 3:15f).

But while the blind will be led to the light, those who think they see through idolatry (vain philosophies of worldly-minded) will be turned back and utterly put to shame. As a matter of fact, what becomes deliverance for the true Israel of God (the redemptive work of the Servant—death and resurrection), becomes a complete defeat for God’s enemies (idolatry and all other human ideologies). If idolatry and human philosophy’s attempts to deal with the human predicament (sin) are ever to be put to shame it is through the historically accomplished and historically eyewitnessed bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the light of what God did through this great event, it is the shame of all shames to worship gods of human origin—be they of stone and wood or philosopher’s minds.

QUIZ

1. What is the motive for the song that is to be sung by believers?
2. Why is it a *new* song?
3. Who can know this song?
4. What should be the lyrics of Christian songs?
5. When did God finally stop refraining from His long awaited defeat of His enemies?
6. Who are the blind?
7. What is the shame of all shames?

c. SIGHTLESS SERVANTS

TEXT: 42:18-25

- 18 Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see.
- 19 Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I send? who is blind as he that is at peace with me, and blind as Jehovah's servant?
- 20 Thou seest many things, but thou observest not; his ears are open, but he heareth not.
- 21 It pleased Jehovah, for his righteousness sake, to magnify the law, and make it honorable.
- 22 But this is a people robbed and plundered; 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.
- 23 Who is there among you that will give ear to this? that will hearken and hear for the time to come?
- 24 Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not Jehovah? he against whom we have sinned, and in whose ways they would not walk, neither were they obedient unto his law.
- 25 Therefore he poured upon him the fierceness of his anger, and the strength of battle; and it set him on fire round

about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.

QUERIES

- a. Who are the "blind" of verses 18 and 19?
- b. How did Jehovah make the law "honorable"?

PARAPHRASE

People of God, servants of Jehovah, open your ears and listen; open your blind eyes and see what I am showing you. But then, who in all the world is as blind as My servant Israel or as deaf as Israel who was sent as My messenger in the earth? I repeat, the blindness of Israel who is supposed to be allied to Me in friendship and peace, supposed to be My confidant, is incredible! You see much but you do not keep what you see; you listen to many things but you do not obey them. To display His own righteousness, Jehovah was glad to give to Israel a great and glorious revelation of Himself in His law. And yet, His greatness and gloriousness is not reflected in this people of the law for they are a people robbed, enslaved, imprisoned, trapped, fair game for all their enemies and, having refused Him, there is no one to protect them. Oh, isn't there just one of you who will listen to Me and My prophet? Isn't there one who will learn from all the instruction and experience of this nation and obey and avert the ruin that awaits disobedience? Don't you know Who let Israel be robbed and hurt? Was it not plain to you that it was Jehovah? It was the Lord this people sinned against when they refused to walk in His ways and did not obey His law. On account of this disobedience God poured out upon Israel His divine fury in war and other calamities—still Israel refused to recognize that this was chastening from Jehovah.

COMMENTS

v. 18-22 INCREDIBLE: That the "servant" in this section is Israel cannot be denied when the reader sees the context. The servant could not possibly be the Messiah for it is said of the servant here that he is blind, deaf, observes not, hears not, is robbed, plundered, none delivers, etc. In verse 19 the servant is *meshullam*, the Hebrew word translated "at peace," a derivative of *shalom*. Keil and Delitzsch say "it is the passive of the Arabic *muslim*, one who trusts in God," or the surrendered one. This characterization of what God intended Israel to be in servanthood intensifies the contrast with what Israel is portrayed as being. That Israel should be so blind is incredible. Jehovah has the prophet repeat the rhetorical question for emphasis! (see Jer. 18:12-13; Amos 3:9-10).

Israel had been privileged to "see" many things. Israel had the law of God revealed in human language to read and study; he had the record of the historical deeds of God's miraculous deliverances and chastenings upon his nation. But Israel's response did not match his opportunity. Israel did not keep what he saw and heard. In verse 20 two fundamental Hebrew words are used; *shemor* (from *shemar*) meaning to *keep*, and *shama*, meaning to *obey* or *hear*. To the Hebrew, hearing was equivalent to obeying. When a person did not obey, he had not heard!

It was Jehovah's good pleasure to magnify the manifestation of His character and demonstrate the gloriousness of His nature through His holy law. This was the sovereign way God chose to exhibit His holiness to man providing man with a motive and means of partaking, through faith, in that holiness. The law of God was holy and good (cf. Rom. 7:12), it was the free rebellion of man against what he knew to be holy that was wrong, not the law (cf. Rom. 7:13-14; 8:3). The law of God, humbly believed and obeyed, would have driven the Israelites to trust in the promised and typified mercy of God to come—and that is just where God could have saved them and used them as servants. But, incredible as it was, they chose to trust

in alliances with Egypt and Assyria, to worship heathen gods, and as a result enslaved themselves under Assyrian tribute (see comments chapter 7). They would, in another generation or two of rebellion against the law of God, make themselves easy prey for the Babylonian captivity.

v. 23-25 INCORRIGIBLE: The question of verse 23 is a wish that *one* might be found among the nation (cf. Jer. 5:1-2) who will hear and obey. Is there not one who will learn from history and prepare themselves for the judgment that is to come upon this nation? Have they all forgotten that it was Jehovah who gave their forefathers over to judgment and chastening (cf. Amos 4:6-12). It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word *shama* is translated *obedient* in our English version of verse 24. The Hebrew word translated *law*, is *torah*. The nation, for the most part, was incorrigible. They deliberately and obstinantly chose not to walk in the ways of Jehovah (cf. Jer. 6:16-19). They refused to learn from the history of their rebellious ancestors in the wilderness wanderings and the days of the Judges. Time and time again God chastened Israel by slaughter of war, destruction of her cities, drought, pestilence—still Israel knew it not. It was not a lack of an authentic historical record of God's divine deeds—it was a moral unwillingness to accept it.

QUIZ

1. What are the reasons the "servant" of these verses cannot be the Messiah?
2. How is Israel characterized in verse 19?
3. What did Israel do with the many things he had been privileged to "see" and "hear"?
4. What did the law manifest?
5. Did Israel's rejection of the law mean the law was not good?
6. Did Israel's incorrigibility stem from lack of ability to know about God's chastening?