

## Isaiah 42-43

- Tonight we begin in Isaiah 42 with God the Father, still the center of the narrative, making an introduction - until chapter 48
  - And He begins chapter 42 by introducing to Israel and the world His Son
    - The Father calls His Son "His Servant"
    - This sets up the next section of Isaiah, which focuses on the Suffering Servant
  - The Father's introduction begins with a six-part description of this coming Servant

[Is. 42:1](#) ¶ "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold;  
My chosen one in whom My soul delights.  
I have put My Spirit upon Him;  
He will bring forth justice to the nations.

[Is. 42:2](#) "He will not cry out or raise His voice,  
Nor make His voice heard in the street.

[Is. 42:3](#) "A bruised reed He will not break  
And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish;  
He will faithfully bring forth justice.

[Is. 42:4](#) "He will not be disheartened or crushed  
Until He has established justice in the earth;  
And the coastlands will wait expectantly for His law."

- First, the Father describes His Son as a Servant
  - This view of Christ is confirmed in NT scripture:

[John 4:34](#) Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.

[Phil. 2:5](#) Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,  
[Phil. 2:6](#) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

[Phil. 2:7](#) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

[Phil. 2:8](#) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

- Secondly, Christ is the One Father upholds

- We can see this fulfilled in at least two ways
  - First, the Father upheld Christ in the desert

[Mark 1:12](#) ¶ Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness.  
[Mark 1:13](#) And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.

- Secondly, the Father upheld Christ in the ultimate sense at His resurrection
- Third, Jesus is the Father's Chosen One
  - We can see this in 1Pet 2 among other places

[1Pet. 2:4](#) ¶ And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God,  
[1Pet. 2:5](#) you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.  
[1Pet. 2:6](#) For this is contained in Scripture:  
 " BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone,  
 AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

- Peter actually quotes from Isa 28 in describing Jesus as the choice stone of God
- Fourth, Jesus is the One WHom God's soul delights
  - This is evidenced in the moment the Spirit descended on Christ

[Luke 3:21](#) ¶ Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened,  
[Luke 3:22](#) and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, " You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

- Fifth, the Father will place His Spirit upon Christ
  - We see this happen in the Gospels, particularly in Matthew :

[Matt. 3:16](#) After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him,

- Finally, this Servant will bring forth justice to the nations

- Jesus is credited specifically with maintaining perfect justice, perfect peace among nations on Earth still wrestling with sin
- We have already read many places in both the OT and the NT of how Jesus establishes this time of perfect justice in the Messianic kingdom
- Verse 2 tells us how He accomplishes these things
  - Jesus won't accomplish these things through forceful argument, nor force and effort
    - He comes meekly and relies on the Spirit and the Church to carry His message to the world
      - Because in His first appearing, He is appointed to be a suffering servant, not a victorious us
  - In Matt, Jesus quotes this prophecy concerning Himself:

[Matt. 12:15](#) ¶ But Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. Many followed Him, and He healed them all,

[Matt. 12:16](#) and warned them not to tell who He was.

[Matt. 12:17](#) This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet:

[Matt. 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 PROCLAIM JUSTICE TO THE GENTILES.

[Matt. 12:19](#) " HE WILL NOT QUARREL, NOR CRY OUT;  
NOR WILL ANYONE HEAR HIS VOICE IN THE STREETS.

[Matt. 12:20](#) " A BATTERED REED HE WILL NOT BREAK OFF,  
AND A SMOLDERING WICK HE WILL NOT PUT OUT,  
UNTIL HE LEADS JUSTICE TO VICTORY.

[Matt. 12:21](#) " AND IN HIS NAME THE GENTILES WILL HOPE."

- Jesus reminded the disciples often that He was not to be stopped in His plan to conquer through suffering
- In Isa 42:3 the prophet describes the manner of Jesus suffering
  - The Hebrew uses idioms to describe His ministry
    - A bruised reed He will not break, a dim wick He will not extinguish
    - Meaning Jesus will not crush the oppressed, but instead He will rescue them and strengthen them in justice

- Said another way, He brings hope to the hopeless
- Verse 4 says that despite the suffering, the Messiah won't be disappointed or discouraged
  - Even though His message was rejected and He was beaten and scourged and put to death
    - This was all according to plan
    - And He won't be finished until He has established justice on Earth, and the coastlands (or the ends of the earth) wait for His law as He rules
- Now the Father declares He is commissioning His Son for this purpose

[Is. 42:5](#) ¶ Thus says God the LORD,  
 Who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
 Who spread out the earth and its offspring,  
 Who gives breath to the people on it  
 And spirit to those who walk in it,

[Is. 42:6](#) "I am the LORD, I have called You in righteousness,  
 I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You,  
 And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people,  
 As a light to the nations,

[Is. 42:7](#) To open blind eyes,  
 To bring out prisoners from the dungeon  
 And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.

[Is. 42:8](#) "I am the LORD, that is My name;  
 I will not give My glory to another,  
 Nor My praise to graven images.

[Is. 42:9](#) "Behold, the former things have come to pass,  
 Now I declare new things;  
 Before they spring forth I proclaim them to you."

- God the Father declares His authority and sovereignty to set His Son on this mission
  - He speaks tenderly to His Son as One called in righteousness
    - Holding Him and watching over Him
  - You get the sense that the Father is speaking in reassuring terms to His Son knowing the severity of what He would ask Him to accomplish

- Then the Father says His Son will be appointed as a covenant to the people
  - The word for people in singular in Hebrew, meaning a single group of people
    - This Messiah will be a covenant to the people, Israel
  - In other words, Jesus singlehandedly fulfills all the Jewish covenants
    - He fulfills the covenant given to Abraham (i.e., He is the “seed”)
    - Jesus completes the covenant given through Moses (i.e., He meets all the terms of the Law)
    - He establishes the New Covenant through His own blood
- Furthermore, Jesus is a light to the nations, or Gentiles
  - Beyond fulfilling all the covenants of Israel, Jesus is a light
    - Something good that draws attention and guides into truth
    - For the Gentiles, Jesus is light for they have not had God’s revelation prior to Him
- Jesus earthly ministry is revealed in v.7 to be one that heals blindness and release from bondage
  - In their ultimate sense, Isaiah is speaking of spiritual blindness and bondage
    - From the slavery to sin
- Then in v.8 the Father says My name is Yahweh
  - And He won’t extend His glory to another, only to Himself
    - Not to idols
  - In this statement we see further evidence that Jesus, Who received the glory of the Father, must have been God Himself
    - If the Father declares He won’t share His glory with another, then Jesus can’t be “another” but rather God Himself

- In v.9, we see another of those strange moments when Isaiah is recording God's words as if he were living in the future looking backward
  - From that perspective, God says the former things have already come to pass
    - The prophecies of Assyria and other events that Isaiah prophesied have happened by this future date
  - Now God says new prophecies are about to be given
    - The far-future visions of Tribulation and beyond
- Before we see this new prophecy, Isaiah himself interjects with a song of praise for the Father

[Is. 42:10](#) ¶ Sing to the LORD a new song,  
Sing His praise from the end of the earth!  
You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it.  
You islands, and those who dwell on them.

[Is. 42:11](#) Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voices,  
The settlements where Kedar inhabits.  
Let the inhabitants of Sela sing aloud,  
Let them shout for joy from the tops of the mountains.

[Is. 42:12](#) Let them give glory to the LORD  
And declare His praise in the coastlands.

[Is. 42:13](#) The LORD will go forth like a warrior,  
He will arouse His zeal like a man of war.  
He will utter a shout, yes, He will raise a war cry.  
He will prevail against His enemies.

- Isaiah calls all men to praise the Lord as He goes forth to conquer His enemies
  - This song sets our focus on the future day of Jesus' return in glory
  - And the New Prophecy begins with a reference to that far future time

[Is. 42:14](#) ¶ " I have kept silent for a long time,  
I have kept still and restrained Myself.  
Now like a woman in labor I will groan,  
I will both gasp and pant.

[Is. 42:15](#) "I will lay waste the mountains and hills  
And wither all their vegetation;  
I will make the rivers into coastlands  
And dry up the ponds.

[Is. 42:16](#) "I will lead the blind by a way they do not know,  
 In paths they do not know I will guide them.  
 I will make darkness into light before them  
 And rugged places into plains.  
 These are the things I will do,  
 And I will not leave them undone."

[Is. 42:17](#) They will be turned back and be utterly put to shame,  
 Who trust in idols,  
 Who say to molten images,  
 "You are our gods."

- With respect to Israel, God will have been silent for over 2,000 years by the time He begins to act again against them
  - The start of Tribulation is that time again when He speaks to them
  - Isaiah summarizes the devastation on the earth that God brings
    - And in v.16 He promises to lead the blind of Isaiah into the light
      - Probably a reference to the remnant of Tribulation lead into safety and into spiritual awareness (faith)
  - In contrast to the remnant, God will bring judgment against those who continue to follow idols
    - Remember, idols are the key focus for the Father in this first section
      - He wants to remove the obstacles to Israel's acceptance of their Messiah
    - The far future fulfillment is the complete destruction of idols everywhere on earth
      - The near future fulfillment is the ending of idol worship within Israel itself

[Is. 42:18](#) ¶ Hear, you deaf!  
 And look, you blind, that you may see.

[Is. 42:19](#) Who is blind but My servant,  
 Or so deaf as My messenger whom I send?  
 Who is so blind as he that is at peace with Me,  
 Or so blind as the servant of the LORD?

[Is. 42:20](#) You have seen many things, but you do not observe them;  
 Your ears are open, but none hears.

[Is. 42:21](#) The LORD was pleased for His righteousness' sake  
To make the law great and glorious.

[Is. 42:22](#) But this is a people plundered and despoiled;  
All of them are trapped in caves,  
Or are hidden away in prisons;  
They have become a prey with none to deliver them,  
And a spoil, with none to say, "Give them back!"

- Now God turns to Israel in the near future time at the point of the Babylonian captivity
  - He calls to Israel as the ones who are now the ones who are blind and deaf
    - In v.19 God refers to Israel, the nation, as His servant
      - The nation was raised up to be God's people, His covenant people
      - The light to the nations
    - Instead, He says in irony that His messenger was deaf
    - His servant was blind
  - In v.20 God says His servant has seen many things, but didn't observe
    - The word for observe, shamar, means to be a gatekeeper
      - One who is supposed to keep watch and and be ready to understand what he sees
      - Israel stopped watching and was ignorant
      - And their ears were open but didn't hear
  - The sake of God's own righteousness, He made His law great and glorious
    - And as a result of their disobedience, God declares they will experience its judgment against them
      - They will be hiding in caves or in prison
      - They will become prey with no one to deliver them
      - None to defend them

[Is. 42:23](#) ¶ Who among you will give ear to this?

Who will give heed and listen hereafter?

[Is. 42:24](#) Who gave Jacob up for spoil, and Israel to plunderers?

Was it not the LORD, against whom we have sinned,  
And in whose ways they were not willing to walk,  
And whose law they did not obey?

[Is. 42:25](#) So He poured out on him the heat of His anger

And the fierceness of battle;  
And it set him aflame all around,  
Yet he did not recognize it;  
And it burned him, but he paid no attention.

- So, because Israel has forsaken God's Law, God warns Judah that their judgment is coming
  - And He assures them of the judgment by comparing their fate to the fate of Israel
    - This is not a comparison that Judah would have wanted to hear
    - Remember, Isaiah is writing these words in the past tense, but speaking about events that weren't going to happen for another 150 years
  - Without giving the specifics of the judgment, God says that His anger will burn against them and they will be caught up in it
    - He's speaking of the Babylonian captivity
- Now chapter 43 begins to turn the sentiment in reverse
  - God will begin to speak of the way He delivers Israel from Babylon
    - Like Isaiah has done before, we first hear the far future prophecy of God's work in Israel during the last days and Tribulation
    - Followed by the prophecy of how God will deliver Israel from Babylonian captivity in the near future

[Is. 43:1](#) ¶ But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob,

And He who formed you, O Israel,  
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name; you are Mine!

[Is. 43:2](#) "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;

And through the rivers, they will not overflow you.  
When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched,  
Nor will the flame burn you.

[Is. 43:3](#) "For I am the LORD your God,  
The Holy One of Israel, your Savior;  
I have given Egypt as your ransom,  
Cush and Seba in your place.

[Is. 43:4](#) "Since you are precious in My sight,  
Since you are honored and I love you,  
I will give other men in your place and other peoples in exchange for your life.

[Is. 43:5](#) "Do not fear, for I am with you;  
I will bring your offspring from the east,  
And gather you from the west.

[Is. 43:6](#) "I will say to the north, 'Give them up!'  
And to the south, 'Do not hold them back.'  
Bring My sons from afar  
And My daughters from the ends of the earth,

[Is. 43:7](#) Everyone who is called by My name,  
And whom I have created for My glory,  
Whom I have formed, even whom I have made."

- The entire passage is one of encouragement to Israel even in the face of God's judgment
  - But the picture here is of a kinsman redeemer
    - Israel will find herself in bondage to Babylon for their sins under the Law
    - And God provides the redemption
  - If someone in Israel found himself in debt and unable to pay that debt, he would have no choice but to sell himself into slavery to pay off the debt
    - He could be freed from that slavery by a kinsman redeemer, but a redeemer had to meet three requirements in the Law
      - He had to be a close relative
      - He had to pay the full price
      - He had to be willing to pay the price, since it was a voluntary act
    - God establishes all these conditions in the verses we have already read
- First, God is a close relative to Jacob, as the One Who formed Him

- God formed Israel in the sense that He gave birth to the nation through Abraham
- In v.1 God says He would also be the one to redeem Israel from her bondage under the law
  - He will rescue her from her trials (v.2), which shows He is willing to redeem her
- Then in v.3 God announces the price He will pay for Israel
  - First, God is willing to sacrifice entire nations of people, bringing them to destruction in the course of His plan to rescue Israel
  - How does God do this?
    - He uses these nations to carry out various stages of His plan for Israel
      - For example, He used Egypt to hold Israel in bondage for a time to protect them from the Canaanite influence
      - And then sacrificed that nation when the time came to free Israel
  - Secondly, God says He is the Holy One of Israel, your Savior
    - This is a reference to the price God paid through our Savior, Christ Jesus
    - God paid the price for Israel's sin in the person of Jesus on the cross
- So God will redeem Israel as One Who is related and willing and able to pay the price
  - And that rescue will happen first with a regathering to their land
    - In vs.6-7 God promises that He will announce to the four corners of the world that the nations are to give up His people
      - So that they may return to their land
    - We know this is the prophecy of Israel's restart in 1948 and the Jews' return to their land
      - Another clue to tell us that we are nearing the end of age

[Is. 43:8](#) ¶ Bring out the people who are blind, even though they have eyes,  
And the deaf, even though they have ears.

[Is. 43:9](#) All the nations have gathered together  
So that the peoples may be assembled.  
Who among them can declare this  
And proclaim to us the former things?  
Let them present their witnesses that they may be justified,  
Or let them hear and say, "It is true."

[Is. 43:10](#) "You are My witnesses," declares the LORD,  
"And My servant whom I have chosen,  
So that you may know and believe Me  
And understand that I am He.  
Before Me there was no God formed,  
And there will be none after Me.

[Is. 43:11](#) "I, even I, am the LORD,  
And there is no savior besides Me.

[Is. 43:12](#) "It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed,  
And there was no strange god among you;  
So you are My witnesses," declares the LORD,  
"And I am God.

[Is. 43:13](#) "Even from eternity I am He,  
And there is none who can deliver out of My hand;  
I act and who can reverse it?"

- And why does God initiate the regathering of Israel?
  - In v.9 and onward God describes the purpose
    - So that they might witness to God's glory, declaring that what He spoke before is "true"
    - And they will declare this in Tribulation and after
  - Isn't it interesting that Israel wasn't willing to be this light and witness when everything was in their favor
    - So instead, they will be called from out of the nations to become that beacon during a time of great persecution and trial
  - And their gathering arrives at their knowledge that Christ is their savior and so that can declare there is no god besides God
    - Remember, the principle purpose the Father has in this section of Isaiah is set the stage for His Son's arrival
- Making crooked paths straight

- And idols are one of the crooked paths He wants to remove
- In Tribulation, the point will be to put an end to all idols, especially Babylon's world religion, the Mother of all Harlots
- And in the near future prophecy, God also works to remove idols from Israel through a period of captivity in Babylon

[Is. 43:14](#) ¶ Thus says the LORD your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel,  
 "For your sake I have sent to Babylon,  
 And will bring them all down as fugitives,  
 Even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice.

[Is. 43:15](#) "I am the LORD, your Holy One,  
 The Creator of Israel, your King."

[Is. 43:16](#) Thus says the LORD,  
 Who makes a way through the sea  
 And a path through the mighty waters,

[Is. 43:17](#) Who brings forth the chariot and the horse,  
 The army and the mighty man  
 (They will lie down together and not rise again;  
 They have been quenched and extinguished like a wick):

[Is. 43:18](#) "Do not call to mind the former things,  
 Or ponder things of the past.

[Is. 43:19](#) "Behold, I will do something new,  
 Now it will spring forth;  
 Will you not be aware of it?  
 I will even make a roadway in the wilderness,  
 Rivers in the desert.

[Is. 43:20](#) "The beasts of the field will glorify Me,  
 The jackals and the ostriches,  
 Because I have given waters in the wilderness  
 And rivers in the desert,  
 To give drink to My chosen people.

[Is. 43:21](#) "The people whom I formed for Myself  
 Will declare My praise.

- So turning to the near future prophecy, Isaiah speaks in the past tense about a future event - their captivity in Babylon
  - God promises to bring the them back from Babylon for their good
    - Just as He promised to rescue them in the far future day of Tribulation

- Now He promises that the Babylonians will themselves become fugitives
      - In 536 BC the Medo Persian empire attacked Babylon and they fled in ships down the Eurphrates
  - In v.16 God compares this coming rescue from Babylon to the rescue He performed earlier during the exodus
    - He made a path through water
      - He brought forth chariot and mighty men who were made to lie down together under the water
      - Never to get up again
      - Extinguished like a wick
- But don't ponder or rest on those things (v.18)
  - Don't think about those miracles, focus on the new ones God is about to do
    - As the Jews returned from Babylon to Jerusalem, GOD did more miracles for them
      - He provided a highway to help direct them back home
      - He provided water for them in the desert
      - The water will even be a benefit to animals in the desert, that it brings glory to God
    - And His people will declare praise to His name
      - The story of how this is fulfilled is told in Ezra

[Is. 43:22](#) ¶ "Yet you have not called on Me, O Jacob;  
But you have become weary of Me, O Israel.

[Is. 43:23](#) "You have not brought to Me the sheep of your burnt offerings,  
Nor have you honored Me with your sacrifices.  
I have not burdened you with offerings,  
Nor wearied you with incense.

[Is. 43:24](#) "You have bought Me not sweet cane with money,  
Nor have you filled Me with the fat of your sacrifices;  
Rather you have burdened Me with your sins,  
You have wearied Me with your iniquities.

[Is. 43:25](#) ¶ "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake,

And I will not remember your sins.

[Is. 43:26](#) ¶ Put Me in remembrance, let us argue our case together;  
State your cause, that you may be proved right.

[Is. 43:27](#) ¶ Your first forefather sinned,  
And your spokesmen have transgressed against Me.

[Is. 43:28](#) ¶ So I will pollute the princes of the sanctuary,  
And I will consign Jacob to the ban and Israel to revilement.

- God reminds Israel of their sins under the covenant, but He promises rescue on the basis of grace, not their merit
  - They have done nothing to merit His rescue
    - So He will provide it entirely on the basis of grace
    - In v.25 He says He will do it entirely for His own sake
  - In v.26 He challenges them to bring some example of the past to His mind to justify His favor
    - State a cause that they might be shown to right or proven to be righteous
    - Even your first father, Jacob the man himself, sinned
      - And your spokesman have also sinned
      - Your prophets, kings, priests, judges, etc.
- Therefore, Jacob and Israel have been judged as a result in exile
  - But grace will prevail (coming chapters)