"BEHOLD, MY SERVANT"

Isaiah 42:1-9
6-26-2024

INTRODUCTION: **See: Matthew 12:14-24**

Isaiah 42:1 - *"Behold my Servant" -* These words were spoken by God the Father of His Son.
Jesus is frequently called *"servant"* in the Bible:
Is. 52:13 - *"Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high."*
Zech. 3:8 - *"Hear now, o Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH."*

***Seriously look at Christ's example of servanthood and copy that pattern.**

I. He was <u>PLEASING</u> to the Father (V. 1)

II. He was <u>EMPOWERED</u> by the Spirit (v. 1b)

III. He was <u>PROMOTED</u> by Humility (v. 2)

IV. He was <u>CHARACTERIZED</u> by Gentleness (v. 3)

V. He was <u>CONCERNED</u> for all Nations (v. 1c, 4, 6)

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INTRODUCTION:

"The dominant figure of Isaiah 40 - 53 is the 'Servant of the Lord.' Up to chapter 53, the term 'servant' occurs twenty times in the singular" (Walter Kaiser Jr., The Messiah in the Old Testament, p. 173).

Isaiah 42 is one of five "servant" passages or "servant songs" in Isaiah, the others being:

--49:1-13
--50:4-9
--52:13-53:12
--61:1-3

Most ancient rabbis saw Isaiah 42 as being Messianic, such as Rabbi David Kimchi, who said, "This is King Messiah."

Jesus is the fulfillment of Isaiah 42!

See: Matthew 12:14-24

"The Pharisees" - No one <u>opposes</u> the truth more fiercely than someone who, in self-righteousness, actually thinks they are defending God and His truth to do so (EX: Saul of Tarsus).

The Church's most severe opposition in the past came not from the atheists or agnostics but from the hands of the religious (EX: Muslims, Catholics).

"Council" - to plot together; to scheme; to make a conspiracy against. This conspiracy occurred 2 years before Christ's crucifixion.

"<u>How</u> they might destroy Him" - The Pharisees already had determined <u>that</u> they would kill Jesus; now their problem was <u>how</u> they would do it.

From God's point of view their (the Pharisee's & National Israel's) clock stopped.

V. 15

"Jesus knew it" - He is omniscient.

"He withdrew Himself" - Jesus was not interested in fighting or in wasting his time and energy defending Himself, but in reaching the lost world with the truth.

"He healed them <u>all</u>" - One validation of Christ's miracle power and deity is that no case was too hard for Him. His divine power was proven to be authentic (real) by His ability to *"cure all manner of sickness"* (Mt. 4:23).

Note the Compassion of Christ: Jesus could have done a number of things to prove His deity & power. He could have flown around Jerusalem; He could have removed & relocated buildings etc. but rather He chose to prove His power by performing compassionate miracles.

V. 16

"Charged" -to seriously warn. Why would Jesus so sternly warn people not to publicize who He was and what He did? Why didn't Jesus hire a staff of public relations personnel? Why didn't He promote Himself? Why wasn't He like modern presidents, who spend millions on campaigning and promotional rallies?

The reason is this: He was to fulfill all Old Testament prophecies concerning Himself, including a prophecy which described Christ's low profile, humble character. He was to accomplish a prophetic statement made through Isaiah which described certain features of Christ's attitude and actions (Is. 42:1-4). Matthew in referring to Isaiah 42 does not quote it verbatim, but rather gives an interpretation of that prophecy.

Isaiah 42:1

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Note the humble servanthood of Jesus Christ described in: Philippians 2:5-11

What is servitude?
What is a servant?

"Behold" - look at, view, see

Today, we need to take a look at Jesus, the Servant of the Father, and compare ourselves with Him to see what kind of servants we are.

We as Christians (Christ-like ones) need to follow in "His steps." (I Pet. 2:21)

***Seriously look at Christ's example of servanthood and copy that pattern.**

I. He was PLEASING to the Father (V. 1)

"whom I uphold" - To hold up; to support (the Father held tightly to His Messiah and promoted Him).

"Mine elect" - *"I have chosen", Mt. 12:18* - It was the Father who, as Head of the Triune Godhead, chose to send His Son into the world (cp. Jn. 3:16; I Jn. 4:14 - *"And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world"*).

NOTE: Matthew 12:18 - *"Servant"* = "pais" - not a usual word for servant (like "diakonos" or "doulos"). This word describes "an intimate servant who was trusted and loved like a Son" (MacArthur, p. 297).

"In whom my soul delighteth (is well pleased)" - These words were fulfilled at Christ's baptism and anointing of the Spirit (Mt. 3:16-17).

Though Jesus is hated and rejected by the world, He is beloved by the Father.

Christ is called "the beloved" (Eph. 1:6) to show the intimate relationship between Him and the Father.

Though the world is not pleased with Jesus, the Father is well pleased.

Not only at His baptism, but also on the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter remembered how "*He (Jesus Christ) received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*" (II Pet. 1:17).

"Those who are (without Christ) in the flesh cannot please God" **(Ro. 8:8)** but God is well pleased with His Son, so that if you are in the Son, God is well-pleased with you. No one can please God independently of Christ.

A true servant does not do his will (what he wants) but he wants to do the will of the One he serves. This is the way Jesus was (Mt. 26:29; Jn. 6:38 - *"For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."*; Jn. 4:34 - *"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."*)

"Then said I, Lo, I come, (in the volume of the Book it is written of me) to do <u>Thy will, God</u>" (Heb. 10:7).

II. He was <u>EMPOWERED</u> by the Spirit (v. 1b)

The Messiah's anointing with the Holy Spirit is a reaffirmation of Isaiah 11:2, which states:

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;
Isaiah 11:2

If Jesus is God, why does He need the Spirit? This question reveals the depth of Christ's humility & condescension.

"I have put my Spirit upon Him" - When Jesus became incarnate, He even forfeited the Spirit's power until His baptism (30 years old). When He was anointed by the Holy Spirit, He did His miracles via the Spirit. The Spirit came upon Him to divinely enable Him to perform His great mission and awesome miracles.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:
Matthew 3:16

Luke 4:18-19 - *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."*

"God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts 10:38).

Unlike every other servant of God (who had a restricted measure of the Spirit's power), it is said that *"God giveth <u>not</u> the Spirit by <u>measure</u> unto Him (Jesus)"* (Jn. 3:34).

This is why the blasphemy against the Spirit is such an offense to Yahweh. Because Yahweh predicted that He would put His Spirit upon the Messiah, and then the Pharisees were interpreting this Spirit as the satanic power of Beelzebub (Mt. 12:24)

One reason God puts His Spirit into God's servants is to equip them to do just what He calls them to do (cp. Rom. 12:5-8; I Cor. 12:7-11, 27:31; Eph. 4:11-16).

If Jesus (while incarnate) relied upon the Holy Spirit for power, how much more do you and I need His Spirit?

"Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord"

III. He was <u>PROMOTED</u> by Humility (v. 2)

"Cry" – to make an outcry or to clamor.

"Lift up" – context – to Lift up one's self; to exalt one's self. Jesus made it a point not to promote Himself but to let His life and actions speak for themselves. He did not have to go around saying, "I am Yahweh."

"Voice" - To call aloud with self-proclamation.

The NT term (Mt. 12:18) "was sometimes used of a dog's barking, a raven's squawking, and even a drunk's bawling" (MacArthur, p. 299).

"Street" - outside streets

It is interesting that Jesus did not go looking for the multitudes in the streets, but the multitudes came looking for Him! They sought Him out! His fame spread throughout the land without any public relations manager, promo ads, or marketing team.

Jesus did not rant and rave, hoot and holler, or foam at the mouth as He preached. He did not seek to arouse the emotions and use persuasive gimmicks or intimidating rhetoric so as to agitate His hearers and pressure them into a response that was devoid of rational understanding and the free exercise of their will.

Jesus did not waste His time arguing, quarrelling or debating, nor did He loudly challenge and react against His opposition. (Jesus would never appear on the late night shows of today)

He did not brawl; He never created an uproar in the streets. He did not lead civil rights marches, nor did He come in the pomp and ceremony which the people expected of the Messiah. Even when He did make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday, He would humbly ride in on a donkey! Fulfilling Zechariah 9:9.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.
Zechariah 9:9

Cp. fulfillment in Matthew 21:2-7 -

Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me.
And if any *man* say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.
All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.
And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,
And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set *him* thereon.
Matthew 21:2-7

If you want to be an influential communicator, if you want to get your message of righteousness across, remember James 3:14-18.

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.
This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish.
For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work.
But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.
James 3:14-18

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (Is. 32:17).

"The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools" (Eccl. 9:17; cp. I Cor. 2:1-4).

"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger" (Prov. 15:1).

The humility of the divine Servant:

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:
But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:
And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
Philippians 2:6-8

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.
Matthew 20:28

For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.
Luke 22:27

God's Servant Messiah would be hated for humility!

IV. He was CHARACTERIZED by Gentleness (v. 3)

"Bruised reed" - a crushed or battered reed which was ready to crack and fall down.

"One of the most obvious legacies of the Fall is man's natural tendency to destroy. Small children will often step on a bug just for the sake of killing it, or snap off a beautiful bud just before it flowers. A tree branch is broken for the sake of breaking it, and a stone is thrown at a bird just to see it fly away or fall to the ground" (MacArthur, p. 300).

Jesus would not injure those who were already injured.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt. 11:29).

The Lord Jesus came the first time as a meek and lowly lamb.

Such a gentle spirit will not characterize His second coming, when He appears as a Lion to judge His adversaries in the Day of the Lord.

"***Smoking flax"*** - a dimly lit wick (made of flax of the plant and used in a lamp).

Jesus saw lives that were just barely hanging on; people whose life was just dimly lit and ready to go out. He would not extinguish such people. Father, He would gently deal with the woman at the well; He would in a gentle manner minister to the woman caught in adultery; He would graciously speak to the thief hanging next to Him on the cross.

The bruised reed (ready to snap) and the smoking flax (ready to go out) illustrate the lost, depraved, sinful people of Christ's day, who deserved the wrath of God, but did not receive it at Christ's first coming.

Christ came not to condemn the world but to save it (Jn. 3:17).

Note, however, that Christ's gentle, uncondemning manner will last "till (until) He shall bring forth judgment unto truth"

V. He was <u>CONCERNED</u> for all Nations (v. 1c, 4, 6)

v.1c
"bring forth Judgment" - to announce or proclaim righteousness

Jesus showed the world what true righteousness was in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5-7).

The fact that Jesus distinguished what was right from what was wrong, shows that there are <u>moral absolutes</u>. (Truth is not relative).

"to the Gentiles" - the Goyim
The fact that He preached righteousness to the Gentiles shows that His principles apply to all people (not limited to a particular group or race).

"Contrary to the thinking and expectations of most Jews, the Messiah was to be the Redeemer of the whole world, <u>not</u> just of Israel" (MacArthur, p. 298).

The promise to Abraham was that through his seed *"all the nations of the earth would be blessed"* (Gen. 12:3).

v.4 – "the isles shall wait for his law" – From the Islands in the remotest parts of the earth the Gentile world has embraced Him as Messiah. Today, many remote places of the earth are standing ready to hear the Gospel message. What a great missionary statement: "The isles shall wait for His law" (the Messiah's word).

It was always God's plan that the Gospel reach from the "uttermost to the guttermost."

Ps. 22:27 - *"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee."*

Ps. 86:9 - *"All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name."*

Is. 9:2 - *"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."*

Isaiah 42:6

"give thee for a covenant of the people" – Jesus Christ brought in the New Covenant. A promise of everlasting life to all who trust in Him. This new covenant would involve His bloodshed. The O.T. predicted a new covenant, and Jesus delivered it!

Jer 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

Heb 8:13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

Heb 12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

"for a light of the Gentiles" – The Messiah would be the source of illumination to the Goyim (the Nations of the earth).

Messiah being a light to the Gentiles is a repeated theme in Isaiah.
See: **Isaiah 9:1-2, 6,7**

Mt 4:16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

See: Isaiah 49:1-8

We must realize that although God used the Jewish race as the vehicle through which He would give us the "oracles of God" and the Messiah, He has always been interested in His message reaching the uttermost parts of the earth (starting with "the Jew first").

****Needed: A Right Theology**

In God's eyes, all lines of distinction, all supposed marks of superiority are non-existent.

"For there is no respect of persons with God" (Rom. 2:11).

Jesusdidnotshowpartiality. EvenHisenemiesadmitted: "Master,weknowthatThouarttrue, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men." (Matt. 22:16b)

a. God shows no partiality in judging men
(Rom. 2:9-11 - "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.")

b. God shows no partiality in describing men (Rom. 3:9-23)
(Rom.3:9-10-"Whatthen? arewebetterthanthey? No,innowise: forwehavebefore proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.")

****Needed: A Right Soteriology**

God shows no partiality in saving men (Rom. 3:24-31).

Gal. 3:26-28 - "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

All races are accepted by God and saved on an equal level (Gal. 3:26-28).

Do you view yourself as a debtor to all people (indebted to reach all with the Gospel)?

Rom. 1:14 - "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise."

All races are equal in the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13).

SHATTER THE BARRIER OF <u>RACIAL</u> SUPREMACY
(God's people must extol <u>righteousness</u> over <u>race</u>)
(Key Text: Acts 10:9-48)

Jew and Gentile are equal in the body of Christ. (Rom. 2:11 - *"For there is no respect of persons with God."*) God does not show racial favoritism (nor should we!) (v. 34)

In God's acceptance of the Gentile, Cornelius, Peter came to realize that God does not show racial favoritism!

Why not? 4 Evidences:

1. GOD'S APPROVAL IS TOWARD ALL (Acts 10:9-16)
   (All people, whether Jew or Gentile, are kosher with God)

   Peter had a nationalistic pride that God would have to erode. God would have to prepare Peter to let him know that He accepted all - Jew and Gentile on an equal basis.

2. GOD'S MESSAGE IS FOR ALL (V. 17-33)
   (All people have the right to hear the Word of God)

3. GOD'S GRACE IS FOR ALL (V. 34-43)
   (All people can be forgiven by the Son of God)
   a. GOD GRACIOUSLY INVITES ALL (V. 34-35)
   b. GOD GRACIOUSLY GAVE HIS SON FOR ALL (V. 36-42)
   c. GOD GRACIOUSLY FORGIVES ALL WHO BELIEVE (V. 43)

4. GOD'S SPIRIT IS FOR ALL (V. 44-48)
   (All believers are baptized by the Spirit of God)

No servant of God can tolerate the sin of racial discrimination in his life.

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

Jesus would literally and spiritually open blind eyes; deliver prisoners from their jail cells; rescue those trapped in the dark prison house of sin.

Isaiah 42:8 - Yahweh does not share His glory with anyone. Yet isn't it interesting that His servant, the Messiah said this:

And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.
John 17:5

CONCLUSION:

Who is the Messiah? God the Father said: He is "My Servant."

True servanthood requires the humility to do even the lowest of service for others (EX: Jesus washing the disciples' feet - SEE: Jn. 13:14-17).

Do you want to be great? Be a servant!

But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.
But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;
Matthew 20:25-26

Are we a servant like Christ. He is our model.

Servant leadership is needed in the home, in the church, in the government.