

# ISAIAH LESSON 36

Behold My Servant<sup>a</sup>  
(Isaiah 42:1-17)

Isaiah 42:1-17 Revised Standard Version (RSV)

## The Servant, a Light to the Nations<sup>b</sup>

**42** Behold my servant<sup>c</sup>, whom I uphold<sup>d</sup>,  
my chosen<sup>e</sup>, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my Spirit<sup>f</sup> upon him,  
he will bring forth justice to the nations<sup>g, h</sup>.  
<sup>2</sup> He will not cry or lift up his voice,  
or make it heard in the street;<sup>i</sup>  
<sup>3</sup> a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a dimly burning<sup>j</sup> wick<sup>k</sup> he will not quench<sup>l</sup>;  
he will faithfully bring forth justice<sup>m, n</sup>.  
<sup>4</sup> He will not fail<sup>o</sup> or be discouraged<sup>p</sup>  
till he has established justice in the earth;  
and the coastlands wait for<sup>q</sup> his law<sup>r, s</sup>.  
<sup>5</sup> Thus says God, the Lord<sup>t</sup>,  
who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
who spread forth the earth and what comes from it<sup>u</sup>,  
who gives breath<sup>v</sup> to the people upon it  
and spirit to those who walk in it:<sup>w</sup>  
<sup>6</sup> "I am<sup>x</sup> the Lord<sup>y</sup>, I have called you<sup>z</sup> in righteousness,  
I have taken you by the hand and kept<sup>aa</sup> you;  
I have given you as a covenant to the people<sup>bb</sup>,  
a light to the nations,<sup>cc</sup>  
<sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
from the prison those who sit in darkness.<sup>dd</sup>  
<sup>8</sup> I am the Lord, that is my name;  
my glory I give to no other<sup>ee</sup>,  
nor my praise to graven images<sup>ff, gg</sup>.  
<sup>9</sup> Behold, the former things have come to pass,  
and new things I now declare;  
before they spring forth  
I tell you of them."<sup>hh</sup>

## A Hymn of Praise

<sup>10</sup> Sing to the Lord a new song,  
his praise from the end of the earth!  
Let the sea roar<sup>ii</sup> and all that fills it,  
the coastlands and their inhabitants.<sup>jj</sup>  
<sup>11</sup> Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice,  
the villages that Kedar inhabits;

let the inhabitants of Sela sing for joy,  
 let them shout from the top of the mountains.<sup>kk</sup>  
<sup>12</sup> Let them give glory to the Lord,  
 and declare his praise in the coastlands.<sup>ll</sup>  
<sup>13</sup> The Lord goes forth like a mighty man,  
 like a man of war he stirs up his fury;  
 he cries out, he shouts aloud,  
 he shows himself mighty against his foes.<sup>mmm</sup>  
<sup>14</sup> 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 travail,  
 I will gasp and pant.<sup>nn</sup>  
<sup>15</sup> I will lay waste mountains and hills,  
 and dry up all their herbage;  
 I will turn the rivers into islands,  
 and dry up the pools.<sup>oo</sup>  
<sup>16</sup> And I will lead the blind  
 in a way that they know not,  
 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 will do,  
 and I will not forsake them.<sup>pp</sup>  
<sup>17</sup> They shall be turned back and utterly put to shame,  
 who trust in graven images,  
 who say to molten images,  
 "You are our gods."<sup>qq</sup>

**Revised Standard Version (RSV)**

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<sup>a</sup> **Behold My Servant** – After Isaiah, Judah would have 100 years of ill-rule and trouble before finally falling to Babylon in 586 B.C. After that, there would be 70 years of exile until Babylon itself fell in 539 B.C. and its new Persian ruler permitted the Exiles to return to the Land in 538 B.C. The second half of Isaiah would include many words of comfort and hope for the Jewish people in their Exile. Chapters 40–55 are viewed by some scholars as having been written by a so-called Second Isaiah (or Deutero-Isaiah), an anonymous prophet living the end of the Babylonian Exile. Isaiah, who is named frequently in Chapters 1–39, does not appear in these chapters by name. The Assyrians, the great threat during the eighth century, hardly appear at all. The Jews are in Babylon, having been taken there by the victorious Babylonians. Cyrus, the Persian king, is named. He will defeat Babylon and release the Exiles. The Prophet, who sees this not as a happy circumstance but as part of God’s age-old plan, exhorts the Jews to resist the Babylonian religion and provides hope of an imminent return to Judah, where the Lord will again be acknowledged as King (Is 52:7). Because the Prophet of Chapters 40-66 proclaimed the triumph of Persia over Babylon, his message would have been considered seditious if written during the Exile. If it were composed during the Exile, it would likely explain why the collection would have circulated anonymously. Under this theory, these chapters were later appended to Isaiah 1–39 and considered the work of Isaiah or perhaps his disciples. However, if these chapters were first written and circulated during the later years of Exile, and if they predicted the name of Babylon’s conqueror before the conquest, there would be no reason that the original Isaiah, author of Chapters 1-39, could not have also predicted what would happen during the Exile.

Indeed, since all of Isaiah, and particularly the second half, are considered to be a primary prophecy regarding the coming Messiah, there would be no reason to exclude the Isaiah of Chapters 1-39 as the author of the remainder of the Book merely because it speaks of events that were not known to Isaiah's contemporaries. Nor does the mere fact that Isaiah himself, or Assyria, are not mentioned in these chapters dispositive since they were written about a later time period in which neither of these were actors. Whether written by Isaiah, Isaiah's disciples or Second Isaiah, the author of these chapters works within the tradition of Isaiah and develops themes found in the earlier chapters, such as the holiness of the Lord (Is 6:1-8) and his lordship of history (Is 7:14, 14:24-27, 26:4). These chapters also develop other themes common in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as the Lord as Israel's redeemer or deliverer (Ex 3:8, 6:6, 15:13, 18:8). Chapters 40-55 are frequently referred to as the Book of the Consolation of Israel and contain the so-called "Servant Songs" which Christians interpret as speaking of the coming Messiah. The initial chapters of this section also contain predictions concerning the role of Cyrus II, the Great (559-530 B.C.), the founder of the Persian Empire, in the return of the Exiles to the Land who is referred to in Chapter 41 as "**one from the East**" and mentioned by name later (Is 44:28). God was thus able to use a pagan ruler to protect and care for His people, just as He had used the Assyrians to punish Judah for its sins. Chapter 41 paints a picture of a courtroom in which God challenges first the nations, and then the gods of the nations, to prove their power. This continues the theme of Chapter 40 in which the power of God is demonstrated. Chapter 41 ended with Cyrus II, as God's servant, freeing the Jews from Exile, and the nations (gentiles or goyim) rejecting God's invitation and choosing to make idols. There seemed little hope for the gentiles leading to the question of how will the gentiles be saved. In Chapter 42 we will learn that God will send a new servant, who will not be identified immediately, but who we will be later identified as the Messiah. This new, unique, servant will not only free the Jews from their Exile, He will also give the gentiles hope for inclusion among the people of God. Although the Jews of Jesus' time identified the Servant with the Messiah, they have now rejected this interpretation, likely in reaction to the Christian interpretation.

<sup>b</sup> Verses 1-9 are the first of the so-called "**Servant Songs**" (Is 42:1-9, 49:1-13, 50:4-11 and 52:13-53:12). These four songs about a suffering servant, written and assembled centuries before the Messiah's birth, are nevertheless rightly viewed by Christians as describing Jesus. In the Servant Songs, Isaiah describes Messiah's role as a humble (Is 42:2, 53:2) King of the line of David, chosen and set apart by God (Is 42:1; Mt 3:17, 17:5), yet different from any of the other kings, who will not only redeem His own people and restore them to the Land, but also bring justice to the gentiles (Is 42:1-4). The Messiah would have to suffer humiliation (Is 52:14) and sorrow, and be rejected by His people who did not esteem Him highly (Is 53:3). He would stand accused but answer with silence (Is 53:7). He would be smitten, stricken and spat upon (Is 53:4), bruised, berated and beaten (Is 53:5). Although innocent, he would be executed with the guilty and buried with the evil and the rich (Is 53:9). The Servant suffered not for His own sins, but for our transgressions, and through His suffering, we are healed (Is 53:5). Many have been called God's servants in the Scriptures: Abraham (Gn 26:24; Ps 105:6); Moses (Nu 12:7-8); Caleb (Nu 14:24); David (Is 37:35); Isaiah (Is 20:3); Eliakim (Is 22:20); Zerubbabel (Hg 2:23); St. Paul (Rm 1:1; Php 1:1; Ti 1:1). The term has also been applied to unbelievers who, nevertheless, had been called to do God's will or accomplish some task for God: Nebuchadnezzar (Jr 25:9); Cyrus II (Is 43:10, 45:1). Corporately it is applied to all Prophets (2Ki 17:13; Is 44:26), the Jewish people as a nation (Jr 20:10, as well as many times in Chapters 40-66 of Isaiah), and all believers in Messiah (Rm 6:15-23). But none of these individuals and groups can qualify as the Servant in the Servant Songs, and that, as will become clearer as those chapters are examined, only the Messiah fully fulfills them. It will become clear that Isaiah is not, and cannot be, speaking of himself, another contemporary, or of the Jewish people as a whole, but is, in fact, proclaiming the coming of the Messiah (Ac 8:30-35). None of us, even the best of us, is without sin (Ec 7:20; Rm 3:10; 1Jn 1:8) and so we are incapable of saving ourselves or others. But God promised to send His Servant to atone for us all through His death on the Cross. And if God calls us, He will equip us and appoint the tasks He wants for us to accomplish. We can be confident that His Spirit will be with us, and, because of what Jesus did, if we are called we will also be favored by God who will insure that we accomplish what He has called us to.

<sup>c</sup> **Servant** (עֶבֶד, *ebed*), which can also mean slave or bondservant. See note on Is 42:8 in Lesson 35.

<sup>d</sup> **Uphold** (תָּמַךְ, *tamak*), or hold fast, grasp or support.

<sup>e</sup> **Chosen** (בָּחֵר, *bachir*; LXX ἐκλεκτός, *eklektos*), or elect.

<sup>f</sup> **Spirit - Ruach** (רוּחַ) usually translated as **Spirit**, can mean spirit, wind or breath. See Note on the Names of God in the Introduction to this Study.

<sup>g</sup> **Nations** (גוֹי, *goy*, plural גוֹיִם, *goyim*; LXX ἔθνος, *ethnos*) or gentiles.

<sup>h</sup> **(1)** Although other identities have been advanced for the Servant, verses 1-4 of this Chapter are quoted by Matthew clearly in reference to the Messiah (Mt 12:15-21). In this reading, the Servant is the child of which Isaiah wrote in Chapter 7 (Is 7:13-17, 9:2-7, 11:1-10; Ps 89:19-20; Zec 3:8). The specific characteristics and actions of the Servant in the Servant Songs (including, among others, gentleness, encouragement, justice and truth) will, as will become apparent as they are studied, eliminate all other possible candidates leaving Jesus as the only one who meets all of the criteria. In verse 1 God declares that He has chosen His

servant, that He is pleased with this Servant, that the Servant is endowed with God's Spirit, and that the Servant will bring forth (יָצָא, *yatsa*) justice (מִשְׁפָּט, *mishpat*) to the Nations. Sometimes a servant can be chosen by God, though, like Sennacherib, not be liked by Him. But the Servant of verse 1 will have God's favor (רָצָה, *ratsah*). The Hebrew *mishpat* can mean the way things should be, particularly in the sense of restoring a prior just state of affairs. It also can mean the outcome of a court proceeding (in line with the courtroom imagery of Chapter 41) or punishment for those who have done wrong. Most of us, conscious of our own sin, do not look forward to judgment day, but those who have been oppressed see judgment day as the time when their oppressors will receive their punishment. The LXX reads, "Jacob is My servant, I will help him; Israel is My elect, My soul has accepted him; I have put My Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." The Septuagint rendering of the Hebrew would identify the Servant as the Jewish people (Is 41:8-9, 43:10). This interpretation does not fit the context, however which would point to a Messianic figure. The *Targum of Isaiah*, representing a different strain of Jewish thought from the LXX, implies an individual, not collective, identity for the Servant. This Servant had the full support of his Father just as Jesus did not act on his own authority, but for the Father (Is 40:10; Jn 3:34; Ac 3:26). As He told the Pharisees, "My judgment is true, for it is not I alone that judge, but I and He who sent me" (Jn 8:16). He will be, as was Jesus, of the House of David (Is 9:5-7, 11:1-3, 11:10; Gn 49:10; 2Sm 7:12; 1Ch 17:11-14; Ps 89:2-5, 89:35-26, 132:10-17; Jr 33:14-26; Ezk 34:24; Hos 3:5; Mt 1:1-2, 9:27-29, 22:41-46; Lk 1:31-33, 1:68-71; Jn 7:42; Ac 2:30-31; Rm 1:3, 5:12; 2Tm 2:8; Rv 5:5, 22:16). This Servant had been chosen to do God's will (Is 61:1; Ac 4:27). Jesus laid down his life in sacrifice in accordance with God's plan to atone for human sin and make possible forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God (Is 53:11; Mt 20:18; Lk 23:35; 1Co 15:12-23; Heb 9:11-14, 10:5-13). At His baptism, the Father acknowledged Jesus as His beloved son with whom he was pleased and anointed Him with His Spirit (Is 2:4, 11:2-5; Nu 11:16-17; 1Sm 16:13; Mt 3:16-17, 12:18-20, 17:5; Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22, 4:18-21, 9:35; Jn 1:32-34; Ac 10:38). He was gentle in spirit (Php 2:4-7) and obedient (Jn 4:34; Heb 3:2), yet in the end exalted (Is 52:13; 2Pt 1:17). During His ministry, Jesus proclaimed "judgment" (Is 2:4, 32:16; Mt 25:31-46; Mk 13:1-27). While Jesus directed his attention primarily to the "lost sheep of Israel" (Mt 15:24), his death and resurrection opened the door to including the gentiles in the people of God (Is 14:1, 49:3-8, 51:4-5; Mal 1:11; Ac 28:28) as would be preached by His disciples after His death (Ac 9:15, 11:18, 26:17-18; Rm 15:8-16; Eph 3:8). These disciples made clear how gentiles too could have their sins forgiven by grace, through faith in Jesus as the Son of God (Mt 15:24-28; Ac 13:38-39, 13:46-47, 17:29-31; Rm 3:21-31; 1Pt 2:4-6) The *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1647), Chapter VII, Sec. 1 reads, "IT PLEASED GOD, IN HIS ETERNAL PURPOSE, TO CHOOSE AND ORDAIN THE LORD JESUS, HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, TO BE THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN, [Is 42:1] THE PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING; THE HEAD AND SAVIOR OF HIS CHURCH, THE HEIR OF ALL THINGS, AND JUDGE OF THE WORLD; UNTO WHOM HE DID, FROM ALL ETERNITY, GIVE A PEOPLE TO BE HIS SEED, AND TO BE BY HIM IN TIME REDEEMED, CALLED, JUSTIFIED, SANCTIFIED, AND GLORIFIED." While Isaiah likely did not think in these terms, all three persons of the Trinity. The First Person is the speaker. The Second is the Servant. And the Third is mentioned directly as the Spirit (Is 44:3; Ps 139:7).

<sup>i</sup> (2) The Servant will not engage in noisy public debate or call attention to Himself in order to exalt Himself (Pr 8:1-4).

<sup>j</sup> **Dimly burning** (כֶּהָה, *keheh*), lit. dim, faded or smoking.

<sup>k</sup> **Wick** (פִּשְׁתָּה, *pishtah*), lit. flax.

<sup>l</sup> **Quench** (כָּבַה, *kabah*), lit. extinguish, quench or put out.

<sup>m</sup> **Bring forth** (יָצָא, *yatsa*), or deliver in an active sense.

<sup>n</sup> (3) Mt 12:20. The Servant will accomplish the purpose for which He was sent not through conquest like Cyrus, or through noise, violence or coercion. Instead He will be gentle (Is 40:11, 50:10) though firm, a reed that does not break (Is 36:6). He will establish justice (Is 9:7; Ps 9:8, 54:5, 94:15, 96:13, 98:9; Jn 5:30; Mi 7:9) through faithfulness (אֱמֶת, *Emeth*; also meaning truthfulness; Rv 19:11). The *Targum of Isaiah* identifies meek or lowly persons as the **bruised or crushed reed**, and the poor as **dimly burning wicks**. The poor and powerless among the Exiles resembled bruised or bent reeds and lamp wicks about to go out. Jesus preached justice and good news to the poor (Is 11:3-4, 34:18, 35:3-4, 40:29-31, 50:4, 57:15; Ps 72:2-4, 147:3; Jr 31:15; Ezk 34:16; Mt 11:28, 18:10-14). There will be resistance to the Servant, and He will suffer (Jn 20:19-27; Heb 2:17-18), but He will not be discouraged or fail.

<sup>o</sup> **Fail** (כָּהָה, *kahah*), or burn dimly.

<sup>p</sup> **Discouraged** (רָצַץ, *ratsat*), oppressed or bruised.

<sup>q</sup> **Wait for** (יָחַל, *yachal*), hope for or expect.

<sup>r</sup> **Law** (תּוֹרָה, *torah*), or instruction.

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<sup>s</sup> (4) Is 2:3-4, 11:11, 24:15, 40:28, 42:10-12, 49:1, 51:4-5, 60:9, 66:19; Gn 10:5, 49:10; Ex 34:29; Mt 12:18-21 == The Servant, in His mission, is a personification of Israel, which had not accomplished its mission. But the Servant will not **grow faint or tired**, or become discouraged because of the failure of the people to repent. The Coastlands, that is the nations, would wait for God's Law, indicating that it was for the gentiles as well as the Jews (Ps 72:10). 1QIsa, instead of *wait for*, has *inherit* the law providing a different gloss on the process. Messiah Jesus provided the path by which the gentiles could obtain salvation and be grafted into the olive tree of Israel (Rm 11:17-18). The LXX reads, "He shall shine out, and shall not be discouraged, until he has set judgment on the earth; and in his name shall the Gentiles trust."

<sup>t</sup> God, the Lord - Yahweh El, twice in this verse.

<sup>u</sup> What comes from it, or vegetation or offspring

<sup>v</sup> Breath, sometimes translated life, or wind. All these concepts combine in this verse. Different word than that usually translated as spirit.

<sup>w</sup> (5) Is 34:1, 40:22, 44:24, 45:12, 45:18, 48:13, 57:16; Gn 1:1, 1:6; Ps 24:1-2, 102:25-26, 104:2, 136:6; Jb 12:10, 33:4; Dn 5:23; Ac 17:24-25; Gal 5:25 == God introduces Himself three times in verses 5-8, first as Creator (v. 5), second by demonstrating His power (v. 6) and finally by asserting His uniqueness, that He is not just another god or idol, but the God (v. 8). In each of the Servant Songs, God confirms that He has selected and commissioned the Servant, and describes the mission of the Servant. In this Chapter He buttresses His words by telling us that He is the Creator of all things. He is more than a clock-maker, but is a God who is active in history, and sustains every creator with a life-giving force. This verse recalls God breathing life into Adam (Gn 2:7), as He breathes life into all of us. In this verse, "breath" and "spirit" appear to be parallel constructions, showing God as the creator and sustainer of life. The Lord is also pictured as stretching out the heavens, the sky resembling, for these desert dwellers, a tent that has been stretched out from horizon to horizon. The LXX reads, "Thus says the Lord God, who made the heaven, and established it; who settled the earth, and the things in it, and gives breath to the people in it, and spirit to them that tread on it . . ."

<sup>x</sup> 1QIsaa reads I have; 4QIsah MT read I, the Lord, have; LXX reads I, the Lord God, have

<sup>y</sup> Lord – Yahweh, here and in verses 8, 10, 12 and 13.

<sup>z</sup> The Hebrew for you in this verse is single, four times in this verse.

<sup>aa</sup> Kept () can also mean shaped (Gn 2:7) as when God shaped Adam.

<sup>bb</sup> Covenant to the people, 1QIsaa MT LXX; 4QIsah reads as an everlasting covenant

<sup>cc</sup> (6) Is 5:7, 5:16, 9:2, 9:7, 11:4-5, 26:3, 26:18, 27:3, 32:1, 41:2, 41:9-10, 41:13, 43:1, 45:1, 45:8, 45:13, 45:24, 49:6-8, 51:4-10, 56:1, 59:21, 60:1-3, 60:21, 61:8; Ex 31:2; Jdg 4:10; Jr 23:5-6, 31:31, 32:40; Dn 9:7; Mal 3:1; Mt 26:28; Lk 2:30-32, 22:20; Jn 8:12; Ac 13:47, 26:23; Heb 9:15 == In verses 6 and 7 God is talking to the Servant who is here commissioned to go to the gentiles and bring them light. The ministry of the Servant would be to fulfill the covenant promise to the Jews, and to bring light to the nations. Some commentators assert that the Servant, addressing the predicament of the gentiles in Chapter 41, will bring righteousness to the gentiles who rejected God and instead continued building idols. This Servant will draw them in a unique way and create a **covenant** people from among the gentiles. No candidate identified as the Servant other than Messiah Jesus can be said to have done this. This Servant will do more than preach, He will be the instrument for bringing the gentiles into covenant with God. Through the Messiah, and God's Spirit, we have the opportunity to help in the fulfillment of that ministry by bringing the light of Messiah to all people. But we must first seek His righteousness before we can bring it to the world (Mt 6:33), and let His light shine through us before we can be lights ourselves (Mt 5:16; 2Co 4:6). Other commentators believe that "people" in this verse may refer not only to gentiles, but also to Jews, or even Jews exclusively and the reference to **covenant** shows that the Servant will be a means for establishing a covenant and the one through whom all the benefits of the covenant would be available to all people, Jew and gentile. If the **covenant** is the **new covenant**, it would be made with the "house of Israel" and the "house of Judah" and its benefits would be first available to the Jewish people (Jr 31:31-34). Therefore it is also possible to understand "people" as indicating Jews only, to be followed by the Servant going as a light to the gentiles. As a light, Messiah Jesus freed all who believed from darkness (Ac 26:16-18). God called His Servant in righteousness perhaps indicating that His call was an expression of God's righteousness or justice or that His Servant might serve the cause of righteousness. Jesus, as the Messianic Servant, surrendered his life, making it possible for those who believe to be forgiven and reconciled to God. (Ac 13:38-39; Rm 8:32-34). God holding the Servant's hand shows that God would be with the Servant and insure that He would accomplish His mission. Keeping the servant may refer to God's protection (Jn 9:4, 11:9-10, 19:10-11). In the LXX, God strengthens His servant (Mt 4:11, Lk 22:43). The Westminster Confession of Faith (1647), Chapter VII, Sec. 3 reads, "MAN, BY HIS FALL, HAVING MADE HIMSELF INCAPABLE OF LIFE BY THAT COVENANT, THE LORD WAS PLEASED TO MAKE A SECOND, COMMONLY CALLED THE COVENANT OF GRACE: [Is 42:6] WHEREIN HE FREELY OFFERED UNTO SINNERS LIFE AND SALVATION BY JESUS CHRIST, REQUIRING OF THEM FAITH

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IN HIM, THAT THEY MAY BE SAVED, AND PROMISING TO GIVE UNTO ALL THOSE THAT ARE ORDAINED UNTO LIFE, HIS HOLY SPIRIT, TO MAKE THEM WILLING AND ABLE TO BELIEVE.”

<sup>dd</sup> (7) Is 24:22, 29:18, 32:3, 35:5, 48:20, 49:9; 51:14, 52:2, 61:1; Ps 66:11, 107:10-14, 146:8; Zec 2:7, 9:11; Mt 4:16, 11:5-7; Lk 1:79, 4:18-21, 7:22; Jn 8:32; Jn 9; Ac 26:17-18; 2Tm 2:26; Heb 2:14-15 = Metaphorically, those in prison would include those in bondage to sin (Rm 6:\_\_). As the Messianic servant, Jesus literally opened the eyes of the blind (Mt 9:27-30, 11:5, 12:22, 15:30-31, 20:30-34, 21:14; Mk 8:22-25; Lk 7:21-22; Jn 9:1-7) But Jesus, the light of the world (Jn 9:5) ended the spiritual blindness that has its source in sin. Without forgiveness through the Messiah, we are alienated from God and neither see nor acknowledge Him as God (Rm \_\_). The LXX reads, “. . . to open the eyes of the blind, to bring the bound and them that sit in darkness out of bonds and the prison house.” The *Targum of Isaiah* applies this to the Jewish people who, having but being blind to, the Law will now be able to see and follow it. The Exiles in Babylon would be released to return to the Land. Thus, the Servant could not be Israel who would be the Servant’s beneficiary.

<sup>ee</sup> I am the Lord, that is my name/my glory I give to no other, 4QIsah MT LXX; 1QIsaa, I, the Lord, am the one, and I won’t give my name and glory to another

<sup>ff</sup> Graven images, or idols

<sup>gg</sup> (8) Is 41:21-29, 43:3, 43:11, 43:15, 46:9, 48:11, 49:23; Ex 3:13-15, 6:3, 8:10, 20:3-5; Ps 81:10, 83:18 = The **Name** (יהוה, **YHWH**) was revealed to Moses (Ex 3:13-14) though it was first used of the Lord in Gn 2:4. It appears to be derived from, or incorporate, the Hebrew for “to be” (הָיָה, *hayah*) as found in Ex 3:14 (Compare the LXX, Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν, *egó eimi ho ón*, I AM THE ONE WHO IS, and the words of Rv 1:4, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, *ho ón kaí ho en kaí ho erchómenos*, THE ONE WHO IS AND WHO WAS AND WHO IS COMING). There is no other God (Is 40:25, 43:10-12, 44:6-8, 45:3-6, 45:14-15, 45:18-22, 46:5, 46:9, 48:11). He is the Creator of all things (Is 40:12, 42:5, 43:1, 44:24, 45:9-12, 48:13, 51:13, 54:5) and eternal (Is 41:4, 44:6, 48:12). He will not “yield His glory to another” (Is 48:11; Ex 20:3; Dt 4:24). The Greek of the LXX in Ex 3:14 is in the present tense (“I am who I am”) while the Hebrew is in the imperfect (“I will be who I will be”). This suggests that God would, and will, prove to be exactly who He said He is, unchanging from age to age. The LXX reads, “I am the Lord God; that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, nor My praises to graven images.” The *Targum of Isaiah* interprets another to apply to humans, not to gods, thus He would not give His glory (which had been revealed to Moses and the Jews) to another people, nor his praise to those who served idols. The Second Helvetic Confession (1561), Sec. 5.025 states, “THE SAINTS ARE NOT TO BE ADORED, WORSHIPPED OR INVOKED. FOR THIS REASON WE DO NOT ADORE, WORSHIP, OR PRAY TO THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN, OR TO OTHER GODS, AND WE DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THEM AS OUR INTERCESSORS OR MEDIATORS BEFORE THE FATHER IN HEAVEN. FOR GOD AND CHRIST THE MEDIATOR ARE SUFFICIENT FOR US; NEITHER DO WE GIVE TO OTHERS THE HONOR THAT IS DUE TO GOD ALONE AND TO HIS SON, BECAUSE HE HAS EXPRESSLY SAID: “MY GLORY I GIVE TO NO OTHER” (ISA. 42:8), AND BECAUSE PETER HAS SAID: “THERE IS NO OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN AMONG MEN BY WHICH WE MUST BE SAVED,” EXCEPT THE NAME OF CHRIST (ACTS 4:12). IN HIM, THOSE WHO GIVE THEIR ASSENT BY FAITH DO NOT SEEK ANYTHING OUTSIDE CHRIST.” In response to Question 179 the *Westminster Larger Catechism* (1647) states, “GOD ONLY BEING ABLE TO SEARCH THE HEART, HEAR THE REQUESTS, PARDON THE SINS, AND FULFILL THE DESIRES OF ALL, AND ONLY TO BE BELIEVED IN, AND WORSHIPPED WITH RELIGIOUS WORSHIP; PRAYER, WHICH IS A SPECIAL PART THEREOF, IS TO BE MADE BY ALL TO HIM ALONE, AND TO NONE OTHER.”

<sup>hh</sup> (9) Is 40:21, 41:22, 43:19, 48:3-6; Ezr 2:4; Rv 21:4 = Commentators disagree about the identity of the “former things” in this verse. Most commentators believe that the “former things” or the “things from the beginning” apply to what God had revealed through His prophets that had subsequently come to pass thus validating God’s power and the trustworthy nature of His word. Former things might also refer to Cyrus, perhaps the Exodus, perhaps the defeat of the Assyrians or perhaps to something else altogether. But the “new thing” is clearly the Servant, who will be gentle and humble, and suffer (Jr 31:31-34; Lk 22:20; Heb 8:1-13, 9:11-28) at the hands of the ungodly. We can gain further confidence in God’s trustworthiness because the predictions revealed in Isaiah about the Messiah have, in fact, been fulfilled in Jesus. The LXX reads, “Behold, the ancient things have come to pass, and so will the new things which I tell you; yes, before I declare them they are made known to you.” The *Westminster Larger Catechism* (1647), in answer to Question 6 states, “THE SCRIPTURES MAKE KNOWN WHAT GOD IS, THE PERSONS IN THE GODHEAD, HIS DECREES, AND THE EXECUTION OF HIS DECREES [Is 42:9].

<sup>ii</sup> Cn Compare Ps 96:11; 98:7: Heb Those who go down to the sea

<sup>jj</sup> (10) Is 2:3, 11:11, 15:1, 16:1, 40:18-20, 42:4, 49:6, 60:6, 60:9, 62:11; Gn 10:5; Ex 20:11; Dt 30:4; 1Ki 10:9; 1Ch 16:32; Ps 33:3, 40:3, 48:10, 65:5, 96:1, 96:11, 96:98, 98:1, 98:7, 107:23, 144:9; 149:1; Mt 12:21; Rv 5:9 = In verses 10-17, as a result of what the Servant does, the gentiles will be invited to share in the inheritance of the Jews. God will make a new people, His people, from among the gentiles. The new song is a response to the new things that God will do (Ps 96:1, 98:1) and includes an invitation to all the nations (Is 12:4-5), as also suggested by the reference to the “end of the earth”, to join in rejoicing as the Lord goes out to battle, a typical motif in Scripture (Dt 33:2; Jdg 5:4-5; Ps 68:7-8; Hab 3:3-6). The Lord Himself will intervene to prepare the way for the Exiles to return to the Land, and will guide them on their journey as He did in the Exodus (Is 41:17-20).

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Thus “dominion” in the LXX would include all inhabited areas, and imply praise to God from all nations. While the Masoretic text would include all sea creatures, the LXX limits the reference to people traveling by sea. The LXX reads, “Sing a new hymn to the Lord; you who are His dominion, glorify His name from the ends of the earth; you that go down to the sea, and sail upon it; the islands, and they that dwell in them.” Verses 6-9 demonstrate what God will do for us and through us. Verses 10-17 should be our response. In verses 10-12 there are two merisms, seas/coastland and desert/cities.

<sup>kk</sup> (11) Is 16:1-2, 21:16-17, 32:16, 35:1, 35:6, 52:7, 60:7; Gn 25:13; Jdg 1:36; 2Ki 14:7; Ps 120:5; Na 1:15 == Kedar, located in the northwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula, was a region inhabited by the descendants of Ishmael through his son Kedar. (Gn 25:13) Its people were nomads, living in tents and raising camels, asses, and flocks of sheep and goats. (Ps 120:5; Song 1:5-6; Jr 49:28-29) Sela (סֵלָע, *sela*, meaning the Rock), is an Edomite city, sometimes linked to Petra, a later Nabatean city, located in what is now Jordan. The LXX reads, “Rejoice, you wilderness, and the villages thereof, the hamlets, and the dwellers in Kedar; the inhabitants of the rock shall rejoice, they shall shout from the top of the mountains.”

<sup>ll</sup> (12) Is 2:3, 11:11, 24:15, 42:4, 60:9, 66:2; Gn 10:5; 1Ch 16:24; Ps 26:7; Mt 12:21; 1Pt 2:9; Rv 14:7 == To give glory to God means to acknowledging Him as the only true God who has revealed his purpose in advance and always carried out that purpose. The inhabitants of islands or coastlands, that is the gentile believers, are directed to declare God’s praise and glory, making known His wonderful works.

<sup>mmm</sup> (13) Is 9:6-7, 26:11, 37:32, 40:10, 59:17, 66:14-16; Ex 14:3, 14:14, 15:3, 20:5; Nu 10:35; Jsh 6:5; Jdg 5:4; Ps 78:65; Jr 25:30; Hos 11:10; Jl 3:16; Am 1:2, 3:4, 3:8; Zep 1:14 == We will praise God because He will rouse himself and give a great war-cry as He goes forth like a mighty warrior to bring the new thing that He is doing, with its justice and judgment, to fruition. The word translated as **fury** above (חֵמָה, *qinah*) could also be translated zeal, jealousy, or envy. According to QIsa, God’s shouting reveals His anger. In the LXX, he is identified as the Lord God of Hosts, having armies at His command. The complete fulfilment of this verse will not come until the Messiah returns (). The LXX reads, “The Lord God of hosts shall go forth, and crush the war; He shall stir up jealousy, and shall shout mightily against His enemies.”

<sup>nn</sup> (14) Is 13:8, 50:21, 57:11, 62:1, 64:12, 65:6; Gn 43:31; Est 4:14; Ps 50:21; Jr 4:31; Lk 18:7; 2Pt 3:9 == In the pangs of childbirth there is agony, and there is crying out in pain, but there is also the promise of new life. But if she cannot deliver, an event all too common in that time, there will not only be no new life, but she will likely not herself survive. Birth pangs are a common image of the apocalypse (\_\_\_). God had held his hand and not taken action against those who deserved judgment, but His restraint had lasted long enough. Those who refused to acknowledge God will now face the consequences of that refusal (Rm 1:\_\_\_). The LXX reads, “I have been silent; shall I also always be silent and forbear; I have endured like a travailing woman; I will now amaze and wither at once.” The rhetorical question in the LXX indicates that the period of forbearance by God will not go on forever. Those who are present at God’s judgment will be amazed and those against whom judgment is rendered will be withered as dry grass (). The *Targum of Isaiah* implies that God forbears acting to give an opportunity for the people to repent and come to God.

<sup>oo</sup> (15) Is 2:12-16, 11:15, 41:18-19, 44:27, 50:2; Ex 9:25, 10:15, 14:21; Ps 105:33-35, 107:33; Ezk 38:19-20; Nah 1:4-6 == God will deal with the nations in judgment. The gentiles will either come to God or be judged. Creation itself will be turned upside down as mountains and hills are made barren. Rivers will dry up. Plants that once flourished in rich marshland would wither and die. The LXX reads, “I will make desolate mountains and hills, and will dry up all their grass; and I will make the rivers islands, and dry up the pools.”

<sup>pp</sup> (16) Is 26:7, 29:18, 29:24; 30:21, 32:3, 35:5-8, 40:4, 40:11; 41:17, 57:18; 58:8-11; Ex 13:21; Dt 4:31; Jsh 1:5; Ps 18:28, 94:14; Jr 31:8-9; Lk 1:78-79, 3:5; Ac 26:18; Eph 5:8; Heb 13:5 == but for those who come to me, v 16, God will guide them and take care of them. If you follow me, I will lead you to the light (John). Some commentators suggest that this is about the Jews returning from Babylon, but they knew the well-travelled path back to the Land. Even if taken metaphorically, the way being obedience to God, the Jews had the Law and knew that also. This verse must therefore refer to the gentile nations who did not have the Law, but who would come to Jerusalem in the end times to worship God (). God will guide those faithful gentiles by unfamiliar paths which will be made smooth by God. The spiritually blind will be brought into the light so that they can see (Jn 1:\_\_\_). In the Hebrew text, the concluding sentence could also mean that God will complete all that He has promised to do. A number of translations render the Hebrew text to convey this significance. “These are the promises — I will keep them without fail.” (Tanakh) “These things I shall do without fail.” (REB) “This I shall do — without fail.” (NJB) The LXX reads, “And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and I will cause them to tread paths which they have not known; I will turn darkness into light for them, and crooked things into straight. These things will I do, and will not forsake them.”

<sup>qq</sup> (17) Is 1:29, 44:9-11, 44:17, 45:16; Ex 32:4; Ps 6:10, 97:7, 115:4 == Those who cling to idols and false gods, refusing to acknowledge the One True God, will be **turned back** and **put to shame** like an army that has been utterly defeated. The repetition in Hebrew of words meaning shame is a way of saying that the shame will be extreme. The LXX reads, “But they are turned back; be utterly ashamed, you that trust in graven images, who say to the molten images, You are our gods.”