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Here Is My Servant, Whom I Uphold

42: 1-9

Here is My Servant, whom I uphold DIG: In Isaiah's time, a king's servant stood in a position of great importance. What terms express this servant's relationship to God in 42:1-7? His mission? His character? Who is the servant referred to here? Why will God's Servant not shout or cry out (Proverbs 8:1-4 and 9:13ff)? What is meant by a bruised reed and smoldering wick (36:6)?

REFLECT: In what ways does Yeshua fulfill this picture of God's Servant? Which of those qualities have you experienced recently? When was the last time you felt like a bruised reed? Looking back on it, how did Messiah find a way to let you know that He was right there with you? How did He treat you with tenderness even if you did not recognize it as such at the time?

As the Cone of **Isaiah** comes to it's point (**to see link click [HI](#) - The Cone of Isaiah**), the **LORD** is speaking and **He** presents the **Servant, the Messiah**, to the nations of the world and to **Judah** in particular. Not coincidentally, **the Trinity** is in view here. Evidence from the TaNaKh that **ADONAI** is indeed a **Trinity** is found in the fact that only **three Persons** are ever called **God**, and no more than **three Persons** are ever seen together. There are four examples of **the Trinity** in **Isaiah**; the first is seen here in **42:1**. **The Trinity** can also be seen in **48:12-16**, again in **61:1**, and also in **63:7-14**. The doctrine of **the Trinity** is a fundamental belief of the Church. Those who deny **the Trinity** expose themselves as either being a member of a cult, like the Jehovah's Witnesses, or merely believing in false doctrine like non-messianic **Jews**. One cannot be saved and not believe in **the Trinity**.

Here is My Servant, whom I uphold, My chosen one in whom I delight; I will put My Spirit on Him and He will bring justice to the nations (42:1). Six things are said about the **Servant**. First, **God** says **He is My Servant, His special Servant (John 4:34 and Philippians 2:5-8)**. Secondly, **He is the One that God upholds (Mark 1:12-13)**. Thirdly, **He is God's chosen (First Peter 2:4-6)**. Fourthly, **ADONAI** says: **You are My Son, whom I love; with You I am well pleased (Luke 3:22)**. Fifthly, **God** says: **I will put My Spirit on Him (42:1a)**. Sixthly, **He will bring justice to the nations (42:1b)**.

The second Person is the Speaker's Servant, or as **He** says **My Servant**. And **the third Person** is said to be **My Spirit**. Here is a passage where there are three and only **three Persons**, no more and no less. Three times **Isaiah** describes the placing of the **Spirit** on **the Messiah**: once in **11:2**, a second time here in **42:1**, which is also referred to at the baptism of **Christ** in **Matthew 3:16-17** and **Luke 3:22**, when **Ruach Ha'Kodesh** came down upon **Him** in the visible form of a **dove**, and a third time in **61:1**. This passage deals with the public ministry of **the Servant**. And finally, what is said about the status of **the Servant** is that **He will bring justice to the** (Gentile) **nations (42:1b)**. This **He** will do at the Second Coming.

Then we have the manner of **His** ministry. **He will not shout or cry out, or raise His voice in the streets (42:2)**. So, while the apostles will be active in street evangelism, **Jesus** will not. **Matthew** connects the quietness, the soft-spokenness of the ministry of **Yeshua** with the prophecy of **Isaiah** here. **Matthew 12:15-21** quotes **42:1-4** with some minor variations, relating it to **Messiah** and **His** ministry in **Isra'el**. As **the LORD's Servant, the Messiah**, did what **Isra'el** could never do. **He** perfectly carried out the will of **the Father** so that people everywhere could believe. This is an example of **the B'rit Chadashah** interpreting the TaNaKh.

In addition, the way that **He** will conduct **Himself** is described. **A bruised reed He will not break**. This phrase means **He** will not crush the oppressed. **He** will help the oppressed, not crush them. **He** will be characterized by mercy, truth, and justice. Those who come to **Him** for help will be accepted and treated with great tenderness.¹⁵⁹ **And a smoldering wick He will not snuff out (42:3a)**. The **smoldering wick** refers to those who have lost all hope. **He** will not **snuff out** our hope; on the contrary, **He** gives us hope.

Finally, we are told that **the Messiah** will succeed in **His** ministry. Four statements are made to that effect. First, **He will not falter or fail**. Second, **He will not be discouraged till He establishes justice on the earth (42:4a)**. If there was any time that **Jesus** should have been **discouraged**, it was when **Isra'el** rejected **Him** as **the Messiah** and said **He** was demon possessed (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ek - It is only by Beelzebub, the Prince of Demons, That This Fellow Drives Out Demons**). Yet, **God** says that **He** will never **be discouraged**. Nor do we find any discouragement in the statements that **Christ** makes during **His** ministry. Third, **in faithfulness He will bring forth justice (42:3b)**. **Justice** has not yet been done on the earth. But when **Messiah** returns at the Second Coming, distant lands **will put their hope in His Torah (42:4b)**. Back in **Chapter 2 Isaiah** stated that when **Messiah** reigns from Jerusalem, the **Torah** will go forth from Jerusalem. So distant Gentile lands will wait for the fulfillment of this

prophecy.

*The fact that **Jesus** is compassionate and mends broken lives does not mean that the lives of believers will be without sorrow. After all, **Yeshua** made it quite clear when **He** said to **His** disciples: **In this world you will have trouble (John 16:33)**. Yet many times when **trouble** comes, it is easy to forget that **Jesus, a man of sorrows (53:3)**, is still right there with us even if we cannot feel **His** presence because of our overwhelming pain. Sometimes nothing consoles me when I am in pain. Praying or reading my Bible does not even give me relief from my torment and I feel guilty about that. But despite my feelings, as I look back on my time of **trouble**, I can see that **He** is a **Promise Keeper** and there really are **His** footprints in the sand as **He** carried me through it.*

This is what God, ADONAI says: He who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that comes out of it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it (42:5). The one who called **the Servant** to establish **His Kingdom on the earth** was in fact **the Creator of the earth**. As a result, **the Servant's** ministry would not be something new, but would be, in fact, the renewal of the creation. The exclusive use of participles points us to the identical descriptions of **God** earlier: **He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in (40:22)**. Equally important is the fact that **the Servant is the One who gives breath or spirit**, to us. **His** concern for us is seen next as **One** who brought us into being and sustains us with every breath we take.

God the Father then commissions **the Servant**. **He promised His Servant full and constant support in the accomplishment of the mission entrusted to Him. I, ADONAI, have called You in righteousness (42:6a)**. The call to **the Servant** comes from **God** and is translated **in righteousness**. Then comes the promise. **I will take hold of Your hand (the Father will sustain Him). I will keep You and will make You to be a Covenant for the people (42:6b)**. The word **people** is singular here, so **God** is talking about a united northern kingdom of **Isra'el** and southern kingdom of **Judah**. The relationship of **the Servant** to **the Jewish people** is to be very intimate. **Yeshua Messiah** is to be **the One** who will fulfill the **Jewish** covenants. **He** will be the mediator of the covenants and is the basis for the teaching of **Messiah** in the different feasts of **Isra'el**.

He is not only the mediator and the maker of the **Covenant**, **He** is also the essence of **the Covenant** itself. **God** says: **You will be a Covenant**. The **Covenant God** is talking about is the **New Covenant**. Soon **Isaiah** will mention the **New Covenant** in two places (**54:10** and

61:8). But it is **Jeremiah** who gives us the details (**Jeremiah 31:31-34**). It is also mentioned in **Ezeki'el 16:60**. Therefore, we have three of the four major prophets, **Isaiah**, **Jeremiah**, and **Ezeki'el** that mention the coming of a **New Covenant**. Therefore, the concept of a **New Covenant** is found within the pages of the TaNaKh. Even though **God** said: **I will make a New Covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31)**. **ADONAI** declares that **the Servant will restore the tribes of Judah and bring back the faithful of Isra'el that He has kept (49:6c)**. This is part of the condition of **the New Covenant** that is made with the Jewish nation.



The **Gentiles** would also benefit. **God the Father** said: **I will also make You a light for the Gentiles** (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ Au - Jesus Presented in the Temple](#)), **that You may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth (Isaiah 42:6c, 49:6 and Luke 2:21-40)**. So anyone who receives salvation, Jew or Gentile alike, would receive it from **the Messiah** or **the Servant of the LORD**. In relationship to the united kingdom of **Isra'el**, the **New Covenant** will ultimately lead to her final salvation and restoration (see [Kp - My Chosen People Will Inherit My Mountains](#)). **To open eyes that are spiritually blind and to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness (42:7)**. For centuries **the Gentiles** had dwelt in **darkness** because they did not have the Scriptures. Only when the gospel moved out of the land of **Isra'el** to **the Gentiles**, did **they** finally receive light (see my commentary on [Acts Az - The Good News Spreads to Samaria](#)). This is exactly what **Luke 2:28-32** and **John 8:12** state regarding **Christ**; that, although **He** came initially for **the Jews**, **the Gentiles** would also benefit because **He** came to be their **light**.

Here **God** said: **I am ADONAI, that is My name** (see the commentary on [Exodus At - I Am Has Sent Me To You](#)), **I will not give My name glory to another or My praise to idols (42:8)**. The name of **ADONAI**, or **the LORD**, implies that **He** is a **Covenant Keeper**.

He faithfully carries out His promises. The fact that **He** alone is the Covenant Keeper of all “other gods” is the uniqueness of **His glory**. **God** said **I will not give my Sh’kinah glory to another or my praise to idols**. No **idol** will ever be the Covenant Keeper.

Because **God** alone transcends the world, **He** alone can explain the course of history. **See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you (42:9)**. **God** says that some of **His** earlier prophecies, or **the former things** in the book of **Isaiah have taken place**, or have been fulfilled. Especially prophecies dealing with the Assyrian invasion and destruction. But **He** now announces that **He** has **new things**, or prophecies, to **declare**. **And as God fulfilled His former predictions, so will He bring His new ones to realization**. **God**, unlike **idols**, can tell the future, and this divine ability adds to **His glory**.