

G.K. Chesterton, the British philosopher-journalist, died in 1936. His writing is both prolific and prophetic. In 1908 The London Times sent out an inquiry to famous authors, asking the question, "What's wrong with the world today?" Chesterton responded simply, "Dear Sir, I am. Yours, G.K. Chesterton."

His insight is as alarming as it is true, and it is directly from the Bible.

What is wrong with the world? I am. And you are. People is what's wrong with the world.
Somehow people need to be changed, and for the better.
There is only one person who can do it.

Yahweh's servant will make you new.

Where are we in Isaiah? It is a huge book and easy to get lost.

2,700 years ago, God is speaking to His people through the prophet Isaiah.

Chapters 1-5 serve as Isaiah's introduction to his message and the themes of His prophesy.

We learn of the four major pieces of Isaiah's repeated message:

1. Yahweh's people have broken His covenant with them.
They are rebellious against the one who has done everything for them.
They are sinners, having broken the stipulations written in God's covenant.
They are corrupted and twisted and have ruined everything around them.
2. Yahweh is going to judge them in His wrath on the coming Day of the Lord.
The brutal Assyrians are going to come conquering. They will almost destroy the people of God.
3. Yahweh has preserved a remnant of faithful people who continue to trust in Him.
4. Someday Yahweh will send His Messiah, anointed one, to rescue His faithful people.

Chapters 6-39 constitute the Book of the King.

Isaiah is warning Israel and Judah that they must turn from their idols and serve Yahweh only.

If they do not (and they won't), God is sending Assyria to destroy them.

At the same time, God is preparing to send His Messianic King to rescue them. (Isaiah 9, 11)

That God is judging His wayward people does not mean that the rest of sinful humanity will be spared.

In chapters 13-35 we find an awesome display of the absolute sovereignty of God over all the nations.

He is King over all the earth and holds the nations in His hand.

All those who fail to acknowledge and serve Him as King will perish.

The Book of the King concludes with four chapters of history,
documenting God's rescue of Israel during the reign of Hezekiah,
the last king Isaiah prophesied to while he lived.

Assyria came to the gates of Jerusalem and Hezekiah trusted God and God saved Jerusalem.

Then God healed Hezekiah and allowed him to reign for fifteen more years.

Beginning in chapter 40, we are in the Book of the Servant.

Isaiah is writing to Israel after he is gone, Israel in exile in Babylon. Jerusalem has been destroyed.

He is writing to a people who are enslaved, first by Babylon and then by Persia.

God's people have questions that Isaiah is answering.

Where is God in all our troubles? Answer: He is with you through them.

How can all of this be God's plan? Answer: He is in absolute control over all nations and everything.

What about the Babylonians and the Persians? Answer: Isaiah 48:22, "no peace for the wicked."

Where is this Messianic King? Answer: He is coming, and He will be God's special servant.

He will be the sovereign King.

He will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

He will be a kind, gentle, Suffering Servant.

He will be your Savior and bring justice upon the earth.

Then, beginning in chapter 56, is the Book of the Conqueror.

This prophesy Isaiah writes to an Israel restored to a rebuilt Jerusalem.

But it is not enough to understand this prophecy being completely fulfilled in 516 BC.

The promised Messianic King will come and conquer all His enemies.

He will bring complete justice and righteousness on the earth.

He will execute vengeance upon all His enemies.

He will bring salvation and deliverance to His people, all who trust in Him.

And He will make all things new.

This morning, we are in the Book of the Servant, which is called this because of four Servant Songs.

Each Servant Song highlights distinctive character qualities and actions of the Messianic King.

This morning, we will study the first of these Servant Songs, in three steps. (vss. 1-4, 5-7, 8-9)

You will find this first Servant Song in Isaiah 42:1-9.

I. The Sovereign Lord appoints His gentle servant to bring justice. Isaiah 42:1-4

This first Servant Song is sung by Yahweh Elohim about His servant that He will send.

This Servant, the Messianic King, is the one we now know as Jesus Christ.

If you read Isaiah, you would see that He will continue to fit these prophesies perfectly.

It is a remarkable fact about Jesus, that nearly everything that He did and was had been predicted.

There is nothing remotely like this in all the history of the world.

This alone, is reason enough to believe that Jesus Christ is God Himself come to save us.

In Isaiah 42:1 we find four truths about Jesus, the Servant of God, which will be borne out in His ministry.

1. He is “held fast” or “upheld” by God Himself. (Jesus would always pray) **Matthew 4:11, Luke 22:43**
2. He is chosen by God and God delights in Him. **Mark 1:9-11**
3. God has put His Holy Spirit upon Him. **Luke 4:16-21**
4. He will bring justice to the nations. (healing Gentiles) **Matthew 28:18-20**

Then, in verses 2-3 we discover an amazing aspect to His character, one that is surprising.

Not that we who have read the gospels are surprised... for Jesus perfectly fulfills this description.

But, for anyone who has been reading only Old Testament promises and prophecy, this is new.

What do we find in these two verses? What sort of ruler is this? What is He like?

He is not loud and self-promoting. He is gentle. He is faithful. He is just.

This Servant-King will be gentle, lowly, kind. **Matthew 11:28-30**

What other king is anything like this? It is altogether new and different.

Verse 4 tells us that He will not quit until He has done what He came to do.

He will establish justice.

Peoples wait expectantly for His Law (His Torah). Only Jesus can write it on our hearts.

If you listen to all our media today, and all the complaining, and all the people protesting for justice...

The careful observer will be struck by one consistent theme.

All the people might not know exactly what they want to see happen, are often confused and hypocritical...

But everyone is desperate for a way of living that will be fair and true, gracious, loving, and heal people.

Do they know what that really looks like or how to get that? No idea.

People hold signs in the streets asking for justice while they burn their neighborhoods and loot the stores.

Have they ever read the Sermon on the Mount? Really?

In these three-chapters of the Bible (Matthew 5-7) Jesus gives His commentary on Torah that He wrote!

It is without question the most wisdom-filled moral teaching in the history of the world.

The problem is that no one can do it... because people don't really want to do it.

There is something wrong with people, you and me, that only this Servant can fix.

II. The Sovereign Lord is making all things new.

Isaiah 42:5-7

First, it is essential to recognize just who is speaking: Elohim Yahweh, “God the Lord.”

Do you know who He is? Really? (vs. 5)

Yahweh Elohim, or rather here it is “Elohim Yahweh,” describes Him.

Elohim = God, is what He is. There are in existence two categories of beings or things:

There is all of creation, everything, and then there is God alone, in a category by Himself. Elohim.

Yahweh = he Lord who is self-existent and always keeps His covenant promises to those He loves.

The Exodus is the perfect picture of His faithfulness, beginning in Exodus 3.

And here in Isaiah 42:5 He is described using a pair of Hebrew poetic bicolons.

Two lines, side by side, which express a similar idea in complimentary ways.

The first bicolon: He is the majestic creator who has made all the heavens and the earth.

The second bicolon: He is the one who gives life and breath to all of us, people whom He has made.

The point: If there is anyone anywhere worth listening to, it is Yahweh Elohim, the Lord God.

If there is any voice in all the universe with determinative power and authority, it is His.

And what does He say?

In verse 6 He turns His attention to His Servant and speaks to Him.

What Has the Lord called His Servant to do? It is something we cannot do for ourselves.

God is going to hold His Servant by the hand and watch over Him.

He will appoint His servant as a covenant to the peoples. Jesus will embody this new covenant.

A covenant is a promise. God makes His promise and sets the conditions.

We accept His promise and agree to keep the stipulations, our part of the covenant.

The problem is that we cannot keep up our end, our part. We disobey and suffer the covenant curses.

It is a hopeless situation for us because we are rebellious corrupt sinners.

But this Servant Messiah is going to come and He Himself will keep our part of the covenant.

And He will do so for all peoples, nations, who look to Him.

He will be the light to all the nations, to all peoples.

And, not only this, but He is going to rescue us from the dungeon and darkness.

Not just Babylon and Persia, but our own slavery to sin and inability to see and obey God.

He is going to make us new! This is what Jesus does for you, if you trust Him as your Messiah.

III. The Sovereign Lord is making all things new.

Isaiah 42:8-9

God will accomplish this! He says, “I am Yahweh.” Recall how He identified Himself in verse 5.

He is the one who keeps all his covenant promises.

And He is going to do this for His glory. (vs. 8) So that no idol will be able to claim the credit.

No one will say, “This president or king is the one who fixed the problems of humanity.”

No one will say, “This philosophy or way of thinking is what has set the world right.”

No one will say, “Financial investment is what has solved our problems.”

No other god, money, person, movement, or moment will be able to boast about fixing the world.

When the Lord does it, everyone will know it is His servant that He sent that brought justice to the world.

Jesus has come. Though He came in such a humble, silent way, now the entire world knows about His coming.

When He came He said that His kingdom is now here. It is here because the King is here.

King Jesus, though murdered, has now risen from the dead. He is still here, reigning on high.

More and more people are learning about Him.

And someday soon, every eye will see Him, and all will know that He is the King of Kings.

Then He will bring in the new creation, the resurrection, and the New Heavens and the New Earth.

He is telling us about it long before He does it. (vs. 9)

This is how God always works. He works this way so that we know it is He who is working.

He says what he’s going to do. He does what He said He will do. Then He tells us what He did!