

BEHOLD GOD'S SERVANT

Jon Macon

Isaiah 42:1-4 says, "*Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.*" We learn from the New Testament that this is a prophecy about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The Father's faithful servant

After Jesus healed a man on the sabbath, the Pharisees held a council in which they determined to kill him (Matt 12:9-14). "*But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; and charged them that they should not make him known: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, 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 show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust*" (Matt 12:15-21). Jesus was God's faithful servant. He committed no sin (John 8:46; Heb 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet 2:22; 3:18). He did only God's will and nothing of himself (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:28-29; 17:4). And he grew to spiritual perfection (Luke 6:40; John 15:9; 17:20-26; Heb 2:10). God had chosen His Son Jesus from before the foundation of the world (1 Pet 1:18-21; Rev 13:8). The Father sent the Son to save mankind (Matt 5:17-18; 9:13; Luke 4:16-21,43; John 3:16; 4:34; 6:29-40; 8:26,42; 9:45; 12:44-50; 14:24; 17:3; Acts 3:24-26; Titus 2:11-14). When Jesus came to this earth and did the Father's will, the Father testified that Jesus is His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased (Matt 3:13-17; 17:5; Mark 1:9-11; 9:7; Luke 3:21-22; 9:35; 2 Pet 1:16-18). Other key elements in Isaiah's prophecy include the fact that God put His spirit upon Jesus (Isa 11:2; 42:1; 61:1; Matt 3:16-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; 4:17-21; John 3:34; Acts 10:38). And, very importantly, Jesus brought salvation to the Gentiles (Matt 12:18,21; 24:14; 25:32; 28:19; Mark 13:10; Luke 2:10,30-32; 24:47; John 11:49-52; Acts 1:8; 2:16-21,38-39; 9:15; 10:34-35,45; 11:18; 13:46-48; 14:27; 15:3,7-19; 18:6; 21:18-19; 22:19-22; 26:15-20; 28:28; Rom 1:16; 2:9-10; 3:29; 9:24-26,30; 10:18-20; 11:11-31; 15:8-19; 1 Cor 12:13; Gal 2:2,7-14; 3:8,14,26-29; Eph 2:11-22; 3:1-15; Col 1:27; 3:11; 1 Thes 2:14-16; 1 Tim 2:7; 3:16; 2 Tim 1:11; 4:17; 1 Pet 2:9-12; Rev 5:9-10; 7:9; 10:11; 14:6-7; 15:4; 21:24-27; 22:2).

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(continued)

The nature of Christ's work on the earth

The nature of Jesus' ministry was not to force himself upon the people and cry to them in the streets. Rather, it was the people who sought after Jesus and then he taught them (Matt 4:23-25; 8:1,16-18; 9:10-13; 12:15; 14:13-22; 15:29-39; 19:1-2; 20:29; 21:1-11,14; Mark 1:44-2:13; 3:7-12; 5:21-34; Luke 4:37; 5:1-3,15-26; John 6:1-14; 12:17-19). In this way, he did not strive, cry, or cause his voice to be heard in the streets (Isa 42:2; Matt 12:19). For example, here in Matthew 12:15-16, Jesus charged the multitudes who followed him not to make him known. And, in his ministry, Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy that he would not break a bruised reed or quench any smoking flax until he sent forth judgment unto truth and victory (Isa 42:3; Matt 12:20). Jesus came to seek and save the lost (Matt 18:11; Luke 19:10). If there was any possibility of saving a lost soul, Jesus made every effort to save that soul. He would fan any spark that was there, not stamp it out. The Pharisees condemned Christ for eating with sinners, but Jesus was the great physician, showing mercy, and calling the sinners to repentance (Matt 9:10-13; 11:19; Mark 2:15-17; Luke 5:29-32; 7:34-50; 15:1-32; 19:1-10; John 8:2-11). When his own disciples were ready to destroy some unbelievers, Jesus told them that they did not know what spirit they were of. Jesus came to save men's lives, not destroy them (Luke 9:51-56). His manner of spirit was meekness and humility and the offering of himself as a refuge for all who labor and are heavy laden (Matt 11:28-30). The Lord's goal is the sending forth of judgment unto victory and truth. *"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind"* (John 9:39). Until the victory of this judgment is achieved and all men have the opportunity to be saved, Jesus is withholding his judgment (John 12:47). And he is not discouraged, nor will he fail to accomplish his purposes (Eph 1:11). But at the end of time, Jesus will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on and judge the wicked (John 5:22-30; 12:48; Acts 10:42; 17:30-31; Rom 14:10-12; 2 Cor 5:10; 2 Thes 1:7-10; 2 Tim 4:1,8). But at this time, by God's grace, eternal salvation has been made available to all men (Titus 2:11). In Revelation 3:20, Christ says, *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."* *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely"* (Rev 22:17). But we had all better come to him while the opportunity exists, because it will be over soon enough. The Lord says, *"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be"* (Rev 22:12).