

Sermon Notes & References

Servant of the New Covenant

Isaiah 42:5-9

January 2, 2011

A. Introduction

1. nature of Divine covenants

2. who is the Servant addressed<sup>A</sup>

B. The Servant Ideal in His Commission

1. Commissioned by the Greatest<sup>B</sup> 42:5

2. His Commission the Most Certain<sup>C</sup> 42:6

3. His Commission Reaches the Furthest<sup>D</sup> 42:7

C. The Servant Ideal in His Achievement

1. His Achievement Consistent with God's Glory<sup>E</sup> 42:8

2. His Achievement Prophesied 42:9

D. The 'WORD' of John chapter 1

1. Who is the Word in fact?<sup>F</sup>

2. Who is this Word to us?<sup>G</sup>

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<sup>A</sup> Isaiah 42:1-4, 41:2, 8-9

<sup>B</sup> Hebrews 1:3

<sup>C</sup> Joshua 23:14, Rom 3:26, 1John 5:12

<sup>D</sup> John 8:36

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<sup>E</sup> Exodus 34:14, Isaiah 4:2, John 17:5

<sup>F</sup> John 1:1

<sup>G</sup> John 1:14, 11, 12

A. Introduction

1. This is the first Sunday of a brand new year
  - a. the new year is often associated with certain things
    - (A) with reflections – looking back over the past year
      - (1) at its success, and, at its failures
      - (2) at its joys, and, at its sorrows
      - (3) you will have heard such sentiments on the radio
    - (B) with resolutions – the desire to learn from the past and to make some life changes for the better in a new year
      - (1) with a fresh, clean slate, nothing written upon it
      - (2) I used to love those brand new notebooks we used to get on the first day of school – not a smudge, not an error, not a wrinkle – and the resolution that this year I would keep neat all year – but it didn't last long! Some girls did; not us boys!
      - (3) we resolve not to mess up this year as in the past
      - (4) we look forward to the new year as a
    - (C) renaissance, an opportunity for a fresh start
      - (1) that's a feeling most of us have
      - (2) amazingly, also, it is something God desires for us
2. today we will look at the Servant of the New Covenant
  - a. 42:6b: '[... I will appoint You as a covenant to the people ...](#)'
  - b. perhaps, better expressed as God's New Covenant Servant
  - c. the word new is not here attached to the word covenant
  - d. but, the idea of newness is present in the passage
  - e. 42:9b: '[... Now I declare new things ...](#)'
  - f. God made a covenant with His people at Sinai with Moses His servant as its mediator; now He promises a new one

- g. let us not confuse the Divine covenants with
  - (A) covenants or contracts made between two people
  - (B) or covenants or treaties made between two nations
  - (C) for God's covenants are totally different in nature
- h. Divine covenants are made unilaterally by a sovereign God and man has no voice in their terms
- i. Divine covenants are frequently unconditional, as some of those made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and, when conditional, that condition often is that man receive them
- j. the condition of the new covenant is that a person receive the New Covenant Servant – but first let us determine the identity of this Servant – to do that let us review

3. Isaiah 42:1-4 which we considered a little over a month ago,

- a. This Servant, because of His spiritual character and nature
  - (A) ... Is Our Spiritual Head (42:1)
  - (B) ... Is Our Spiritual Example (42:2-3)
  - (C) ... Our Spiritual Hope (42:4)
- b. so, considering these facts, the Servant addressed here
  - (A) is NOT Cyrus as anticipated in Isaiah 41:2 – *“Who has aroused one from the east Whom He calls in righteousness to His feet? He delivers up nations before him And subdues kings. He makes them like dust with his sword, As the wind-driven chaff with his bow.”* – and later named in Isaiah 44:28, although Cyrus, too, was to be a servant of God, carrying out God's purposes in restoring the exiled Israel back to the land of promise
    - (1) Cyrus was but a human ruler who brought a temporal deliverance to God's people Israel
    - (2) he was not the Spirit filled Servant of verses 1-4
  - (B) is NOT Israel as a nation, as spoken of in Isaiah 41:8-9, *“<sup>8</sup>But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend, <sup>9</sup>You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from its remotest parts And said to you, ‘You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you.’”* – not even the true Israel, the returned remnant or the church, for this Servant excels both in His mission and ministry
- c. this Servant is the Ideal Servant
  - (A) showing perfectly the character of God

- (B) carrying out perfectly the work of God
- (C) and these truths will emerge as we study these verses
- (D) but we will, without further apology, identify this Ideal Servant with the Messiah-Christ, Jesus of Nazareth
- (E) this Servant, the Messiah-Christ, is demonstrated to be
  - (1) ... Ideal in His Commission
  - (2) ... Ideal in His Empowerment

B. The Servant Ideal in His Commission

1. Commissioned by the Greatest . . . . . 42:5
  - a. Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives breath to the people on it And spirit to those who walk in it,
  - b. the status, character and power of a representative, is determined by the one for whom he acts
    - (A) this is true of ambassadors, who represent the voice of some foreign government or ruler
    - (B) and it is true of Jesus Christ, who is described this way: 'And He is the radiance of His *li.e. God's* glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,' (Hebrews 1:3)
    - (C) so look at the one who commissions this Servant as His representative, as the manifestation of Himself to man
  - c. the one giving the commission to the Ideal Servant
    - (A) is the Creator – the one who by the exercise of His will and His word brought the universe into existence
    - (B) and the one who takes a deep and abiding interest in the creation He brought into being
      - (1) extending the heavens in the same fashion that you our I might put a canopy over a tent-gazebo
      - (2) spreading out the surface of the earth, making everything beautiful in its place
    - (C) but also concerned with the mankind that He has placed on this earth, giving the breath, life and being
  - d. the Messiah-Christ, the Ideal Servant is commissioned

- (A) by the all-powerful Creator God, Holy, Majestic
  - (B) by the all-loving, ever-present God who desires to save a people for Himself out of the chaos of sin
  - (C) so that in Messiah-Christ, we find these same qualities in Jesus who powerfully provides salvation from sin
- e. His commission is from the Greatest, God Almighty

2. His Commission the Most Certain . . . . . 42:6

- a. *I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I will also hold you by the hand and watch over you, And I will appoint you as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations,*
- b. literally this reads, 'I, Yahweh, I have called you'
  - (A) by this, attention is drawn to the way that Yahweh has worked in the past – how He had made a covenant with His people Israel, bringing them out of Egypt and into the land of promise, so that Joshua could say to Israel, '*Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed.*' (Joshua 23: 14) – what God says, He carries out
  - (B) this He does '*in righteousness*' – the commission given to the Ideal Servant is one that is perfectly righteous – it in every way corresponds to God's absolute justice
  - (C) God's loving purpose in sending the Messiah-Christ to redeem a people to God in no way contradicts God's abhorrence to sin – so nothing exists to impede its being carried out; rather, Messiah-Christ's work is, '*for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*' (Romans 3:26)
- c. but there is yet further assurance of its certainty
  - (A) there are three 'I wills' that fall the '*I have called*'
  - (B) God will hold His hand: Father's intimate, continuing presence with the Son throughout His earthly ministry
  - (C) God will watch over Him: Father's protective care of the Son throughout His life on earth, even in death
  - (D) Father appoints the Son as His new covenant with man – in the communion service we read the

words, 'this cup is the new covenant in my blood'

- (E) the covenant given at Sinai was in the form of words written upon tablets of stone
  - (F) the covenant given at the cross is in the form of the Ideal Servant Himself, Messiah-Christ, written in the form of the nail-prints in His hands and feet and the spear-thrust into His side
  - (G) the new covenant is not in words but in the Word
  - (H) the new covenant is a person not an arrangement
- d. [He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.](#) (1 John 5:12)
- (A) because the Son of God rose from the dead
  - (B) because the Son of God is seated at the right hand of the majesty on high
  - (C) so that commission He was given is most certain & true
  - (D) and we can with full assurance bear the same message as a light to the nations
- e. His commission is most assured of its success

3. His Commission Reaches the Furthest . . . . . 42:7

- a. [To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.](#)
- b. in our studies in Mark in the Adult Bible Class we have seen recently that in the most extreme circumstances, when it would appear the situation was hopeless, Jesus could do the impossible
- (A) He stilled the wind and the waves on the Sea of Galilee
  - (B) He delivered the man possessed of Legion of demons
  - (C) He healed the woman while doctors failed 12 years
  - (D) He raised the dead young girl back to life
- c. the situations listed in this verse, are hopeless
- (A) yet He is to heal not merely the physical blindness, but the state of blindness which prevents man, on account of sin, from every seeing or coming before God
- d. Simon Bolivar, El Liberator, is the historic here of two South American countries, Bolivia and Peru
- (A) he led Peru to independence from Spain in 1824
  - (B) they pleaded that he become their first president, but he declined: his was the job of liberation, but to others was the work of governing

(C) he accepted their offer of one million pesos on the condition that he add to it his own money and buy the freedom of 3,000 slaves still in Peru: he said, 'It makes little sense to free a nation unless all its citizens enjoy freedom as well.'

(D) this Ideal Servant, Messiah Christ

(1) did not come, like Cyrus, to restore the Jews to their own land for a few hundred years

(2) did not come, as the Jews expected, to free them from the bondage of Rome

(3) but He came to deliver from a far greater bondage, a more fundamental slavery, that to sin. Jesus said, 'So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.' (John 8:36)

e. His commission reaches the furthest, far beyond everything that man could think or plan

### C. The Servant Ideal in His Achievement

1. His Achievement Consistent with God's Glory . . . . . 42:8

a. I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.

b. in the instructions to Israel are these words: '– for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God –' (Exodus 34:14)

c. by His very nature: being True and being Unique, God can tolerate no rival – true religion cannot be tolerant of the false religion for to allow such would deny its own truth

d. promises of Messiah-Christ constantly refer to His glory, e.g. in Isaiah 4:2, 'In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel.'

e. and Christ was able to pray shortly before His death, 'Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.' (John 17:5)

f. Messiah-Christ, the Ideal Servant, in achieving His God-given commission, would do so fully to the glory of God

2. His Achievement Prophesied . . . . . 42:9

a. Behold, the former things have come to pass, Now I declare new things; Before they spring forth I proclaim them to you.

b. through, the prophets in the past

(A) and more recently through Isaiah

- (B) God had spoken, promising, e.g. deliverance from Assyria and other nations that oppressed Israel
- c. and these promises had been fulfilled
- d. and even now, historical events marched to bring Cyrus into place in 150 years to carry out God's plan
- e. which was far beyond the capability of any man to know
- f. now, there is prophesied new things to be achieved by the Ideal Servant, Messiah-Christ, including His covenant
- g. things far beyond the capability of any man to know
- h. but that God foretold this achievement through prophecy certifies that Messiah-Christ's work will be achieved

D. To conclude, let us look at the term 'Word' in John chapter 1

1. Who is the Word in fact?

- a. verse 1: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*
- b. there is no article in the Greek before 'beginning' – it is not speaking of a specific beginning, but of beginningness as a quality: take, as it were, any commencement you choose, and the Word was; the Word is Eternal
- c. but there is an article when it says '*and the Word was with the God*' – the Word was a distinct Personality within the Presence of the One true God; having asserted that,
- d. the final word '*God*' has no article, for it speaks of the quality of Deity, and in Greek the order is reversed: '*and God, Deity, was the Word*' – the Word according to His quality or nature is God; He is intrinsically One with God
- e. being One, there is no sharing of glory with another, for each Person of the Trinity possess that glory in common

2. Who is this Word to us?

- a. verse 14 clarifies this: *And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*
  - (A) the Word is the one who became man, God with us
  - (B) the Word, is Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah-Christ
  - (C) the Word is the bodily revelation of God to mankind



- b. verse 11: **He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.**
- (A) His own were the people of Israel, the people to whom Isaiah's message of the Covenant Servant was given
  - (B) but the majority of Israel, so privileged of God, did not believe in the Messiah-Christ, but crucified Him
  - (C) the Gentiles, to whom he was sent as a Light, did not receive Him; they too crucified Him
  - (D) but John continues with an invitation of hope:
- c. verse 12: **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name**
- (A) you enter the new covenant of blessing from God
  - (B) by receiving the One who is in Himself that covenant
  - (C) Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, as your Saviour

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