

The Servant of the Lord—Isaiah 42:1–25

Open It

1. For what different reasons might one person hold another person's hand?
2. What interpretations do we tend to put on another person's silence?

Isaiah 42:1–25 (ESV)

¹Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

²He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street;

³a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice.

⁴He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.

⁵Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it:

⁶"I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,

⁷to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

⁸I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.

⁹Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them."

¹⁰Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise from the end of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants.

¹¹Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits; let the habitants of Sela sing for joy, let them shout from the top of the mountains.

¹²Let them give glory to the LORD, and declare his praise in the coastlands.

¹³The LORD goes out like a mighty man, like a man of war he stirs up his zeal; he cries out, he shouts aloud, he shows himself mighty against his foes.

¹⁴For a long time I have held my peace; I have kept still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant.

¹⁵I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn the rivers into islands, and dry up the pools.

¹⁶And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, 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 do, and I do not forsake them.

¹⁷They are turned back and utterly put to shame, who trust in carved idols, who say to metal images, "You are our gods."

¹⁸Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see!

¹⁹Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one, or blind as the servant of the LORD?

²⁰He sees many things, but does not observe them; his ears are open, but he does not hear.

²¹The LORD was pleased, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

²²But this is a people plundered and looted; they are all of them trapped in holes and hidden in prisons; they have become plunder with none to rescue, spoil with none to say, “Restore!”

²³Who among you will give ear to this, will attend and listen for the time to come?

²⁴Who gave up Jacob to the looter, and Israel to the plunderers? Was it not the LORD, against whom we have sinned, in whose ways they would not walk, and whose law they would not obey?

²⁵So he poured on him the heat of his anger and the might of battle; it set him on fire all around, but he did not understand; it burned him up, but he did not take it to heart.

Explore It

3. What did God say would distinguish His Servant? (42:1)
4. How is the gentleness of God’s Servant described by Isaiah? (42:2–3)
5. What attitude would characterize God’s Servant? (42:4)
6. How is the glory of God described by Isaiah? (42:5)
7. What did God promise to accomplish through His Servant? (42:6–7)
8. What kinds of compromise are impossible given who God is? (42:8)
9. What was Israel learning through Isaiah’s prophecy that they could have learned no other way? (42:9)
10. Who, according to Isaiah, will sing the “new song” of praise to God? (42:10–12)
11. How is God described in relation to His enemies? (42:13)
12. What wonders will take place when God no longer holds Himself back? (42:14–16)
13. How will God take pity on our blindness? (42:16)
14. What will become of those who worship idols? (42:17)
15. Why did God call Israel blind and deaf? (42:19–20)
16. How did the people compare to the laws God had given them? (42:21–22)
17. What response did God want, and what response did He get, when He turned Israel over to her enemies? (42:23–25)

Get It

18. What characteristics of God’s Servant, the Messiah, are reassuring to those who falter in their faith?
19. What makes people blind and deaf to God’s Word?
20. How could God’s ultimate intention in disciplining His people with war and flames actually be for their good?

Apply It

21. To whom can you express some of the tenderness and care you have received from Jesus? How?
22. When can you take time to praise God for His love and kindness?