

The Life and Times of Isaiah:

Isaiah 41-53, The Uniqueness of the Lord, The Servant of the Lord

The Servant of the Lord

The book of Isaiah frequently uses the phrase "my servant" (or equivalents like "my servant" in God's speech) to refer to God's chosen agent. The term appears multiple times, primarily in chapters 41–53, with a few earlier or later instances.

Key Passages with "My Servant"

Isaiah 20:3 — Refers to the prophet Isaiah himself as "my servant Isaiah" (a symbolic act of judgment on Egypt and Cush).

Isaiah 41:8–9 — "But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen... saying to you, 'You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off.'"

Isaiah 42:1 — "Behold 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." (This opens the first of the famous "Servant Songs.")

Isaiah 42:19 — "Who 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?" (Here, ironically applied to Israel as failing in its role.)

Isaiah 43:10 — "You are my witnesses, declares the LORD... my servant whom I have chosen..." (Referring to Israel.)

Isaiah 44:1–2, 21 — "But now hear, O Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen... Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant; I have formed you; you are my servant..."

Isaiah 44:26 — "...who confirms the word of his servant..." (likely the prophet or Israel in context).

Isaiah 45:4 — "...for the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen..."

Isaiah 48:20 — "...the LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob."

Isaiah 49:3 — "And he said to me, 'You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'" (This is part of the second Servant Song.)

Isaiah 49:5–6 — The servant speaks: "...the LORD... formed me from the womb to be his servant... It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob..." (The servant's mission expands beyond Israel.)

Isaiah 50:10 — "Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of his servant?" (Part of the third Servant Song, where the servant speaks in first person.)

Isaiah 52:13 — "Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up..." (Opening the fourth and most famous Servant Song, leading into Isaiah 53.)

Isaiah 53:11 — "...by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous..." (Within the suffering servant passage.)

### The Four "Servant Songs"

Scholars commonly identify four poetic sections as the "Servant Songs" (or "Songs of the Servant of the Lord"), where the figure is described in detail:

Isaiah 42:1–9 Gentle servant bringing justice to the nations.

Isaiah 49:1–13 Servant called from the womb, mission to restore Israel and be a light to the Gentiles.

Isaiah 50:4–11 Obedient servant who suffers but trusts God.

Isaiah 52:13–53:12 The exalted yet suffering servant who bears sins and makes many righteous.

### The Uniqueness of the Lord as Compared to the Idols of the World

Isaiah 40:18-20 To whom then will you liken God?...As for the idol, a craftsman casts it, a goldsmith plates it with gold, and a silversmith fashions chains of silver. He who is too impoverished for such an offering selects a tree that does not rot; He seeks out for himself a skillful craftsman to prepare an idol that will not totter.

Isaiah 41:4 "Who has performed and accomplished it, calling forth the generations from the beginning? 'I, the Lord, am the first, and with the last. I am He.'"

Isaiah 41:28-29 "But when I look, there is no one, and there is no counselor among them who, if I ask, can give an answer. "Behold, all of them are false; Their works are worthless, their molten images are wind and emptiness.

Isaiah 42:1-4 "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry out or raise His voice, nor make His voice heard in the street."

Isaiah 42:3-4 "A bruised reed He will not break and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not be disheartened or crushed until He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands will wait expectantly for His law."

Isaiah 42:5 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,

Isaiah 42:6 "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"