



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V25 N1 January 1, 2023

## LIGHT HAS COME

“Light of Reflection”

Isaiah 42:5-7

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Evangelism

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Acts 1:8



Who is the  
servant of the  
LORD?

Evangelism requires a message – no Christian gospel, no evangelistic proclamation. No worries, however, for we have good news to share with “all nations” (Mt 28:19; cf. Mk 13:10; Lk 24:47) – the good news about our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Like Paul, we preach: “Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1Co 1:23-24). In another place Paul tells us that our “good news” message is rooted in the Old Testament Scriptures. In his letter to the Romans, he introduces himself as follows: “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God – the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord” (1:1-4).

Consider just three allusions to the good news in the Old Testament. First, the gospel was promised immediately after sin entered the world in what is commonly known as the *protoevangelium*. God told the serpent, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Ge 3:15). On the meaning of “he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel,” *The NIV Study Bible* explains: “The antagonism between people and snakes is used to symbolize the outcome of the titanic struggle between God and the evil one, a struggle played out in the hearts and history of humankind. The offspring of the woman would eventually crush the serpent’s head, a promise fulfilled in Christ’s victory over Satan – a victory in which all believers will share (see Ro 16:20)” (note on Ge 3:15).

Second, the gospel was promised to Abraham. God told Abram, his name before leaving his homeland, to leave Ur, his people, and his family and go to a land that he would show him. And then God made this promise to the patriarch: “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be

*blessed through you”* (Ge 12:2-3). Paul makes the gospel, which is implicit in the promise made to Abram, explicit in his letter to the Galatians. He writes: “Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: ‘All nations will be blessed through you.’ So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith” (3:8-9).

Third, the gospel was prophesied by Isaiah in the first of his “servant songs.” *The NIV Study Bible* explains: “There are four ‘servant songs’ in which *the servant is the Messiah*: 42:1-4 (or 42:1-7 or 42:1-9); 49:1-6 (or 49:1-7 or 49:1-13); 50:4-9 (or 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12” (note on Isa 42:1-4, italics added). In the first song, the LORD announces: “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope” (42:1-4). According to the prophet, the Servant of the LORD, the Messiah, will be endowed with God’s Spirit, equipping him to *bring justice to the nations*. One commentator explains: “‘Justice’ (Heb. *mishpat*) connotes societal order as well as meaning legal equity. The Gentiles would not find this justice on their own, but the Servant would bring it to them (cf. 11:1-5; 32:1). Jesus Christ will do this at His second coming” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Isaiah,” 2022 ed., 279, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf)). Lest there be any doubt that Isaiah’s prophecy refers to Jesus, Matthew prefaces his quote of Isaiah 42:1-4 with these words: “This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah” (12:17). In the face of the growing opposition described in 12:1-15, “verse 17 views Jesus’ withdrawal as the fulfillment of Scripture. In the longest Old Testament quotation in his Gospel, Matthew depicts Jesus as God’s suffering servant (Isa. 42:1-4), who does not fight back against those who oppose him . . . The passage in Isaiah predicts that God’s servant will bring justice, but not by force or violence” (Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, NAC, 200).

# 1

## EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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### Read Isaiah 42:5-7

5 *This is what God the LORD says –  
the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out,  
who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it,  
who gives breath to its people,  
and life to those who walk on it:*

6 *“I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness;  
I will take hold of your hand.  
I will keep you and will make you  
to be a covenant for the people  
and a light for the Gentiles,*

7 *to open eyes that are blind,  
to free captives from prison  
and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.*

### Read also Isaiah 42:1-4

1 *“Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen one in whom I delight;  
I will put my Spirit on him,  
and he will bring justice to the nations.*

2 *He will not shout or cry out,  
or raise his voice in the streets.*

3 *A bruised reed he will not break,  
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.  
In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;*

4 *he will not falter or be discouraged  
till he establishes justice on earth.  
In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Bracket “God the LORD” in v. 5.
- Underline “who stretches,” “who spreads,” and “who gives” in v. 5.
- Circle “you” and “your” in v. 6.
- Bracket “in righteousness” in v. 6.
- Highlight “covenant” in v. 6.
- Circle “people” and “Gentiles” in v. 6.
- Box “to” indicating *purpose* in v. 7.
- Double underline “to open,” “to free,” and “to release” in v. 7.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, “This text is about \_\_\_\_\_.”



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Explain the significance of “God” used together with “the LORD” as in verse 5.
2. What does “who *gives* breath . . . and life” indicate to you about life?
3. To whom is the LORD speaking in verse 6 (cf. v. 1)?
4. To him, the LORD says, “I have called you *in righteousness*” (v. 6). What does that mean?
5. The LORD also says to him, “I will *take hold of your hand* and *keep you*” (v. 6). Explain what that *figurative* language signifies.
6. Describe who will be blessed by him based on the use of “people” and “Gentiles” in verse 6.
7. Two *metaphors* are used to describe him – “covenant” and “light.” Explain the sense in which he is “a covenant” and “a light.”
8. The word “to” indicates *purpose* in verse 7. Put his three-fold purpose in your own words.
9. Read Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:18. Explain how the New Testament understands Isaiah’s prophecy.
10. **Discussion:** According to Isaiah 42:1, God’s chosen one “will bring justice to the nations.” Talk about what this means and when it will happen.

### Commentary On The Text

The first of Isaiah's four servant songs in which the servant is Messiah is found in Isaiah 42:1-7. On the point of this passage and its structure, one commentator writes: "Since Yahweh is the God of Israel, does He have any regard for the Gentile nations? Yes, a servant of the LORD will bring forth justice to the nations (42:1-9). That is the point of this pericope. Yahweh had challenged the nations to behold the folly of idols (41:24) and idol worshippers (41:29), but now He urged them to behold His Servant (42:1). This Servant would reveal God to the world, something the idols could not do. The LORD first spoke *about His Servant* (42:1-4) and then *to His Servant* (42:5-9) . . . Earlier (41:8-16), the servant was Israel, so the readers would naturally assume that Israel is the servant here too . . . Only later does it become clear that this Servant must be an individual, namely, Messiah . . . Matthew quoted 42:1-4 as finding fulfillment in Jesus Christ (Matt. 12:18-21)" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Isaiah," 2022 ed., 276, italics added, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/Isaiah.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/Isaiah.pdf)).

Before examining what the LORD says *to his servant* (vv. 5-7), a few comments are in order concerning what he says *about his servant* (vv. 1-4). Among other things that the LORD says about his servant's calling (v. 1) and his demeanor (vv. 2-3), he also says, "he will bring justice to the nations" (v. 1) and "he establishes justice on earth" (v. 4)—both of which speak to the fact that the servant is the Messiah. As Christians, we can give too much attention to the doctrine of heaven, while at the same time giving too little attention to the equally important, if not more important, doctrine of the kingdom of God and the new earth. Jesus is the Messiah, the descendant of David, who is destined to rule over Israel and the nations *on earth*. Listen to what Gabriel told Mary: "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end" (Lk 1:30-33; cf. Da 7:13-14). Remember, the righteous will not spend eternity in heaven. The righteous go to heaven upon death to be with the Lord (2Co 5:6-8) and to await the resurrection that will occur in connection with his return (1Th 4:14-18). Following his return, the righteous will reign with Christ during the thousand-year kingdom age, and then live with him forever on a new earth, following

the final judgment (Rev 20:7-15; 21:1-8).

Now here's what the LORD says *to his servant* (vv. 5-7). His words in verses 6-7 are introduced by Isaiah's identification of the one speaking (v. 5), namely, "God the LORD," more literally rendered, "the true God, Yahweh," the one who Isaiah goes on to say created the heavens and the earth, the one who imparts life to all living things. Note that God did not create life. As John says, "In him was life" (Jn 1:4). He *imparted* his life to all living things and now *imparts* it to all living things, so sustaining his creation.

In verse 6, the LORD says to his servant, "I have called you for a *righteous purpose*" (HCSB)—namely, "to bring justice to the nations" (v. 1), that is, to establish justice on earth (v. 4). The quote on page 1 is worth repeating: "'Justice' (Heb. *mishpat*) connotes societal order as well as meaning legal equity. The Gentiles would not find this justice on their own, but the Servant would bring it to them (cf. 11:1-5; 32:1). Jesus Christ will do this at His second coming" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Isaiah," 2022 ed., 279, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf)). What's more, he assures him that he will enable his servant to complete that task, since he will be with him, that is, *take hold of his hand*, and sustain him, that is, *keep him*. The LORD also says that he will make his servant "a covenant for the people" and "a light for the Gentiles." The precise meaning of these two *metaphors* is difficult to discern. Concerning the first, it likely means that the servant will fulfill all of the covenant promises made to God's people in the Old Testament and that the blessings of those covenants will be available through him. Concerning the second, it likely means that the servant will reveal the truth of salvation to all people, including the Gentiles (see 49:6; cf. Lk 1:28-32; Ac 13:46-48; 26:22-23).

In verse 7, the LORD reveals what results from his servant's ministry—blind eyes are opened, captives from prison are set free and those in dungeons sitting in darkness are released. The *figurative* language refers to salvation in its fulness that comes to those who believe in him. In a nutshell, "This spiritual salvation to both Jews and Gentiles will eventuate in the glorious messianic kingdom" (John A. Martin, "Isaiah," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 1096).

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 5 *God the LORD* Cf. “This is what God, Yahweh, says” (HCSB). “God here is *hā’ēl*. The word *’ēl* is God transcendent (40:18). The addition of the definite article (*hā*) is for emphasis: ‘he who is indeed the true transcendent God’. LORD, as the capital letters indicate, is ‘Yahweh’, the God who revealed himself to Israel (Ex. 3:15)” (J. Alex Motyer, *Isaiah*, TOTC, 261) – cf. “This is what the true God, the LORD, says” (NET).

v. 5 *who stretches . . .* “The speaker identified Himself, for the benefit of the idol worshipping nations (cf. 40:1). He was the transcendent God who created all things (Heb. *ha’el*, cf. 40:18), namely, Yahweh, the covenant-keeping God of Israel. He described Himself further as He who established the earth and who alone cares for it and sustains its inhabitants. The Servant’s ministry will fulfill the Creator’s original intention for the earth” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes of Isaiah,” 2022 ed., 280, [plano-biblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf](http://plano-biblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf)). God is not the creator of life; he is its giver. He imparts his life to his creation. “The ‘life’ of the natural world, just as much as the life of humans, is the constantly ministered life of God. Life is not inherent in the soil, nor is human life the product of a self-existing evolutionary surge, but the direct gift of the Creator. It is not held in perpetuity but is enjoyed by the faithfulness of his continuing ‘giving’” (Motyer, 261).

v. 6 *you, your* The pronouns refer to “my servant” (v. 1). “One should remember that previously (41:8) the nation is called the Lord’s servant. But 42:1 is obviously different. The passage is clearly referring to an individual, and the New Testament use of it is conclusive in referring it to the Lord Jesus Christ . . . Isaiah 42:1-4 is quoted in Matthew 12:17-21 where the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ is said to be the fulfillment of the prophecy” (Alfred Martin and John Martin, *Isaiah: The Glory of the Messiah*, 114-15). “The further description of the ministry of this Servant in 42:6-7 confirms that this is not the nation but someone who will function for the nation and indeed for the world. Where Israel was blind and deaf, captive to the powers of this world, this servant will give sight and freedom. This ministry will be the ultimate revelation of the ‘glory’ of God, which fills the earth (6:3) and belongs to no idol (42:8)” (John N. Oswalt, *The NIV Application Commentary: Isaiah*, 470).

v. 6 *in righteousness* Or “for a righteous purpose” (HCSB); cf. 41:2 regarding the call of Cyrus

“Like the servant of the Lord in 42:6, Cyrus was chosen to carry out God’s righteous purposes” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Isa 41:2). “Righteousness: both the conqueror (41:2) and the Servant are called in pursuance of the Lord’s righteous purposes” (Motyer, 261). “Yahweh not only called an invader, in harmony with His righteous purposes for humankind (41:2), but He alone also called this Servant at the right time, in the right place, and for the right purpose” (Constable, 280).

v. 6 *covenant* Speaking figuratively. “A person cannot literally be a covenant; (bkrit) is probably metonymic here, indicating a covenant mediator” (*The NET Bible*, 15tn on Isa 42:6). “Through the Messiah as king, the Davidic covenant (see 2Sa 7:12-16; cf. Isa 55:3 and note) would be fulfilled (9:7), and he would institute the new covenant by his death (see Jer 31:31-34; Heb 8:6-13; 9:15 and notes)” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Isa 42:6).

v. 6 *people, Gentiles* As mediator of the covenants made with Israel, the servant will serve as a light to the Gentiles. Jews, God’s people, and Gentiles alike will be blessed by him.

v. 7 *to open . . .* Cf. 61:1 with Lk 4:18. “Universality is not, therefore, a violation or adjustment of the covenant; it is its fulfilment. It brings, in the Servant, the light of truth, the healing of disabilities (open eyes), liberation from oppressive restriction (free captives) and transformation of circumstances (from . . . darkness: like Eden, with perfect people, perfect society and perfect environment (61:1)” (Motyer, 262) – a reference to conditions in the kingdom age. “Like ‘light,’ the Servant would heal disabilities (physical and spiritual), end restrictions that others imposed, and transform individual circumstances (cf. Luke 1:79; John 1:4; 8:12; 9:5, 39-41; 12:46; Acts 26:18). He would bring people out of bondage, including their bondage to sin (cf. 61:1; John 8:32; Col. 1:13)” (Constable, 281).

# 4

## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Jesus is the Servant of the LORD whom God has chosen to bring justice to the earth and full salvation to all who believe.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



### 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## FAMILY TALK

Soon after I trusted Christ, I was invited to participate in a college campus street evangelism event. My response was an emphatic, “No, nope, no way, not qualified.” I barely knew anything about the Bible or Jesus. How in the world did they expect me to share something that confounded me?! Several years went by in which I diligently read and studied the Bible, and I still had the same response to openly evangelizing. What if someone asked me a question I couldn’t answer? Would they think I was a phony? Then I had kids. I realized quickly I had a responsibility to share the good news of Jesus with my own little flock. Most of my kids trusted Christ at events outside of the home (yay, camp!). I did have the great pleasure of being involved in my daughter’s choice to follow Jesus. Here’s what I can tell you about sharing Jesus with your kids: 1) You’re not going to mess this up. He loves your kids more than you do. He’s not going to let you mangle His story but will give you every word you need to say. 2) You are planting seeds. Bringing God and the story of Jesus into your everyday life is the best way to consistently lead your kids to Him. 3) You’re not going to know everything. Home is a safe place to ask questions, and what remarkable fun to explore God’s Word together. 4) Take the chance. Ask your child if they’re ready to trust Jesus. They’ll let you know if they aren’t, and you’ll get time of reflection and prayer while you’re waiting.

### What Does The Bible Say?

Read Isaiah 42:5-7

1. What has the Creator created?
2. Who is “you” in verse 6?
3. What will Jesus do for the people?

### What Do You Think?

How does Jesus open the eyes of the people and free prisoners today? How can you help in His work?

### What Do You Do?

This week, try to share something about Jesus with three people. Tell us who you talked to and how you shared the good news of Jesus.

### CORE COMPETENCY: Evangelism

I share Jesus with others with my words and actions.

### MEMORY VERSE: 2 Corinthians 5:17

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”*

### KidPIXCOUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- \_\_\_\_\_ I completed my Bible Study
- \_\_\_\_\_ I memorized this week’s verse
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought my Bible to church
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought a friend



CHILD’S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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